

November 3, 2004

Present: Susan Payne, Chairperson, Kelly Boling, Elizabeth Corrigan, Joe Gitterman* arrived at 5:30pm
Alternates: Linda Frank, Dan Sherr

Chairperson, Susan Payne called the meeting to order at 5:00pm. Ms. Payne welcomed Dan Sherr as an Alternate to the Conservation Commission, Dan is taking over for Elaine Luckey who resigned his term expires on January 1, 2006.

Alternates seated were Linda Frank and Dan Sherr.

MOTION: Approval of the minutes from the October 6, 2004 meeting of the Washington Conservation Commission, Linda Frank made a motion to approve the minutes of the October 6th meeting with the following addition: on page (1) under Referrals from other Commissions, the second sentence should read Kelly Boling attended a portion of the Public Hearing and Kelly Boling seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Referrals from other Commission:

Status of Walker Brook development proposal: The New Milford public hearing was continued once again. The Town of Washington has submitted much documentation to New Milford voicing it's concerns with the proposal, at this point they have done all they can. Susan Payne did mention that there was a well written letter submitted to the newspaper from Tibbatts/Nichols residents on Walker Brook Road voicing there opposition to the proposal.

Holly Hill Farm, 87 Whittlesey Road: an extensive planting plan has been submitted to Inland/Wetlands for this Property, they have referred it to the Conservation Commission. Members received site visit reports and information from the landscape architect on this project. Betsy Corrigan needs to get clarification on setbacks from the river and is concerned with the plan to restore the area with native species. Betsy wants to be sure that they are native to this area. There was a question as to whether the lawn/grassy area goes down to the river now. Susan Payne believes the owners are well intentioned and are becoming educated. Betsy would also like to check for flat areas near the river for archeological sites. Ms. Payne feels that the Inland/Wetland Commission is on top of this application, but we should express our concerns to reinforce issues that have been brought up. Betsy will draft a letter to the Inland/Wetlands Commission and members will try to do a site visit by contacting the owners.

Halprin, 89 Lower Church Hill Road: Mike Ajello, Zoning Enforcement Officer alerted Susan Payne to an upcoming application for the above mentioned property. According to Mr. Ajello the property owners are going to blast away "Judson's Rock" which is located on this property. Betsy Corrigan will check to see if there is any historical significance to this site. Dan Sherr will also check with Bruce Reinhold at the Gunn Memorial Historical Museum for information. Joe Gitterman questioned the visual impact of the proposed house from Steep Rock and asked about doing a balloon test on the property. Susan Payne will contact the owner Bob Mathews to see if a site visit can be arranged.

Management and Monitoring of Town Properties:

Linda Frank reports that monitoring is just about all done.

Subcommittee reports:

Open Space Committee: Dan Sherr spoke about the Open Space Forum which was held on October

26th, everyone was very pleased with the turn out and the forum itself. Dan informed people that on Saturday October 30th there was an abbreviated forum covering all (4) forum topics plus a 5th item about tax implications at the Gunn Memorial Library. About 20 people attended. Joe Gitterman asked how members felt the Open Space Forum went compared to the Municipal. Dan felt that the Open Space Forum was done in a different style and had different content. There was discussion on the mil rate increase for funding of the Open Space Fund. Joe Gitterman is concerned about property owners being taxed out of town. Kelly Boling feels that the reality is that education will be top priority.

Canoe Brook: no report

School Connection: Linda Frank has sent Chip Miller at the Gunnery a packet of information on the town owned Wykeham Road property and followed up with a phone call, she has not had any feedback yet.

Cell Tower Update: no report - Susan Payne did say that you can see a road site going in at the Gooseboro location.

Land Use Data Management: Kelly Boling will be getting help to search through the last (5) years of Planning Commission minutes to get maps for George Blake to complete his mapping work.

Flora & Fauna: Betsy Corrigan disturbed a draft of "Invasive Plants of Washington". Betsy also shared some invasive species specimens with members.

Greenway: Susan Payne reports that work continues on the trail guide.

Road Discontinuation: Kelly Boling has been in contact with the First Selectman, Dick Sears.

Scenic Road: Joe Gitterman explained that New Milford designated (28) scenic roads at inception. At the rate Washington is designating Scenic Roads it will take 5-10 years to obtain their goal. It costs the applicant approximately \$285 for the application process. Joe is looking into the town mandating scenic roads, do we have the luxury of waiting for individuals to apply. Joe will contact the Connecticut Council of Municipalities to get more information. He will also speak with the Planning Commission and return to the Selectmen with information

Water Resources: no report

Other Business:

Susan Payne gave members the following statistics about Washington in 1950 the population was 2227 which averages to 11.1 acres per person. In 2000 the population increased to 3596 and averages went down to 6.9 acres per person. Dan Sherr added that between 1990 and 2000 the population grew less than 1% a year but the amount of space lived on has doubled, this information is convincing evidence of sprawl. What people are learning is that large acre zoning seriously contributes to sprawl, which is making them think more toward cluster housing development.

Dan Sherr who is involved with the Bantam River Watershed Association which includes the towns of Goshen, Litchfield, Morris and Washington spoke about working on a three year strategic plan of what they should be looking at and doing to protect the watershed resources. Currently the BRWA has the go ahead from Northeast Utilities to open up the falls and dam in Bantam. Ms. Payne stated that Washington hasn't done much with the Bantam River she will put it on the agenda for discussion at a future meeting.

Pam will email the proposed 2005 list of meeting dates to members to be voted on at the December

Conservation meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 7:00pm.

Next regular scheduled meeting of the Conservation Commission is December 1, 2004 at 5:00pm.

Submitted subject to approval,

Pamela L. Osborne