

WASHINGTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

MINUTES

December 4, 2019

5:15 P.M.

Bryan Memorial Town Hall

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

ALTERNATES PRESENT: Ms. Rawson, Mr. Conroy

RESIDENTS PRESENT: First Selectman Mr. Brinton, Ms. Turoczl

CLERK: Ms. Gallagher

With a Quorum present, Ms. Payne called the meeting to order at 5:16 p.m. and seated the regular board members. Ms. Rawson arrived a few minutes after the meeting started.

Consideration of Minutes:

Ms. Payne asked for the following correction to the November 6, 2019 minutes page one present: Ms. Rea and the application by Albritton, page two under West Church Hill Road scenic: Ms. Rea.

Motion: To Approve the November 6, 2019 minutes with the corrections page one The application by Albritton, and page one, Ms. Rea, page two Ms. Rea addressed the commission. By Susan Branson seconded by Ms. Frank passed 5-0.

2020 Meeting Schedule:

The commission members received and reviewed the 2020 calendar for the Conservation Commission meetings. Ms. Payne approved the schedule and signed the new calendar to be posted.

Alternate Vacancy:

Ms. Payne asked the commission to think of possible candidates to fill the recent vacancy on the commission.

Spring Hill Farms application to build barn:

Ms. Payne reviewed the site plan submitted by Spring Hill Farms with the commission for the barn, kitchen and bath facility. The additions do not impact the conservation easement areas.

Motion: To acknowledge that the proposed Spring Hill Farms building additions do not impact the conservation easements. By Ms. Frank seconded by Mr. O'Hazo passed 5-0.

New Preston Falls Project: 3:50

Ms. Payne gave the commission a review of the tree work that needs to be done at New Preston Falls. Mr. Pollock will be doing the tree removal after the trees are tagged and then the Zoning Enforcement Officer needs to see the trees that are tagged before the work begins.

Ms. Payne read what the current permit states, which is for a repair of the bridge. The commission would like to see mowing done in the area, they would like to see if a possible trail or boardwalk could possibly be added to the site. Ms. Payne handed out and read the State DOT Beautification permit that was issued in 2017. The Commission reviewed the site plan that Mr. Sabin had designed.

Tree Regulations: 14:05

Ms. Branson made revisions to the proposed Tree Regulations that were suggested at last month's meeting. She added definitions of the keywords to the preamble to clarify the proposed changes to the Zoning Regulations. The Tree Regulations will only apply to the site plans for new construction homes. The Commission feels as though the Tree Regulations as written are easy for property owners to understand. The commission spoke to Land Use and they would like to write a letter expressing the Conservation Commissions intentions to have the Zoning Regulations amended to include the Tree Regulations. The Commission thanked Ms. Branson for all her work preparing the document.

Motion: To recommend the Conservation Commission proposes Tree Regulations be added to the current Zoning Regulations. By Ms. Payne seconded by Ms. Dupuis Passed 5-0.

Delay Of Demolition: 32:00

The Commission read the proposed Delay of Demolition Ordinance that the Historic District Commission drafted. They suggested one change to the document they would like to see a change to section 3, the age of the home they would like to see lowered to 50 years rather than 75 years. The Commission feels as though 180 day wait time is appropriate.

Motion: To move that a change to section 3 of the delay of Demolition be changed to 50 years instead of 75 years. By Ms. Payne seconded by Mr. O'Hazo passed 5-0

Cricket Valley Power Plant: 36:15

Ms. Frank showed the Commission the Aeroqual Web site where the readings from Washington's AQY1 monitor are displayed. Readings for ozone, nitrogen dioxide, particulate matter, temperature, relative humidity and dew point are reflected in the charts measuring the air at our School Street location. When the high school is dust free we will move the monitor to that higher location.

The Western CT Clean Air Action group also has monitors in Sharon, Cornwall, Warren, Kent, New Milford, and Sherman. The Cricket Valley Power Plant in Dover Plains, NY should be on line in January. We will report each month on our findings.

Solar Panel Regulations: 41:58

Ms. Branson recused herself from this agenda item.

The Town of Washington Land Use Department received an application for a large Solar Array to be installed at a private residence. A site visit was set up and Mr. O'Hazo attended. Mr. O'Hazo made a couple observations that he shared with the Commission. He had a conversation with the Solar Installer, the Solar Installer said that the array will be used for residential use and there are no plans at this time to create a buffer of shrubs or trees to block the view of the array. He explained where the array will be placed on the property.

The Commission would like to have Solar Regulations for the Town of Washington. The Commission reviewed the Northwest Hills Council of Governments, Solar Energy Systems Regulation Checklist handout. They would like to work with Zoning to create Solar Regulations.

Hillside Farm: 54:40

Ms. Payne spoke to Mr. Lloyd who addressed the Commission about Steep Rock's intentions to purchase the property on Nettleton Hollow Rd. The Commission would like to contribute funds out of the Open Space Fund to help preserve the land. Ms. Payne questioned if the Open Space Fund was approved with the State. Ms. Rawson spoke about the Bond Commission with the State of Connecticut, the last two meetings were canceled and the next meeting will be on December 13, 2019. The current bond funding is extremely important to have to ensure adequate funding for the current applications for land preservation. It's also very important to show Governor Lamont that we want to protect and fund conservation.

Other Business:

Rabbit Hill Road Bridge: 1:00:15

Ms. Branson recused herself from this agenda item.

Ms. Dupuis attended an Inland/Wetland meeting and learned about an application to replace a bridge on Rabbit Hill Road. The bridge is currently a one lane bridge, the new site plans will accommodate two lanes of traffic. Ms. Dupuis said the current bridge is 14' wide. Ms. Dupuis is concerned about the aquifer, and the habitat that will be impacted by the larger bridge design. There is also unsightly orange markers that are of concern due to the fact that this is a scenic road, she would prefer to see yellow markers. Ms. Frank voiced her concern about public safety. Ms. Dupuis stated that because Rabbit Hill Road is a scenic road, the Conservation Commission should be informed about any proposed changes. She spoke to the State DEEP department and there are state listed species in the area and one third of an acre of wetlands will be disturbed by this project.

Ms. Payne will request to be notified from the Board of Selectmen regarding the alterations to correct potential hazards to safety, on Rabbit Hill Road.

Ms. Dupuis would like the commission members to drive by the site and also look at the one lane bridge on Couch Road that was replaced when Mr. Chapin was in office.

Motion: To adjourn the Meeting at 6:30 p.m. By Ms. Payne seconded by Ms. Frank Passed 5-0

Respectfully Submitted,



Karen Gallagher
Conservation Commission Clerk
December 09, 2019