

**INLAND WETLANDS COMMISSION  
TOLLAND, CONNECTICUT**

**REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF  
March 18, 2010**

**Members Present:** Lee Lafountain, Chairman  
Archie Tanner, Vice Chairman  
Stan Tetrault, Secretary  
Joe Bushey, Regular  
Beth Banning, Regular  
Patti Hollay, Alternate

**Absent Members:** None

**Others Present:** Steve Lowrey, Wetlands Agent  
John Ianni, Highland Soils  
Jim Gorman, Creative Exteriors  
Anne Letendre, Friends of Hockanum River Linear Park, Inc  
Jane Seymour, CT DEP Bureau of Natural Resources Inland Fisheries Division  
Mark Sousa, Action Water Gardens  
Linda Farmer, Director, Planning & Community Development

**REGULAR MEETING**

1. Call to Order at 7:42pm.

2. Approval of the Meeting Minutes

Acceptance of the March 4, 2010 meeting

Banning/Bushey: motion to accept the minutes of March 4, 2010 as presented.

Seat Hollay for Tanner. Unanimously approved. Tanner and Lafountain abstained.

3. Public Comment: none

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Meeting with Landowners along tributaries of the Tankerhoosen River and other interested in the Tankerhoosen River Watershed Management Plan**

Lafountain introduced himself, the Commissioners and the agenda. LaFountain explained that the headwater of the Tankerhoosen River is in Tolland. Lafountain located the watershed on a map and described the different areas of the watershed. Lafountain said the water quality of Gages Brook is very good but any destruction here would affect the entire watershed. LaFountain explained the scope of the Watershed Study and Plan. Lafountain reviewed the goals of the plan including preserving and improving the headwaters of the Tankerhoosen.

Letendre reviewed the watershed details including the area encompasses 12.9 sq miles in 4 towns including Manchester, Tolland, Vernon and Bolton. Letendre said the area serves one of two Class 1 wild trout streams east of the CT River. Letendre said the Nature Conservancy contacted her organization as one of the clean watersheds that has a positive impact on Long Island Sound. Letendre said the study was funded by grants from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and Long Island Futures Fund and encompasses baseline water quality tests, field inventories and the recommendation management plan. Letendre said this plan is only one of nine approved by the DEP which allows the project to be eligible for additional grant funding. Letendre described the watershed including land use and impervious coverage. Letendre said Tolland's impervious coverage in the watershed is approximately 10-15%, which means that future development needs to mitigate impervious coverage. Lafountain explained that once land gets over 15% the water quality becomes impaired and at high risk for degradation of water quality. Letendre reviewed the global and site specific recommendations of the plan including stormwater retrofits, riparian buffer restorations, stream bank restoration, dam evaluation, aquatic invasive species and priority stream cleanups.

Seymour presented information on the Belding Wildlife Management Area (282 acres) along the Tankerhoosen River in Vernon. Seymour said the stream has a self sustaining brook trout population. For that population the river needs to be not only clean but also cold for the fish to survive. She said there are also a species fresh water mussel that requires clean waters and the trout for their survival; the mussel larva spend part of their life cycle attached to the gills of Brook Trout. Seymour also said the area has several types of wildlife species in the Management Area including deer and turkeys which adapt well to environmental changes and others that are less adaptable including wood chucks, birds and turtles. Seymour explained that lawns are not “grasslands” and described the habitats that different species prefer. Seymour explained the process of succession. Seymour said that wild fires were frequent occurrences in CT in the past but now these fires are fought and minimized affecting the sustainability of fire-adapted ecosystems. Seymour described the different habitats of the Belding Area, including the large area of Conifers and the uncommon birds that live there. Seymour described the projects that are ongoing including expanding the grasslands and fields as well as butterfly gardens. Seymour said an ongoing project is removal of invasive shrubs. Another project is an attempt to bring back American Chestnut and Pitch Pine.

Ianni introduced himself and his credentials. Ianni reviewed the functions and values of wetlands including groundwater recharge and discharge, flood flow alterations and storage, fish and shell fish habitats, sediment and nutrient retention and redistribution, water quality enhancement, creation of food sources for people and wildlife, wildlife habitat, sediment and shoreline protection and stabilizations. Ianni said he has noticed a significant difference (improvement) in Connecticut’s wetlands since the state and many towns have decreased the amount of road sand that has been used during the winter season.

