

# February 9, 2011

5:00 p.m. Land Use Mtg. Room

**Members Present:** Susan Payne, Linda Frank, Diane Dupuis, Betsy Corrigan, Alt., Randy Bernard, Alt.

**Absent:** Phil Markert, Kelly Boling, Phil Dutton, Alt.

**Staff Present:** Shelley White

**Others:** Mr. Charles, Mr. Vilbois, Ms. Devlin, Mr. Casey, Ms. Churyk

Chairman Susan Payne called the meeting to order at 5:10 p.m.

Seated: Susan Payne, Linda Frank, Randy Bernard, Alt., Betsy Corrigan, Alt.

## Consideration of the Minutes

The Minutes of the January 5, 2011 Conservation Commission Meeting were considered.

### Corrections:

Under Cell Tower Update, 1st paragraph, 2nd sentence should read: There will be a meeting re the lease 1/6/11 and Mr. Comi will be present to advise the Town.

3rd sentence should read: The Town has a list of criteria that it would like included in the lease.

4th sentence should read: The lease will have to be presented at a Town meeting for approval.

3rd paragraph, 5th sentence should read: He stated that he could get service from Verizon all the way up Route 202 and wondered why couldn't AT&T co-locate on the existing towers along Route 202 and why should AT&T have their own tower.

7th sentence should read: Ms. Dupuis stated that AT&T is on the Gooseboro cell tower, which is a low tower but they are not on the tower in Marbledale even though they are approved to co-locate on that tower 5 years ago.

9th (last) sentence should read: He stated that this would be at the expense of the community and the bird habitat in the area.

4th paragraph, 3rd sentence should read: He stated that his family members are full time residents and he feels fortunate to live in Washington because it is such a beautiful area.

5th paragraph, 4th sentence, should read: Ms. Corrigan stated that the Wood Turtles are State-listed and the problem is that only adult turtles are found, which indicates that the nesting sites are being impacted.

6th paragraph, 4th sentence should read: He stated that he knows the Siting Council will not take health concerns into account but recently in France they have taken health concerns into account because there is research that shows that cell towers could affect the health of people that live near them.

8th paragraph, last sentence should read: Ms. Payne stated large cell towers that have been proposed in surrounding areas on town property were voted down.

11th paragraph, 2nd sentence should read: He stated that he has done some research and it seems that the neighbors can only complain amongst themselves because this proposed tower would be on private land.

14th paragraph, 5th sentence should read: She stated that AT&T would be at a Town Meeting that has not been scheduled as of this date.

16th paragraph, 3rd sentence should read: She stated the grade of the proposed road is about 20%, which is much more than is allowed in Town zoning regulations and would be a safety issue.

Under Referrals / New Projects, 3rd paragraph, end of paragraph add: Ms. Frank mentioned that most of the CE's accepted by the Town have been roadside buffers and/or highly visible from the road.

Under Other Business, first announcement should read: The Greenway Committee met this month. She stated Mr. Brian Boyer would be working on the possible access to the railroad beds to connect greenways between towns.

### Motion:

to accept the January 5, 2011 Regular Meeting Minutes of the Conservation Commission as amended,

by Ms. Frank, seconded by Mr. Bernard, passed by 5-0 vote.

## **Referrals / New Projects**

### Discussion re: possible Nussbaum Conservation Easement

Mr. Charles was present to discuss the possibility of a Conservation Easement at 132 Calhoun Street. He stated that the property is in the Calhoun-Ives Historic District and that the Historic District Commission has approved the proposed house and guesthouse. Mr. Charles gave a brief history of the property. He stated that he is working the property owners and they are proposing approximately  $\pm$  3 acres for the easement. The Commission and Mr. Charles discussed enforcement, maintenance and monitoring of the property should a Conservation Easement be granted. It was the consensus of the Commission that they would like to schedule a site visit in the spring and that they would like to hear a formal proposal.

### Cell Tower Update

#### Lease Negotiations Town Garage Site

Ms. Payne stated that there was no update on the lease negotiations for the proposed cell tower on the Town Garage Property at 10 Blackville Road and if and when a lease is negotiated it would have to be voted on by the Town at a Town Meeting.

### 17 Warren Road Cell Tower Site

Ms. Dupuis stated that AT&T representatives were at the Town Meeting on January 29th. She stated that representatives of the Washington Montessori School, parents of the students, and neighbors to the proposed cell tower were in attendance to oppose the proposed siting of a cell tower at 17 Warren Road. Ms. Dupuis stated that the WMS proposed alternative sites further down Route 202. Ms. Payne stated "we felt like WMS had thrown us under the bus". Ms. Dupuis stated that Town of Washington Conservation Commission has taken the stand to never offer alternative sites to the telecommunication companies when siting a cell tower because they feel that it is the telecom's job to responsibly locate the cell towers. Ms. Dupuis stated that the Washington Montessori School offered alternative sites that would be located directly across from the Macricostas Preserve. The Conservation Commission feels that the same issues of environmental impact would be present at these locations as the proposed 17 Warren Road site. Ms. Dupuis stated that the fact that AT&T has been approved to be on the tower in Marbledale was discussed at the meeting. She stated that AT&T did say, at this meeting, that they would consider co-locating on the Marbledale cell tower and being 'up and operational.' She stated that part of the mandate of the Connecticut Siting Council is that a telecommunication company must prove that there is no coverage it does not mandate 100% coverage.

