

November 7, 2007

Present: Susan Payne Chairperson, Linda Frank, Joe Gitterman, Phillip Markert

Alternates: Diane Dupuis

Guests: Paul Symanski, Chris Charles

Chairperson, Susan Payne called the meeting to order at 5:00pm.

Alternate members Diane Dupuis was seated

Motion: to accept the minutes of the October 3, 2007 meeting of the Washington Conservation Commission was made by Diane Dupuis seconded by Joe Gitterman, passed unanimously.

Referrals or new projects:

Abella, 44 Scofield Hill Road, 3 lot resubdivision: Members were mailed copies of the proposed Conservation Easement Language. Paul Symanski from Arthur Howland Surveyors was present to discuss the proposed language. Conservation members made recommendations for easement areas several months ago, Mr. Symanski had the map with final easement areas defined. He stated that the language was modeled after the Myfield easement; Joe Gitterman asked if he should reclude himself from the discussion. Members did not think that was necessary. Sara Taylor of Murtha Cullina had reviewed the language, she was concerned with section 3.4 and 3.5 under "Grantor's Reserved Rights" to perform lot line revision and to construct, install, use and maintain underground utility conduits. Members felt these sections were fine to leave as is. Under section 2.4 members added language to allow for use of herbicides to control/eradicate invasive species with the approval of the grantee. In section 3.7 add native conifers and in section 3.9 be specific with farm/open fencing no solid/stockade style fencing. Under section 4.5b delete "In no event may Grantee approve of the construction of any residences on the Protected Property" and increase the (60) days time frame to (90) days through out this section. Susan Payne gave Paul Symanski a hand written copy of the Conservation Commission's recommended changes to present to the Planning Commission.

Ms. Payne reminded members of the importance of reading through the easement language and went on to discuss the cover letter from the Planning Commission addressing their new policy that applicants obtain Conservation Commission approval for proposed language first and that emailed copies will not be accepted.

Canning Conservation Easement, Calhoun Street: Chris Charles was present to talk about proposed easement of a portion of the 7 acre parcel, a two acre piece of the field. Mr. Charles added that there might be additional deed restriction put on the property and went on to speak about potential easements in the area. His question to conservation members was if they would consider a small parcel like this two acre piece. Linda Frank felt it would be easy to monitor and Susan Payne felt it was critical to the Historic District. Chris Charles asked about reserving rights to build a barn on the conserved piece. Members felt that it was too small to reserve that right. Members went on to discuss the location of the two acre eased area; suggestions were made such as having the easement run along the roadside. Susan Payne noted that the viewscape in this area is critical and expressed her appreciation to the applicant. In closing Ms. Payne reminded Mr. Charles the area be clearly marked and mapped.

Larsen Farm, West Shore Road: This property is going before the Planning Commission to be divided in half between two sisters for no consideration so no set aside is required.

Walker Brook Road Subdivision, New Milford: There was a hearing held on Monday November 5th. Dick Sears submitted a letter on behalf of the Town of Washington and Susan read from an article in today's Voices.

Drought Management, Water Resources and Aquifer Protection: Susan Payne told members of Governor Rell's advisory and the creation of an Aquifer Protection Agency. Phil Markert stated that he had looked into this and the agency didn't apply to us, just the larger towns. Susan felt it was important to investigate protection of our water resources. Phil will look for the data/information he has collected.

Scenic Road Designation for Route 202: Discussion tabled till December when Kelly Boling is present.

Zoning Changes, accessory apartments: Susan Payne circulated a memo from Wayne Hileman of the Housing Commission expressing concern for the proposed changes to zoning regulations for detached and attached accessory apartments, to allow only one, when presently one of each (detached and attached) are allowed. Susan asked if the Conservation Commission should get involved in this discussion, there is a Public Hearing at the November 26th Zoning Commission meeting on the proposed changes. Chris Charles spoke about the proposed changes in the eyes of the Planning Commission. Joe Gitterman questioned the Conservation Commission's role with this issue; Susan Payne felt it was important for members to be aware.

Myfield, Mygatt Road: Chris Charles was present to ask about a proposed change to the conservation easement on this property. Joe Gitterman reclused himself from this conversation. Mr. Charles showed members a map with the existing easement areas and explained the proposed change. They would like to move building #1 northeast on the parcel which would encroach on the conservation easement area. This easement is held by the Town of Washington. They would also like to cluster three of the units together; this does not affect the easement area. Chris explained this would create three corridors. Mr. Charles went on to talk about planting in the field between the Myfield project and Quarry Ridge. Susan Payne commented on the need for diversity in the plantings and suggested checking with Betsy Corrigan. Conservation members had no problem with the proposed changes to the easement area; there remains the question about legally amending the conservation easement.

Subcommittee Reports

Cell Tower Update: The cell tower is going up on the Underwood property, 16 Mountain Road in New Preston. Diane Dupuis stated that a health study will be done.

Scenic Road: There are no new applications. Joe Gitterman once again offered assistance with the application process.

Open Space Committee: Meeting tomorrow at 4:00pm.

Greenway: Susan Payne was pleased to announce that Keith Templeton is the new chairman for Greenway.

Management and Monitoring of Town properties: Linda Frank will be photographing these properties when all the leaves have fallen.

Other Business: Phil Markert has compiled a traffic report, which shows that the State of Connecticut has no concerns with traffic in the Washington area. They have no plans to build new roadways. Members went on to discuss Route 202, designation of scenic roads and the issue of speeding.

Members had received information on:

Painter Ridge Improvement meeting on October 30th.

Getting Greener event by the Washington Garden Club held on November 7th.

Flood Plain Management Conference for Municipal Governments on December 13th.

Upper Housatonic Valley, National Heritage area Inc meeting on November 15th.

Adjourned at 6:30pm.

Submitted subject to approval,

Pamela L. Osborne, Secretary