Ianni said there are differences in quality of wetlands. Ianni said the buffer areas around the wetlands are also important to preservation. Ianni explained there are different wetlands values including recreation, esthetics/visual appeal, heritage and protect endangered species since Connecticut is at the northern edge of southern species and the southern edge of northern species, educational and scientific value. Ianni reviewed how wetlands are valued and how impacts are judged.

Gorman introduced himself and explained that he was here to discuss garden and wetlands species that are native to the area and usually successful in wetlands areas. Gorman presented a conceptual sketch to deal with erosion issues that might be present. Gorman provided a list of native plants that could be used in a wildlife habitat or rain garden.

Timmy, an employee of Gorman’s discussed riparian and vegetative buffers and native showy plants that are inexpensive but beneficial to watercourses including winterberry, high bush blueberries, spicebush, wild iris, marsh marigolds, sedges, rushes, shadblow, river birch, hemlock, fur, spruce, etc. Gorman explained that bringing native species into landscape is a recent trend. Gorman said encouraged property owners to get help from resources that are available.

Sousa discussed the use of rain water gardens and rain water harvesting and reusing water which has become a good part of conservation. Mark also talked about the use of rain barrels as an easy way to resupply the aquifers. Gorman also reviewed some environmental lawn and plant products to use close to waterways.

Lafountain requested help with protecting the waterways from the property owners. Lafountain requested small steps by property owners and mentioned that for commercial and municipal property owners there may be grants available.

Letendre mentioned the use of low impact development regulations that are in place. Citizen asked about lawns that edge the streams. Gorman said that within two years a natural habitat could develop. Citizen asked about erosion control. Gorman said it would help with erosion. Timmy said invasive plant species should be looked for and removed.

Citizen asked about changes in the use of salt. Ianni said that Vermont has studied the use of salt, since VT has used large amounts of salt on their roads for years; in the natural habitats the impact on plants has been minimal. Bushey reviewed the studies regarding vernal pools in regards to road salt damages to aquatic species. Lowrey said there is a PhD student at Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies who has been studying salt in wetlands and said there are some effects in vernal pools where these minerals concentrate over the years; however in running water i.e. brooks and streams, Vermont has not seen much of an impact. Farmer said the use of sand has been mostly eliminated in the Town but the amount of salt has not increased. A citizen asked, if salt is not harmful why would

the State decrease the amount of salt near public drinking water supplies. Ianni surmised that public water supplies were held to a high standard and the water companies did not want to take any chances. Ianni said that homeowners can have the biggest impact on their properties and could significantly improve the waterways. Ianni said there are a lot of resources available to homeowners. Lafountain said the Commission's goal is to help homeowners to address the esthetics of the homeowners' property in a more environmentally friendly way. Lafountain asked citizens to help protect the watershed. Ianni said that this effort was a partnership between the homeowners and the Commission, but if areas are not protected regulations could come. Hollay said the Commission would be willing to help homeowners to restore their property and willing to facilitate these contacts with other groups in town that are willing to help the property owners. Gorman reviewed the use of water/rain barrels. Citizen reviewed that the Lodge parking lot is pervious and suggested ways to decrease the amount of run off. Lowrey said there are only a few asphalt plants in CT that make pervious pavement but as demand increases the supply of pervious asphalt will increase.

Lafountain thanked all of the attendees and opened the forum to discussion.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

IWC #554-Town of Tolland: Excavation in an intermittent watercourse to restore and improve drainage at 50 Virginia Land.

Lowrey reviewed the location of the 8" pipe and the flow of water through the property.

Bushey/Banning motion to approve IWC App # 554 as discussed at the previous meeting.

Unanimously approved. Hollay seated for Tanner. Tanner and Lafountain abstained.

### **RECEIPT OF APPLICATIONS: None**

### **GENERAL BUSINESS**

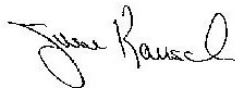
1. Correspondence
2. Other Commission Business
3. Adjourn

Banning/Tetrault: motion to adjourn.

Unanimously approved.

Meeting adjourned 10:07pm

Respectfully submitted,



June Kausch  
Clerk, Inland Wetlands Commission