

WASHINGTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

MINUTES

January 8, 2020

5:15 P.M.

Bryan Memorial Town Hall

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: Ms. Dupuis

ALTERNATES PRESENT: Mr. Conroy

Alternates Absent: Ms. Rawson

CLERK: Ms. Gallagher

With a quorum present, Ms. Payne called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m. and seated Ms. Payne, Ms. Frank, Ms. Branson, Mr. O'Hazo and Mr. Conroy (for Ms. Dupuis).

Ms. Payne verified that the members that were reappointed were sworn in by the Town Clerk.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES: 3:08

The Commission members reviewed the minutes. There was one correction on page 4, Ms. Dupuis is concerned about the aquifer.

Motion to approve the December 4, 2019 minutes with the following correction on page 4, Ms. Dupuis is concerned about the aquifer, By Ms. Frank seconded by Mr. O'Hazo, passed 5-0.

Election Of Officers: 4:52

A motion was made by Ms. Frank to appoint Ms. Payne as Chair to the Conservation Commission, Seconded by Ms. Branson and approved 5-0

A motion was made by Ms. Payne to appoint Ms. Frank as Vice Chair to the Conservation Commission. Seconded by Ms. Branson passed 5-0.

Alternate Vacancy: 6:30

The Commission members had a brief discussion regarding the Alternate Commission vacancy position on the board since Mr. Sabin resigned. The commission talked about a couple people that have reached out to them expressing interest in joining the commission as an alternate. The Town Clerk is researching if a business owner in Washington can fill a board and reside in another town. The Commission will review this at next month's meeting.

New Preston Falls: 9:58

Ms. Payne has spoken to the First Selectman regarding the work that needs to get done to the bridge. Ms. Payne reviewed a report done by Mr. Neff in May of 2017. The Commission discussed Mr. Bedini's recommendations to the commission that were presented in January of 2019. The Commission would like the State DOT to evaluate the bridge and have their recommendation on how to proceed with the bridge, the bridge is on state owned property. . The Commission would rather repair the bridge rather than replace the bridge if possible. In October of 2017 a permit was issued to repair the bridge, the permit doesn't expire until five years after the issue date.

The Commission discussed the tree work that needs to get done at The New Preston Falls site. There are six trees that need to be removed these trees need to be tagged before the tree removal is completed. Ms. Payne will have a meeting with Mr. Osborne, Mr. Tsacoyannis and Mr. Pollock later this month to discuss the tree work. Ms. Payne would like all the departments involved to review the plans for the site before the work begins.

Ms. Payne showed a map that was done in 2007 that shows the site and the work that was proposed to be done in 2007, including planting plan.

Ms. Branson would like to get a group together to clear out some of the undergrowth around the falls. She would like to see what usable land they might have for a walking trail. - 46:53

Tree Cutting Regulations: 28:21

Ms. Payne sent the proposed Tree Cutting regulations to the head of the Zoning Commission, Mr. Solley, and to the Board of Selectmen on 12-12-2019 along with the solar recommendations. The Commission would like all of the Zoning Commission members to review the proposed Tree Cutting Regulations. Ms. Branson said a letter could be sent to the Zoning Commission to have the Tree Cutting Regulations put on the agenda. They discussed the possible steps that they might need to take including a possible petition to have a special permit to amend the Zoning Regulations. Ms. Payne reviewed an email from Ms. White, Land Use Administrator, detailing the steps that are need to amend the Zoning Regulations. The Commission is hoping that this item will be on the next Zoning agenda.

Cricket Valley Power Plant: 38:05

The Western CT Clean Air Action Group meets on the 13th of January in Kent. WE will be meeting with Dr. Kristin Wagstrom, via Facetime, Dr. Wagstrom leads the Computational Atmospheric Chemistry and exposure laboratory at Uconn. She is Assistant Professor for environmental engineering education at Uconn. She will be working with WCCAA to analyze the data collected on all eight monitoring stations. The Cricket Valley Power Plant in Dover Plains is not fully operational yet, so at present, we are collecting baseline data.

Solar Panel: 51:14

Ms. Payne invited Mr. Furse to attend this month's meeting, he was unable to attend. Mr. Furse advised the commission about Solar Panels a few months ago. Ms. Payne spoke to Ms. Hill, Zoning Commission,

about having solar panel regulations added to the Zoning regulations. The ground mounted solar panel arrays are considered to be a structure through the current Zoning regulations. The Commission would prefer the town to have separate solar panel regulations to regulate the size and disposal of solar panels.

Historic District Commission Delay of Demolition: 56:00

Ms. Payne gave a recommendation to the Historic District to reduce the age of the dwelling to 50 years instead of 75 years. The Historic District decided to keep the age of the dwelling at 75 years, as written in the proposed Delay of Demolition Ordinance.

Rabbit Hill Bridge: 56:55

Ms. Payne went to see the Rabbit Hill Bridge site. Ms. Payne believes that this project is being done for public safety, they do have guard rails up which look very nice. Ms. Payne said the project is on the Board of Selectmen agenda for tomorrow night.

Cell Tower: 58:39

Kent is still considering where to have a cell tower, Richards Rd and Bald Hill Rd are being considered. There is an article in the Spectrum on Friday.

Other Business:

Hillside Farm: 59:12

Mr. Lloyd spoke to the Commission about the Hillside Farm on October 2, 2019. The bond with the state was approved for \$350,000. The Commission approved a \$50,000 grant out of the open space fund to help facilitate the project. Ms. Payne emailed Mr. Lloyd when she was notified of the approval of the state bond, Mr. Lloyd will keep the Commission informed of the exact amount that is received by the state bond and when the purchase of the property is expected to happen.

Budget: 1:03:23

Ms. Payne reviewed the budget with the commission for the year 2020. The budget looks good and she will review with the First Selectman later in the month.

New Preston Open Space Fund:

Mr. Conroy asked about the inventory of plants (vernal pool map), Ms. Payne spoke to Ms. Corrigan she has located the updated maps and will get a copy to the Commission.

Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 6:17 was made by Ms. Payne seconded by Ms. Frank passed 5-0

Respectfully Submitted,



Karen Gallagher
Conservation Commission Clerk
01-10-2020