

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION
TOLLAND, CONNECTICUT
MEETING MINUTES OF JUNE 10, 2010**

a. Call to Order – The meeting was called to order at 7:09 p.m. in the Council Chambers. Present were: Phil Moreschi (Chair), Lois Query (Vice-Chair), Don DiGenova, Cynthia MacDonald, and Dorothy Mickiewicz. Eugene Koss arrived at 7:35 p.m. and Richard Symonds arrived at 7:45 p.m. Others present: Arthur Jacques, Boy Scout, Troop 61, Mansfield; Linda Farmer. Not in attendance: Andrew Holl.

b. Additions to the Agenda

The following additions were made to the agenda:

- Executive Session added
- Discussion of rain barrels and composters
- Discussion of Campbell property
- Letters regarding re-appointment to the Commission

Ms. Query moved to add these items to the agenda and Mr. DiGenova seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Ms. MacDonald moved to seat Ms. Mickiewicz as a regular member and this was seconded by Mr. DiGenova.

2. Public Comments

a. Comments for the public – 2 minutes - None

b. Boy Scouts

• Troop 2, Tolland – invasive plants – 5 minutes - None

• Troop 61, Mansfield – bluebird project – 5 minutes

Mr. Jacques has seen various birds in three of the five birdhouses that he installed. He believes these are: a tree sparrow, a house sparrow and one unidentified bird. Mr. Jacques presented a photograph of the birdhouses to Mr. Moreschi and the Commission as well as a sample birdhouse which is made from rough cut cedar. Bluebirds prefer this type of wood because it allows them to access the house without a perch. Mr. Jacques' goal is to place two houses in each pre-determined location and will visit the houses weekly.

Mr. Jacques spoke with the organizers of the Farmer's Market and will build and sell these birdhouses along with an instruction sheet (including mounting directions) at the Market. The profits will be used to build additional birdhouses for the project.

3. Approval of Minutes – May 13, 2010

Ms. MacDonald motioned to accept the minutes of the May 13, 2010 meeting. Ms. Mickiewicz seconded the motion. All were in favor. Changes included: in section 3, replacing Ms. Symonds with Mr. Symonds; in section 4d, 5th sentence should read, "Mr. Moreschi believed parking should be on-street and there should not be a parking lot, kiosk or gate on Old Stafford Road."

4. Committee Reports

a. Website additions and update – 2 minutes

Ms. MacDonald explained that there were some old items which should be removed from the website, specifically outdated items listed under Calendar & Events. Additionally, she would like to see a new navigation point added which would link to forms and documents (PDF) such as the Use Permit. She is willing to sit with Ms. Murdock to assist in making the changes as is Mr. Symonds. Mr. Moreschi assigned Ms. Murdock and Mr. Symonds to work together to determine what changes need to be made and Mr. Symonds stated that he would look into it on Monday, June 14.

b. Updated Rating Sheets – 20 minutes

Ms. Mickiewicz explained that the Ratings Sheets were discussed at the Workshop. A table of liabilities, a summary of pros/cons and a scale were added to the Sheets. Mr. DiGenova mentioned that there was still one section specific to water and wetlands while there were other line items regarding water and expressed concern with duplication. Discussion took place and it was determined that in completing the Rating Sheets that qualification would be needed. Mr. DiGenova also brought up the question of whether all items on the Sheets should be weighted the same since on the current layout they are all equal. Mr. Symonds explained that while the categories are potentially equal the ratings may differ and Ms. Query believed once the Sheets were completed by eight individuals that a good cross-section would be apparent. Mr. Symonds explained that the mixture of quantitative and qualitative options presents the opportunity for flexibility and this format was indeed flexible. Ms. Mickiewicz added that the bullets on the Sheets were in place to provide ideas for thought rather than an expectation of a rating for each bullet point. Mr. Koss explained that each Commissioner should apply judgment in his/her own way whether that is thoroughly empirical or if the items were used to shape one's thinking. Mr. Moreschi commented that the Sheets were a means of guiding the evaluation process and making it consistent with the Open Space Plan. He explained that the Sheets tie back to the Plan and provide the opportunity for additional comment and notes. Mr. Koss moved to adopt these updated Rating Sheets on a trial basis. Mr. Symonds seconded the motion. All were in favor.

