

July 7, 2010

5:00 p.m. Land Use Mtg. Room

Members Present: Susan Payne, Linda Frank, Phil Markert, Kelly Boling, Diane Dupuis, Phil Dutton, Alt.

Absent: Betsy Corrigan, Alt., Dirk Sabin, Advisor

Staff Present: Shelley White

Others: Rocky Tomlinson

Chairman Susan Payne called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.

Seated: Susan Payne, Linda Frank, Phil Markert, Diane Dupuis, Kelly Boling

Ms. Payne announced that Mr. Ric Sonder has resigned from the Conservation Commission.

Consideration of the Minutes

The Minutes of the June 2, 2010 Conservation Commission Meeting were considered.

Corrections:

Page 1: under Laus/22 Nichols Hill Road/2 Lot Resubdivision: 4th line should read: ...Association and suggested a fee be given in lieu of the open space set aside.

Motion:

to accept the June 2, 2010 Regular Meeting Minutes of the Conservation Commission as amended, by Mr. Boling, seconded by Ms. Frank, passed by 5-0 vote.

Referrals / New Projects

There were no referrals or new projects to discuss.

Route 202 Scenic Road Designation

Ms. Payne stated that the Town Website has posted a reprint of the editorial from the Litchfield County Times regarding the Scenic Road Designation. The Commission thanked Mr. Boling for his hard work on this application.

Cell Tower Update

Mr. Markert stated that the subcommittee met this morning and they are waiting for Walter Cooper to come back to them with some numbers that calculate the maximum effects of the tower on the surrounding area. He stated our regulations have a 750 foot setback and there are several houses within that setback. Mr. Markert stated that the Board of Finance approved a \$10,000 allocation to hire a consultant to assist the Town when a lease is presented. Ms. Payne stated that there is not an application yet but a balloon test will be required with an application. Mr. Markert stated that the cell tower would most likely be 40 feet above the tree canopy. The Commission discussed what could be done with the lease so that it would favor the Town a little more.

108 New Milford Turnpike

Ms. Payne stated that a Special Meeting on Tuesday, June 8, 2010 at the New Preston Congregational Church was successful. Sean Hayden from the Northwest Conservation District was present with maps of the property. She read a list of volunteers for the newly formed New Preston Open Space Committee and stated that she is in the process of arranging a meeting for this group. Minutes of this Special Meeting were circulated in June to the Conservation Commission.

Decommission Extraneous Town Street Lights

The Commission discussed the list of streetlights for possible decommissioning that Mr. Boling presented. The Commissioners agreed that it would help if the lights were located on a map for reference. The Commission proceeded to assign streets to each member to record the streetlight locations. Mr. Tomlinson, Emergency Management Coordinator, stated that a survey has been done in the past and that he believes the ones that are left were chosen for safety reasons. It was the consensus of the Commission that Mr. Boling will talk to the Board of Selectman about the list. There was a brief discussion regarding how much it costs to operate the lights.

Town Plan of Conservation and Development

Ms. Payne recommended that the Conservation Commission review the POCD and come back to the next meeting ready to discuss what the Commission should focus on. The Commissioners should bring both the POCD and Natural Resources Inventory Report to the September 1, 2010 meeting.

Recommendations to Zoning Commission re: Best Development Practices

Clear Cutting and Ridgeline Protection:

The Commission discussed how they should present proposed Clear Cutting and Ridgeline regulations to the Zoning Commission.

Other Business:

Best Development Practices

There was a brief discussion regarding stone walls.

Town Beach

Ms. Dupuis stated that there is a hotdog cart in the Town Beach parking lot that is taking two spaces and is parked in the direct sight line to the lake. The Commission agreed that it is great to have food available to the residents at the beach but it should probably be moved further down the parking area. The Commission agreed that Ms. Payne would send an email to the Selectmen expressing the Commission's concern for the traffic coming off the State Road and into the parking area that is not associated with use of the Town Beach, use of 2 parking spaces and obstruction of view scape.

Discussion of Planning Commissions response to Revision of Zoning Regulations re: Inns

Ms. Payne asked the Conservation Commission if they would like to take a position as to whether or not they support the Planning Commission's response to the proposed revisions. Mr. Boling stated that he thinks the proposed regulations were not drafted properly and they have potential to threaten the Town's rural character. Mr. Dutton explained that he was in support of the proposed revisions to the Zoning Regulations re: inns. He talked about the economic effects, discrimination of people on State Roads vs. Town Roads, and the next generation that will inherit large properties. Mr. Boling stated that he does not have a problem allowing inns on Town roads but the proposed regulations lack clarity and parameters.

Motion:

to send a letter of support to the Planning Commissions finding that the proposed new regulations concerning 'inns' is not consistent to the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development or recommendation of the Natural Resources Inventory
by Mr. Boling, seconded by Ms. Dupuis, passed by 4-1 vote.
Mr. Markert voted against because he thought the response of the CC was limited.

Mr. Markert stated that he feels the Zoning Commission is limited by statutory requirements and that all commissions should base regulation changes on what the Town wants and use the statutory requirements to execute the changes.

Doug Tallamy @ Town Hall

Ms. Payne stated the Washington Garden Club is proposing to have Douglas Tallamy come in Thursday, October 14, 2011 at 5pm to do a program on native plants. She stated WEC and Steep Rock have offered to sponsor the program and asked if the Conservation Commission would agree to sponsor as well. It was the consensus of the Commission that they would allocate money from the budget to help sponsor this program.

The Conservation agreed that they would not be conducting a meeting in August. The next Regular Meeting of the Washington Conservation Commission will meet on September 1, 2010, in the Land Use Meeting Room at Bryan Memorial Town Hall.

Motion: to adjourn by Ms. Payne.

Ms. Payne adjourned the meeting at 6:25 pm

Submitted subject to approval,
Shelley White, Land Use Clerk