

June 6, 2007

Present: Chairperson Susan Payne, Kelly Boling, Linda Frank, Joe Gitterman

Alternates: Elizabeth Corrigan, Diane Dupuis, Dan Sherr

Guests: David Thompson, First Selectman Dick Sears, Chris Charles

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

Alternate Dan Sherr was seated.

Motion: Linda Frank made a motion to accept the minutes from the May 2, 2007 meeting of the Washington Conservation Commission, with the addition: to page 1, under Referrals/Old Moore Property/Washington Partners LLC, 108 New Milford Trpk., add: *Kelly Boling informed commission members that he had done consulting work for the owners of this property.* Diane Dupuis seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Referrals or new projects

Susan Payne reported that the Planning Commission approved the Young Elliot's Farm LLC, 110 Calhoun Street, 2-lot subdivision application at their June 5th meeting.

David Thompson introduced himself to the Conservation Commission. Mr. Thompson stated that he was a member of the Inland Wetlands Commission but was not here as a representative of that commission. David began by saying that he wanted to be proactive in looking at a property on 50 Scofield Hill Road; this is a three acre parcel next to the Abella property, he felt that planting trees on this property would help with a water runoff problem in this area. He distributed an aerial photo of 50 Scofield Hill Road and the surrounding area, as well as information on America the Beautiful-A Tree Planting Program, America the Beautiful Foundation Sponsors and information on DEP Landowner Assistance and The Members Project. Mr. Thompson would like to find a way to talk to the owner about perhaps starting a park/planting trees on this property. Linda Frank agreed that there was a history of a water runoff problem in the area. First Selectman Sears noted that there is sheet runoff down to Mygatt Road. Joe Gitterman noted his success with planting hybrid poplars on his property. Susan Payne questioned the appropriateness of contacting the owner. Linda Frank suggested that the neighborhood work together to help with the problem. David Thompson asked if he pursues contact with the owner would the Conservation Commission offer a letter of encouragement. Dick Sears noted that educating the public about these problems would help; it's not just one property but a combination of properties.

Washington Partners LLC, 108 New Milford Trpk., (old Moore property): First Selectman Sears began discussion by stating that the Housing Trust was doing some due diligence on this property. From the audience Chris Charles stated that this was too fine a parcel to let pass by, it could be collaboration between the Housing Trust, Housing Commission, Board of Finance and Conservation Commission. This property is 30+ acres and is on the market for \$900,000.00. The consensus was that the parcel could be bought for less than the market price, with a combination of funding from the Open Space Fund, State Small Cities grant, Housing Trust and Housing Commission Fund. Kelly Boling stated that he has worked with the owners of the property on options; Kelly personally feels that this parcel is a strategic parcel that should be bought now, with planning in the future. Mr. Boling went on to say that this is an opportunity next to the village center. Susan Payne mentioned the Conservation Commission's Open Space Committee looking at the Route 202 corridor for preservation.

Betsy Corrigan arrived at 5:40pm.

Mr. Sears is looking for leadership from the Conservation Commission to develop a broad base of support for this parcel. Linda Frank felt that the other choice is someone will come in and develop the site for housing. Joe Gitterman suggested buying an option to hold the property, to allow for time to come up with a plan. Diane Dupuis asked about doing a study of the land. Betsy Corrigan noted that the parcel was in a lime belt and a vegetation survey would be helpful. Members agreed to do a site visit on Saturday June 9th at 9:00am. Kelly Boling will contact the owner about the site visit.

River Front Loop, 16 Titus Road: Dick Sears showed members a survey of the 4.72 acre parcel, explaining that it has taken four plus years to develop the new Town Garage site on Blackville Road. Mr. Sears went on to explain the short term plan to create a meadow and walking loop to the river. Dirk Sabin, landscape architect has done a plan for the area and a new committee has been formed. The proposed trail will be gravel base with stone dust and the meadow will be high grass. They hope to stabilize the banks and artificial berm that already exists. There will be a site walk on Saturday June 9th at 10:00am with the Planning Commission. No vehicle traffic will be allowed, only access for emergency vehicles. There is a public hearing set for the Inland Wetlands Commission for Wednesday June 6th at 6:00pm. Betsy Corrigan added that this would be a good area for migratory bird stop over and asked about removal of invasives. Mr. Sears stated that removal of invasives was part of Mr. Sabin's plan. Mr. Sears stated that he would appreciate support at the Wetlands hearing.

Cell Tower Update: Diane Dupuis stated that a survey had been mailed out to Postal Patrons and 187+ surveys have come back. The consensus is that nobody wants the mono-tree. Ms. Dupuis noted that a new application is coming in for the Northville area.

Abella, 44 Scofield Hill Road, 3-lot subdivision: Members refreshed themselves with the map and access across major waterways. Susan Payne read a letter she received from Inland Wetlands Chairman Mark Picton who was looking for extra protection for the wetlands areas. Members stood by their letter of April 26, 2007. They went on to discuss water runoff and whether our regulations were doing what we want for our town. Joe Gitterman suggested more frequent meetings of the commission chairs to coordinate.

Village District Overlay Zone: Members discussed submitting a letter to the Zoning Commission stating support of a Village District Overlay Zone in Marbledale. Dan Sherr feels that there was good support in Marbledale for getting started with a Village District which might include: a Historical District, tree planting, parallel street parking, monument installation etc. Kelly Boling suggested getting neighbors in the Marbledale area involved, perhaps a joint meeting with the Planning Commission. Dan Sherr explained that the Open Space Committee had met in Marbledale with representation from the Historical District and Board of Selectman.

Cultural/Archaeological Resource Regulation:

All members received copies of: Digging In News from the Office of State Archaeology & the Ct Historical Commission, Protecting Archaeological Sites on Private Land by Susan L. Henry and two Local Preservation documents.

Other Business

The Conservation Commission received an email from Joe Mustich regarding hours at the town beach. Members had brief discussion about the email to decide whether it was within the purview of the Conservation Commission to address the town beach hours.

Meeting adjourned at 7:05pm.

Next scheduled meeting of the Conservation Commission is July 11, 2007 at 5:00pm.

Submitted subject to approval,

Pamela L. Osborne, Secretary