

May 4, 2011

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

Members Present: Susan Payne, Linda Frank, Diane Dupuis, Phil Dutton, Randy Bernard, Alt.

Absent: Betsy Corrigan, Alt., Phil Markert

Staff Present: Shelley White

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

Seated: Susan Payne, Linda Frank, Diane Dupuis, Randy Bernard, Alt

Consideration of the Minutes

The Minutes of the April 6, 2011 Conservation Commission Meeting were considered.

Correction(s):

Page 1, Under Review of POCD, 3rd sentence should read: Mr. Bernard stated that many groups in the area have done water testing but it is a question of accessibility.

2nd paragraph, 1st sentence should read: The Commission discussed Summary Section B. Open Space...

Page 2, 4th paragraph, 1st sentence should read: The Commission discussed Summary Section C. Scenic Resources...

Motion:

to accept the April 6, 2011 Regular Meeting Minutes of the Conservation Commission as amended, by Ms. Frank, seconded by Ms. Dupuis, passed by 4-0 vote.

Ms. Payne nominated Ms. Frank for Vice Chairman.

Motion:

to accept the nomination of Linda Frank as Vice Chairman of the Washington Conservation Commission, by Ms. Payne, seconded by Ms. Dupuis, passed by 3-0 vote.

Ms. Payne stated that there was an article in Voices that stated that there would be a line item of \$25,000 for Open Space in the Town of Washington Budget this year.

132 Calhoun Street Nussbaum Conservation Easement

Ms. Payne stated that there is nothing new to report from Mr. Charles. Atty. Myles was consulted regarding the deed restrictions and Ms. Payne stated that they do not expire unless otherwise stated in the deed.

Driveway Access at West Shore Road/Larsen Farm (Klein)

Ms. Payne stated that the Inland Wetlands Public Hearing was continued for the May 11th IW Commission Meeting at 5 pm.

Cell Tower Update

Ms. Dupuis stated that First Selectman Lyon told her that they are still trying to figure out what should be negotiated. She stated that the viewing of the documentary Full Signal at the Gunn Memorial Library was well attended and the film has been put into circulation at the library.

5:15 Mr. Dutton arrives and is seated.

Streetlights for Possible Decommissioning

The Board of Selectmen looked at the memo regarding the streetlights for possible decommissioning and they would like a representative from the Conservation Commission to meet with the B.O.S. to discuss. There was a brief discussion regarding the procedure of decommissioning the streetlights. Mr. Dutton volunteered to meet with the Selectmen.

Other Business

Ms. Payne made the following announcements:

- No news on Vinnie's Gas Station in the Depot.
- First Selectmen Lyon anticipates that ½ of the material at the Old Town Garage site will be removed and stored at the Blackville Road Town Garage by the end of the year.
- Route 45 between New Preston Village and West Shore Road should be open before Memorial Day.
- The Department of Transportation will be working on the bridge on Bee Brook Road and there will be a one-lane road in that area for about a year.

Review of POCD

Review of POCD to be continued at next meeting.

Subcommittee Reports:

Annual Monitoring Report

Ms. Frank stated that she and Ms. Payne did some Conservation Easement monitoring and they did not find anything wrong and everything seems to be in order.

Watercourses/Waterways of Town – Report on Water Testing

Mr. Bernard stated that he started compiling a list of known interested parties and stakeholders in water quality testing for key surface waterbodies in the area: Washington Environmental Council (WEC), Housatonic Valley Association (HVA), Connecticut DEP, Steep Rock Association, Lake Waramaug Task Force, Shepaug River Association, Rivers Alliance, Roxbury Conservation Commission, Connecticut Community Foundation, Washington Rod and Gun, Waterbury Bureau of Water, Roxbury Land Trust, Town of Washington, Town of Roxbury. He stated that WEC has done chemical testing of rivers and streams during normal flow and some storm water samples from 2000 to 2009 and the reports are available to the public. Mr. Bernard stated that there is baseline data of surface water testing from a variety of locations, with comparisons within the Town and the regional area. He stated that the Housatonic Valley Association is doing a lot of coordination and outreach in the community and is part of a macro invertebrate study project that involves approximately 8 or 9 sites along the Shepaug River from Washington down through Roxbury and he showed graphics and explained how the study is done. Mr. Bernard stated that the Connecticut DEP shocks the rivers to count fish (the fish are stunned not killed), classify the fish according to size, monitor the temperatures and the data is recorded. He stated that Steep Rock monitors temperature, dissolved oxygen, PH, of rivers and also at the confluence of some streams and the Connecticut Community Foundation funded the monitoring equipment. Mr. Bernard stated that the Lake Waramaug Task Force hires a private firm to test the waters of the lake every year and suggested that this report be sent to the Conservation Commission. He stated that the Shepaug River Association monitors compliance with the Shepaug River agreement. Mr. Bernard stated that the Roxbury Conservation Commission is coordinating activity in Roxbury and are participating in the DEP program of stream monitoring in June. Mr. Bernard stated that the Washington Rod and Gun Club participate in fish stocking. He stated that the Waterbury Bureau of Water controls the flow of water in the Shepaug and Roxbury Land Trust is a party in the litigation of the Shepaug but has not been active lately as the

Roxbury Conservation Commission has taken over with this.

The Commission discussed the cost and process of annual water quality testing and including it in the Conservation Commission annual budget. Creating a map of critical areas at the confluences of rivers, streams, lakes in Town that could be protected by conservation easements and purchased with the Town's Open Space funds was also discussed.

Greenway Committee

Ms. Payne stated that the Committee walked various sections of the railway. She stated that some of the railway is on private property and they did not want to trespass. The Commission looked at a map showing the railway.

New Preston Open Space Stewardship Committee

Ms. Payne reported that the Town has been trying to do some cleaning up of the New Preston Open Space and have also promised to mow once or twice a year but at the moment progress has been delayed because the property is wet and equipment has gotten stuck. She stated that she would be getting some of the New Preston Open Space Stewardship Committee members to help with the invasive plants and that Mr. R. Woodruff has expressed interest in becoming a member of the committee

Best Development Practices Brochure

Ms. Payne stated that she emailed Steve Wadleton, Town Webmaster, and let him know that the Conservation Commission would like to make their website more educational and Mr. Wadleton stated that he would be happy to work with the CC to accomplish this. Mr. Dutton volunteered to work with Mr. Wadleton.

Other Business

Ms. Payne stated that she attended the Wind Turbine Conference in Falls Village and briefly spoke about some of the topics of discussion. The Commission discussed the visual and auditory impact of the turbines and the need for proper siting of the structures.

The Conservation Commission received a letter from the Yale School of Forestry-Global Institute of Sustainable Forestry about the Highlands Regional Study, which can be found as a PDF at <http://yalef.es/highlandsreport>. The Commissioners looked at the maps provided with the report.

There was a brief discussion regarding underground storage tanks.

Motion:

to adjourn by Ms. Payne, passed by 5-0 vote.

Ms. Payne adjourned the meeting at 6:30 pm

Submitted subject to approval,
Shelley White, Land Use Clerk