

WASHINGTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

MINUTES

October 2, 2019

5:15 P.M.

Bryan Memorial Town Hall

MEMBERS PRESENT: Ms. Payne, Mr. O'Hazo, Ms. Branson

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ms. Frank, Ms. Dupuis

ALTERNATES PRESENT: Mr. Sabin, Ms. Rawson, Mr. Conroy

RESIDENTS PRESENT: Mr. Lloyd, Ms. Gorra, Ms. Turoczi

CLERK: Ms. Buell

With a Quorum present, Ms. Payne called the meeting to order at 5:17 p.m. and seated Mr. Conroy for Ms. Frank and seated Mr. Sabin for Ms. Dupuis.

Open Space Fund: 3:17

Ms. Payne advised the commission about the Open Space Fund and the available funds that are in the account.

Mr. Lloyd, who's representing Steep Rock, addressed the commission about the Hillside Farm on Nettleton Hollow Rd. that Steep Rock would like to purchase. He showed the commission maps of land that Steep Rock currently owns including the acreage and showed this particular parcel which is 86 acres, 76 acres are in Washington and 10 acres are in Woodbury. He spoke about the Land Acquisition Fund and the various fundraising efforts they are making within the community. He explained what he thinks the total acquisition will cost and told the commission about land conservation grants that they have applied for. He explained that they would like to make trails on the property and lease part the land to a farmer. Mr. Lloyd stated that the infrastructure on the property needs improvements. He spoke about the water courses, and habitats that are on the property. Mr. Sabin spoke about the good views, open lands, wet meadows flood plains uninterrupted forest and the unique geology and glacial deposits that are on the property.

Ms. Payne would like the commission to consider a fifty thousand dollars grant out of the Open Space Fund to help fund the purchase of the property. This will require a town vote. The commission is supporting Steep Rocks efforts to preserve this parcel of land.

Motion: To have the commission vote to donate fifty thousand dollars out of the Open Space Fund towards the Hillside Farm Open Space acquisition with final confirmation of funds pending receipt of additional information of the overall fundraising program. The said funds are strictly for land acquisition purposes, stewardship and trails, not to be involved for infrastructure of building improvements and things like that. By Mr. O'Hazo amended by Mr. Sabin seconded by Ms. Branson Passed 5-0 vote

New Preston Falls Project: 39:55

Mr. Sabin received a bid, which was approved by the Town of Washington for removing the existing bridge and steel beams and the work has been completed. Mr. Sabin received the documents from the prefab company so he can submit to wetland to obtain a permit.

Mr. Sabin left the meeting and Ms. Payne seated Ms. Rawson for Ms. Dupuis at 5:56 p.m.

Ms. Payne informed the commission that inland/wetlands made the discussion on September 25, 2019 to approve a permit to remove the trash and log debris from the New Preston Falls this was requested by Albritten.

Tree Cutting Regulations: 42:14

Ms. Branson revised the Tree Cutting Regulations Draft down to one page, which was requested during the September meeting, and emailed a copy to the commission members. She explained the process within the Town of Washington to have changes made to the Zoning Regulations. She spoke about some of the regulations that already exist within the Land Use Department. The commission talked about some of the wording in the draft that they would like changed before the draft is to be presented to the Zoning Board and they would like Mr. Sabin's input regarding how tree canopy help the ground to absorb rain water, which was requested during last month's meeting. Ms. Branson will make the suggested revisions and Mr. Sabin will email Ms. Branson his recommendations.

Ms. Branson made a few comments about The Connecticut Notable Trees Project, which is a completely volunteers effort, and explained the formula that they use, which includes diameter, height and size of canopy, ect., to have a tree be listed as notable in the State. She would like to verify if the trees that are listed as notable in Washington still exist.

Cricket Valley Power Plant/ Air Quality Monitoring Update: 1:03:02

Ms. Payne gave a quick update because Ms. Frank was unable to attend the meeting, the monitor is currently on School Street and will be moved to Shepaug Valley School once the dust settles from the construction of the Ag-stem School.

Solar Panel Regulations: 1:03.50

Mr. O'Hazo and Mr. Conroy researched how other neighboring towns regulate solar panels. He said that the Town of Washington considers the ground mounted panels to be a structure. Mr. O'Hazo wants the commission to review that packet that he emailed and discuss his findings at next month's meeting.

Cell Tower/Choice of site in Warren: 1:08:56

There are no new updates

Vernal Pools: 1:09:01

Ms. Payne spoke to Ms. Corrigan and she was able to find the older vernal pools map and will be updating it, she will advise the commission when the map is updated.

New Business: 1:09:34

Ms. Branson asked the commission about Blight regulations. They spoke about some of the properties in town that are in disrepair and if there's any way to have the home owners clean up the properties. They had a brief discussion about some of the neighboring towns that have Blight regulations.

Consideration of Minutes: 1:14:43

Ms. Payne asked for the following corrections to the September 4, 2019 minutes, under Tree Cutting regulations, Paragraph 1 Ms. Branson called Attorney Linda Francois and she suggested Ms. Branson speak to Attorney Keith Ainsworth., and Paragraph 2, The Audubon Society says many birds thrive on this type of environment.

Ms. Branson would like the minutes to be formatted differently so the minutes fit on three pages.

Motion: To approve the minutes of the September 4, 2019 meeting with the following corrections; Ms. Branson called Attorney Linda Francois and she suggested Ms. Branson speak to Attorney Keith Ainsworth, and The Audubon Society says many birds thrive on this type of environment. By Ms. Payne seconded by Ms. Rawson Passed 5-0 vote

Ms. Payne thanked the commission for a very productive meeting.

Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 6:35p.m. By Ms. Payne seconded by Ms. Branson, Passed 5-0 vote

Respectfully Submitted,



Karen Buell
Conservation Commission Clerk
October 4, 2019