

January 5, 2005

Present: Susan Payne, Chairperson, Betsy Corrigan, Joe Gitterman

Alternates: Linda Frank, Dan Sherr

Guests: Dick Sears, First Selectman

The meeting was called to order at 5:00pm.

Alternates Linda Frank and Dan Sherr were seated.

MOTION: Approval of the minutes from the December 1, 2004 meeting of the Washington Conservation Commission, Joe Gitterman made a motion to approve the minutes of the December 1st meeting, Dan Sherr seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Susan Payne informed members that Betsy Corrigan, Phil Market and Linda Frank have all been reappointed to the Conservation Commission. Their reappointment will continue until January 1, 2008. Betsy and Linda have both been sworn in by the Town Clerk.

MOTION: Linda Frank made a motion to elect Susan Payne as Chairperson and Kelly Boling as Vice-Chairman of the Conservation Commission through January 2006. Betsy Corrigan seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Referrals from other Commissions:

Status of Walker Brook development proposal: Susan Payne reported that the New Milford Zoning Commission approved the proposal for cluster housing on this site. Betsy Corrigan added that the King's Mark Environmental Study will begin with a general meeting on January 11, 2005 the results of this study is public record.

Holly Hill Farm: Betsy Corrigan will be submitting a letter to the Inland Wetland Commission for their January 12th meeting.

Judson's Rock: Betsy Corrigan submitted a letter dated December 17, 2004 to the Zoning Commission. There is no new activity on this application. There was continued discussion on doing a balloon test on this property. Members felt that it would be beneficial for both the owner and potential buyers, it was decided that Joe Gitterman will contact Michael Jackson of Steep Rock Association on this matter.

Stiteler-Giddins, 198 Tinker Hill: Linda Frank and Dan Sherr went on the site visit with the Planning Commission. Ms. Frank is concerned with the substantial swath that will be cut when they install the 10' driveway and clear 15' on each side of the drive. She would like to see less tree removal. Dan Sherr believes they will be cutting down between 60-65% of the trees in this area. Linda Frank added that the engineer noted that the area is not defined as wetlands and the pathway is needed for construction purposes. Betsy Corrigan is concerned with the seeps and intermittent watercourses which are not taken into consideration. Mr. Sherr feel that there are two issues the first being the wetlands issue on the whole site and secondly pumping sewage up the hill to the proposed septic site. Linda Frank has spoken with an adjoining property owner who feels that her property has gotten wet over the last 3-5 years because of activity on the uphill side from her property. Betsy Corrigan interjected that the lake is ultimately affected from all this activity, you are working against nature. Joe Gitterman asked if there was any possibility of suggesting plantings, terracing or water control methods that would help. Susan Payne feels that the land owners would be receptive to suggestions. Dan Sherr will work on a draft letter for the Planning Commission; he will circulate it to members for comment. The Planning Commission has continued the

Public Hearing until their February 1st meeting.

Beck, 129 Calhoun Street: This application has been withdrawn from the Planning Commission.

Management and Monitoring of Town Properties: no new activity

Subcommittee Reports

Road Discontinuance: Dan Sherr was present at the Selectman's meeting when they discussed Kelly Boling's possible addition to the Zoning Regulations to address discontinued or abandoned public highways. It was Dan's feeling that the Board of Selectman felt the proposed regulations were excessive.

Susan Payne mentioned the on going concern with the "Private Drive" sign on the Nettleton Hollow Road side of West Mountain Road, which was discontinued. Susan stated that Greenway was not interested in maintaining this area. This matter is in the hands of the Selectmen's office.

Open Space Committee: Dan Sherr stated that the recent survey mailed to all towns' people has been receiving a lot of attention. They received 330 responses which were about 13%, a good percentage. Open Space was a high priority. Dan reported that the survey responses included townspeople with school age children which had been a concern through out the forum. He will email the results from the survey to members.

Ridgeline Protection: A subcommittee has been formed which includes Linda Frank, Phil Markert, Susan Payne and Ric Saunders. This subcommittee will be doing the leg work for ridgeline regulations. Linda Frank mentioned that Kent is having preliminary discussion on ridge line regulations this month and will have a public hearing in February. The subject of ridgeline preservation is addressed in the 2003 Plan of Conservation and Development.

Land Use Data Management: First Selectman Dick Sears stated that the assessor's maps are in the process of updating. Looking ahead Mr. Sears would like to see a projector in the Land Use Meeting Room with access to the Arc View GIS data.

Greenway: Susan Payne has contacted Liz Dexheimer to help with the trail guide.

Scenic Road: There was discussion on the draft of the Scenic Road Ordinance which is posted on the town's web site. The ordinance is labeled draft #10, Pam Osborne, secretary will check into this to see if the document is the final ordinance and then contact Rex Swain to make changes if need be. Joe Gitterman told members that New Milford designated their scenic roads individually; it was done in the manor required by state statutes. Joe Gitterman brought up the topic of designating state roads scenic. Joe is reluctant to pursue the "Scenic Road" designation on state roads but on the other hand is concerned for the town's future development.

Canoe Brook: Ms. Osborne, secretary will check with the selectman's office on the status of the Steep Grant. (All paperwork has been filed - still in the waiting stage.)

School Connection: no new activity

Cell Tower Update: Diane Dupuis sent members an email about a study on cell phones and DNA.

Flora & Fauna: Betsy Corrigan has continued to work on her draft of invasive species for the Town's website. Joe Gitterman shared his invasive species removal plan, he's renting ponies!

Water Resources: no report

Other Business

Dick Sears mentioned that there will be an upcoming Town Newsletter; he will be seeking items for publication.

Susan Payne informed members that the Swiss Hospitality property has sold.

Meeting adjourned at 6:40pm.

Submitted subject to approval,

Pamela L. Osborne, Secretary