Ms. Payne stated that Sean Hayden of the NW Conservation District had provided maps of Natural Diversity Database 2010 and a Conservation Development Policies Plan for the State of Connecticut. She displayed a location map that indicates that the total Route 202 area that is in question was within a State conservation area. Ms. Payne stated that Mr. Wadleton of the Inland Wetlands Commission did express concerns for the proposed cell tower and questioned whether the CSC did not need the Town Inland Wetlands Commission approval. Mr. Fitzherbert of the Zoning Commission spoke on his own behalf at the 1/29 Meeting regarding his concerns for cell towers being located so close to a school and residences. The Commission briefly discussed distances of cell towers from schools.

Ms. Devlin stated that the neighborhood group from 17 Warren Road came out with a statement (attached) that they equally oppose the alternative sites proposed by the WMS. She stated that she had been in contact with Dr. Klemens regarding the Conservation Management Practices for Wood Turtles. She read her email to Dr. Klemens (on file in the Land Use Office).

Mr. Vilbois stated that he drove around the Route 202 area and informed the neighbors of the alternative sites. He stated that some of the neighbors were unaware of the research that has been done on impacts of cell towers. He asked who would speak to the property owners of the alternative sites other than AT&T and the Montessori School. Ms. Dupuis stated that she had heard that some neighbors have been talking with one of the property owners and that [www.burbankaction.org](http://www.burbankaction.org) is an informative site to educate people on the impacts of cell towers.

Ms. Churyk stated that she lives approximately 500 feet from one of the alternative sites that the Washington Montessori School has recommended. She stated that she is uncomfortable with this and is worried for her young children and family's health.

The Commission and neighbors looked at the Geological Survey Map of the Town of Washington and discussed the proposed sites.

There was a brief discussion regarding the planning of the showing of the documentary film Full Signal.

#### Streetlights for Possible Decommissioning

It was agreed that Ms. White would compile a map that indicates the location of the streetlights and it will be reviewed at the next Conservation Commission Meeting on March 2, 2011.

#### **Other Business**

Ms. Payne asked the Conservation Commissioners if they were in favor of her submitting a statement to the Zoning Commission that they support the Planning Commission's decision regarding the Revision of the Zoning Regulations/Section 4.4.19 and 21.1.69: Addition of Youth Camp as a Use Permitted by Special Permit in the R-1 District and Definition of Youth Camp. The Planning Commission resolved that they do not approve the proposed revisions because it finds that such revisions are not consistent with the Town Plan of Conservation and Development and are contrary to the goal of preservation of rural character. It was the consensus of the Conservation Commission that Ms. Payne would draft a statement to the Zoning Commission stating that the Conservation Commission supports the Planning Commission's position regarding this revision.

Ms. Payne stated that she and Ms. Frank attended the Protecting Your Water Quality with Low Impact Development presentation with Sean Hayden on January 30, 2011 in Warren.

Motion: to adjourn by Ms. Payne

Ms. Payne adjourned the meeting at 6:40 pm

Submitted subject to approval,

Shelley White, Land Use Clerk

#### **Attachment #1**

*Updated with names on February 9, 2011*

**STATEMENT OF OPPOSITION TO PROPOSED ALTERNATIVE SITES TO 17 WARREN**

## **ROAD**

On January 29, 2011, AT&T held an informational meeting with the Town of Washington, its residents, and members of the Washington Montessori School for the proposed cell tower at 17 Warren Road in Washington, Connecticut. We appreciate the role of the Washington Montessori School throughout this process. We do not, however, support their legal counsel's nomination of three alternative sites for the tower.

We, the undersigned, unequivocally oppose the 17 Warren Road site, those alternative sites proposed on January 29, and any effort to relocate the proposed tower to an area that would compromise other residents or harm the environmentally sensitive Route 202 corridor.

Sincerely,

William Ahearn, Sheila Sullivan, Tim Coakley, Andrea Coakley, Imad Afiouni, Christine Afiouni, Patricia Devlin, Joslyn Pollock, Bill Pollock, Stefan, Churyk, Carole Churyk, Louise Churyk, Wayne Churyk, Ulrich Vilbois, Ingrid Salcedo, Janice Smith, Eleza Paul, Christina Paul, Vince Casey, Toby Casey, Laura Levinstein, Susan Loyd, Rob Odom and Simone Odom.