

October 5, 2005

Present: Susan Payne Chairperson, Kelly Boling, Joe Gitterman

Alternates: Betsy Corrigan

Guests: Addie Roberts, Valerie Anderson

Members are asked to email (conservation@washingtonct.org) or call Pam at (868-0423) if you can not attend a meeting.

The Chairperson Susan Payne called the meeting to order at 5:05pm. Ms. Payne noted a change in the members list, Betsy Corrigan is now an alternate and Linda Frank is a regular member.

Alternate Betsy Corrigan was seated.

MOTION: approval of the minutes from the September 7, 2005 meeting of the Washington Conservation Commission, Kelly Boling made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 7th meeting with the following three amendments: on page 1 in the second motion, line three should read *Board of Selectmen spend up to \$6,000 , per potential acquisition, for;* on page 2 under Open Space Committee, line 10 should read *Commission: 1) PA490 is inappropriate to provide permanent protection; it was,* on page 2 under Ridgeline Protection, line 2 should read *with Gary Fitzherbert, Zoning Commission, Phil Markert, Ric Sonder, Mike Ajello,* Joe Gitterman seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Referrals or new projects: There were no referrals or new projects for review. Susan Payne informed members that the Gunnery School driveway/classroom project on South Street received Zoning Commission approval last week. She went on to say that the Gunnery School offered to have as a condition of approval that the driveway be oil and stone, the Zoning Commission declined to make this a condition of approval, they felt it would be micromanaging. Ms. Payne felt that the Conservation Commission as environmental watch dogs might want to draft a letter to the Gunnery asking that they consider using the oil and stone surface for the driveway. Joe Gitterman felt that members should have more information before making such a suggestion. Kelly added that the oil and stone would be more in keeping with the town's rural character. Susan Payne stated that her motivation was toward environmental impact. From the audience Addie Roberts suggested that Conservation members direct The Gunnery to Nonpoint Education for Municipal Officials (NEMO), who has done studies of this nature. It was decided that Susan will draft a letter and circulate it to members for comment.

The Depot Study: Addie Roberts the Chairperson of the Planning Commission told members that the report has not been received yet, they are not in a hurry, and it's not something to be rushed. Addie reminded members that this is a preliminary study just a start.

Subcommittee Reports

Open Space Committee: no report

Ridgeline Protection: no report

Archeological Resources Protection: Betsy Corrigan hopes to make progress during the winter.

Land Use Data Management/ training of Town Land Use staff: Kelly Boling will ask Dick Sears about

the projector and will see if George Blake is interested in training staff.

Greenway: Susan Payne did a press release for the "Points of Interest Trail Guide". Joe Gitterman asked about distributing the guides at other business establishments and perhaps the Mayflower. Susan will drop some guides off at the Mayflower and would love for someone to distribute to other businesses. Susan has the 55' flood high water plaque to be placed on the Washington Pharmacy. In closing Ms. Payne noted the Greenway work day on October 22nd.

Management and Monitoring of Town properties: Susan Payne reminded members of their monitoring reports which are due.

Scenic Road: Joe is discouraged in the low number of applications for Scenic Roads. Susan Payne will mention the application process and availability of the packets in the Land Use Office in her annual report. At the last Planning Commission meeting Wheaton Road was designated scenic. Dan Sherr has the State Scenic Road designation information.

Canoe Brook: no report

Cell Tower Update/Tanner Farm: Diane Dupuis stated that no application has come to Warren for the proposed cell tower on the Tanner farm property off of Rabbit Hill in Warren. Her concern with the cell towers location is distance from people and threat to endangered species. Joe Gitterman asked about removal of cell towers after their use is discontinued. Diane Dupuis answered that both Warren and Washington have regulations requiring cell tower removal. Members discussed camouflage of the cell towers; Diane noted that they are disguising cell towers as silos now.

Flora & Fauna: Betsy Corrigan would like to see an invasive plant working group, consolidate volunteers into one invasive working group. Betsy, Natalie Dyer and Charles LaMunier have been working together; Betsy would like to see the group working under the Conservation Commission. Betsy would like to use a general approach, do some out reach (literature/ brochure) which will require funding. Kelly Boling suggested information on both the town website and newsletter. Joe Gitterman questioned Betsy about using environmental friendly herbicides. Betsy concerns are with loosing native plants that might grow in the same area and would rather use volunteers and a learn as you go approach.

Water Resources: no report

Review of Natural Resource Inventory Report's recommendations to select projects for implementation: Members began discussing forest management, clear cutting and potential impact on water resources. A good winter project might be an informational / educational booklet perhaps entitled "Best Development Practices in Washington" which could be a follow up to the Land Use brochure. It could target forest issues, clearing to get a view without clear cutting. Joe Gitterman asked about opening up fields, which are good bird habitats, and locating an "old growth forests". From the audience Valerie Anderson stated that she observed "old growth forest" while trekking through the woods between South Street and Painter Ridge. Susan Payne asked members to look through the Natural Resource Inventory Report to pull together information.

Other Business

Susan Payne told members about two upcoming programs:

10/11 @ 6:30pm @ Gunn Library WEC is sponsoring a program on light pollution.

10/13 @11:00 am @ St. John's Church Garden Club sponsoring a program about the deer population.

Susan Payne is wrapping up the Annual Report for the Conservation Commission, if members have any thoughts they want to be included please email them to Susan.

Ms. Payne also distributed copies of CACIWC's The Habitat summer 2005 issue to members.

Meeting adjourned at 6:15pm.

Next scheduled meeting of the Washington Conservation Commission is November 2, 2005 at 5:00pm.

Submitted subject to approval,

Pamela L. Osborne, Secretary