

September 3, 2008

Members Present: Susan Payne, Joe Gitterman, Phil Markert, Linda Frank, Kelly Boling

Alternate Present: Ric Sonder

Guest(s) Present: Randy Bernard

Staff Present: Shelley White

Susan Payne called the meeting to order at 5:02 p.m. and seated members Phil Markert, Linda Frank, Kelly Boling, Joe Gitterman and herself.

Ms. Payne announced that the application for Scenic Road Designation has been received by the State of Connecticut.

Ms. Payne introduced Mr. Randy Bernard a Lab Director at Hydro Technology Lab.

Consideration of the Minutes:

The August 6, 2008 Regular Meeting Minutes were accepted.

Motion: to accept the August 6, 2008 Regular Meeting Minutes of the Conservation Commission, by Linda Frank, seconded by Phil Markert, passed 5-0.

Guest Speaker:

Ms. Payne invited Mr. Bernard to come and speak to the Conservation Commission regarding the water resources of the Town of Washington. She requested that Mr. Bernard help point out resources, and explain their importance, from viewing the maps (Litchfield Hills, CT Greenprint Drinking Water Resources & T.O.W. Resource Map Series Water Resources, December 1999). She stated that this could be helpful in finding a parcel of land to purchase with the Open Space Fund for preservation.

Mr. Bernard stated that there is an abundance of water resources in the Town. He believes it would be beneficial to preserve the quality of the Town's water resources. He categorized water resources as three types, "surface, ground and discharge."

Ms. Frank stated that if the property owner owns the water on that property.

Mr. Bernard pointed out that the State owns the surface water but the property owner owns the ground water. The Commission and Mr. Bernard discussed the ownership and rights of property owners regarding water resources within the parcel.

Mr. Boling suggested that the Commission may want to consider whether or not they should be actively trying to identify properties that are important to preserving the quality of water and possibly advocating for some way for private property owners to protect their natural resources.

Mr. Bernard stated that there is an obvious difference between public and residential water supplies.

Ms. Frank and Ms. Payne asked if the water companies have a responsibility to make sure water does not become contaminated.

Mr. Bernard said that the water company should be doing source water assessments. He said that the 1-2 dozen public drinking water supplies are regulated and that all water companies are required to print out an Annual Consumer Confidence Report.

5:30 pm. Mr. Markert exits.

Mr. Bernard displayed a diagram that explained the 'Zone of Influence.' He explained the factors that affect the dimensions of the area of influence. Mr. Bernard said that if the Commission's goal is to preserve and protect water resources, he would recommend the Commission to look at land that has stratified drift aquifers and land that has water resources that feed these aquifers.

5:50 pm. Mr. Bernard exits, Ms. Payne seats Ric Sonder.

Referrals or New Projects:

Ms. Payne presented the a site development plan prepared for Dale and Lani Guerts, by Arthur H. Howland, dated June 18, 2008 for their property on June Road. After reviewing the site plans, Mr. Boling suggested a site visit would be necessary. Ms. Payne said that she would request a site visit.

Conservation Easement Model:

Mr. Boling stated that he received comments and revisions from Paul Frank of the Planning Commission. Mr. Boling will revise and distribute to the Conservation Commissioners for any other comments. Mr. Boling stated that he will then send it to David Miles (Washington Town Counsel).

Open Space:

Mr. Sonder stated that he has recovered most of the work done previously and has started working on finalizing the database for developing a matrix to evaluate parcels of land for possible purchase with Open Space Funds. He said there are four types:

1. Property that has been evaluated,
2. Property that has not been evaluated,
3. Property that is on the market,
4. Property that is not on the market.

Mr. Sonder stated that the desirability of a parcel will be numeric.

Ms. Payne said that they will apply the criteria for parcel evaluation to the matrix.

The Commission questioned the importance of aesthetics and the visibility to the public. The consensus was that public visibility is priority for land being preserved with town funds.

Mr. Gitterman presented an article titled "New Milford Makes a Statement: Farming is Staying," by Joseph Berger. Mr. Gitterman stated that rural character is important to preserve. He stated that he believes that the C.C. should concentrate on preserving farms for farming and visibility to the public is important.

Other Business:

Ms. Payne stated that the acceptance process for easements had been drafted last year. The next step would be to bring this draft to the Planning Commission to get adopted. Ms. Payne informed the Commission that there is an application for a new cell tower on Rabbit Hill.

Ms. Diane Dupuis of the Conservation Commission will be meeting with the First Selectman on September 11th to discuss the application.

Motion: to adjourn the meeting by Joe Gitterman, seconded by Susan Payne, passed 4-0.

Susan Payne adjourned the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

FILED SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

Respectfully submitted,
Shelley White
Land Use Clerk