c. Invasive Species Committee Report – 2 minutes

Only two forms have been returned that were distributed at the Children's Day event however the directions reference an online pamphlet that is not yet posted. Ms. MacDonald believes this topic would also make a good Scout project. Mr. Koss commented that although the response rate was small that the information was distributed to the people and when Scout troops approach the Commission it could suggest this as a topic. The question of whether the Invasive Species Committee is part of the Education Committee arose and Ms. Query clarified that the Invasive Species Committee is indeed a subcommittee of the Education Committee.

d. Unfinished Management Plans – 5 minutes

• Discuss Sage Meadow Plan

Mr. Symonds explained that at the last workshop, Ms. Mickiewicz re-drafted the plan putting it into the Commission's format and removed the "implementation" section. Changes were made yet there is still a "P" in Lot 11 that was not removed and it was his understanding that it would be. Additionally, the "kiosk" should be redefined. The discussion will be continued at the next workshop and will cover placing "Recommendations" in the appendix as well as the topic of haying and mowing. Joshua Trust should have a place to sign off on the front page. Once this has been completed, a meeting should be planned with Joshua Trust.

e. Willimantic River Alliance – update – 2 minutes

Ms. MacDonald explained that there was not a lot of new information but that there would be a ribbon cutting ceremony at Mansfield River Park with recognition of the Willimantic River as a water trail. She will have photographs available.

f. Tolland Conservation Corps - None

g. Discussion of Rain Barrels and Composters

Mr. Moreschi initiated the discussion of rain barrels and composters and whether the Commission should consider sponsoring making such items available to the townspeople. The rain barrel (cistern) is a 55 gallon drum that collects rain water, hoses are connected and then the water is available for gardens. Mosquito rings are placed in the barrel to prevent breeding. Mr. Moreschi will send information with further details to the Commission members for their review.

h. Discussion of the Campbell Property

Ms. Farmer presented the Luce Grant to Mr. Moreschi. This was the complete grant minus two appraisals and she is waiting to hear about the grant. If the DEP awards the grant then further surveys will be conducted.

Ms. Farmer explained that a new farm lease had been negotiated with Ms. Campbell and presented the details to the Commission.

Ms. Farmer initiated a discussion regarding the installation of a new trail on the Campbell property suggesting that it be reviewed and discussed further with Mr. Hankinson (Tolland Conservation Corps).

i. Letters of Re-appointment to the Commission

Mr. Moreschi explained to the Commission members that they would soon receive an e-mail regarding serving another two years on the Commission. He explained that he may not have the time to continue to act in the capacity of Chair as he once had. He invited the members to reflect and consider if they would be interested in taking on the Chairperson's role. A general discussion took place and the Commission agreed that it would like to see Mr. Moreschi remain in the position. The members believe he is the right person for the role and are willing to take on more if it would allow Mr. Moreschi to remain in the position.

5. Old Business

Mr. Symonds inquired as to the status of the Scout project regarding the cleaning of the dam on the Weigold property. An update was not available however Ms. Mickiewicz offered to find out more information for the next meeting.

6. New Business

- Nye-Holman State Forest Management Plan – 10 minutes

Mr. Moreschi explained that some clarification was needed regarding the map and Parcel 29-55 off Old Post Road. He will e-mail and follow up with the sender.

- Bolton Lakes ERT meeting – 2 minutes None

7. Adjournment

Mr. Symonds motioned that the meeting be adjourned, the Commission go to Executive Session, and that the clerk be paid. Ms. MacDonald seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Pascuzzi
Clerk