

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
TOLLAND, CONNECTICUT  
MEETING MINUTES OF JULY 8, 2010**

1. Call to Order – The meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m. in the Council Chambers. Present were: Phil Moreschi (Chair), Lois Query (Vice-Chair), Don DiGenova (Secretary), Cynthia MacDonald, and Richard Symonds. Eugene Koss arrived at 7:58 p.m. Others present: Eric Grulke, Boy Scout, Troop 2; parents of Arthur Jacques, Boy Scout Troop 61 Mansfield; Ken Hankinson.
  
2. Public Comments
  - a. Comments for the public – 2 minutes - None
  - b. Boy Scouts
    - Troop 2, Tolland – invasive plants – 5 minutes

Erik Grulke from Troop 2 in Tolland attended the meeting to update the Commission on the project at the Auperin property. He and some other scouts will go to the property in late July and August to work on the trail which will connect Auperin to the Weigold property. This group will put in seven hours of work.
    - Troop 61, Mansfield – bluebird project

The parents of Mr. Jacques attended the meeting to provide an update to the Commission. Mr. Jacques has sold 18 birdhouses. He will have 10-15 additional birdhouses ready for spring. He checks on the installed bird houses weekly and four of the five houses are occupied; however, the inhabitants are not bluebirds.

Mr. Jacques is also considering two additional projects: the restoration of the dam on the Weigold property and the restoration of the cellar well at the Stoppeworth property. To aid in this, it would be most ideal to have a photograph of the original dam/cellar well but Mr. Symonds did not believe such a photo exists. It was noted however that there is a 1934 aerial photo online that may provide some guidance. The date/time of Tuesday, July 13<sup>th</sup> at 6 p.m. was proposed for Mr. Jacques and the Commission to visit the Weigold property with a backup date of Thursday, July 15<sup>th</sup>. All attending will meet at the entrance to the property.

Prior to beginning any work, Mr. Jacques will submit a proposal to the Conservation Commission.

Lastly, Mr. Symonds confirmed that Mr. Jacques is selling the birdhouses at the Farmers' Market on Saturday mornings for \$13.00. Anyone purchasing a birdhouse will also receive guidelines for mounting, maintaining and inviting bluebirds to the new home.
  
3. Approval of Minutes – June 10, 2010

Mr. Symonds motioned to accept the minutes of the June 10, 2010 meeting. Ms. MacDonald seconded the motion. The opportunity for discussion was presented. In the future it will be noted that Mr. DiGenova is the Secretary for the Commission. Further, Ms. Mickiewicz will be asked if she would like to be appointed as a regular member. All were in favor.

#### 4. Committee Reports

##### a. Invasive Species Committee Report – 2 minutes

Ms. MacDonald has thus far has only received two responses from the Children's Day event but noted the relevant online information will be posted shortly. Further, Ms. MacDonald spoke with Deen O'Connell from the Garden Club. Ms. O'Connell would like to schedule some work sessions where a roadside crew (such as the Scouts or the Tolland Conservation Corp) would remove some invasive species (knotweed, burning bushes etc.) from Anthony Road.

Mr. DiGenova suggested asking if either Ms. O'Connell or Ms. Marianne Lattimer would like to serve as alternate members on the Conservation Commission.

##### b. Unfinished Management Plans – 15 minutes

- Discuss Sage Meadow Plan

Mr. Symonds explained that the plan for Sage Meadow is complete. He met with Ms. Mickiewicz at the workshop to finish the plan; only a couple of format issues still exist. Changes made include: under 'intended use', reducing 'implementation' to a bulleted format; noting that on the last page of the plan that parking is not allowed on Lot 11. Mr. Pagini will take care of correcting the graphic referring to Lot 11. It was also discussed whether "Joshua's Trust" should appear on the cover page. It was determined that it was not necessary and that as a co-adopter, Mr. Pagini would not be able to present it to his group until its September meeting. Additional changes to be made to the plan include replacing the photograph on the first page and correcting the pagination. Mr. Symonds also noted that he had spoken with Mr. Pagini and he is in agreement with the plan as presented although Mr. Pagini would like to see and review an attachment containing specific parameters. Once the attachment is complete, it will be brought back before the Commission.

Ms. Query requested more detail on why the property cannot be hayed. Mr. Symonds explained that according to the easement, the property cannot be hayed and further explained that the ground nesters may need the material as well.

Mr. Symonds moved to approve the Sage Meadow Conservation Area Management Plan drafted on June 24, 2010 with the corrections to be made as noted. Ms. Query seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Mr. Moreschi commented that plans for the Hoveland and Eimrath properties should be looked at next as well as the plan for the Palmer property. He will ask Mr. Lowrey for maps in preparation for visits. A general discussion of the Palmer property including the issue of the well on the property also took place.

##### c. Willimantic River Alliance – update – 2 minutes

Ms. MacDonald explained that the WRA is watching the water levels of the Willimantic River. At a certain point if the water level is very low, Conservation measures will be triggered for the University of Connecticut and other areas. Further, the Water Trail project is moving forward and the Paddle Guide is complete.

A subcommittee is looking into placement and installation of road signage to the access sites along the trail. One of these access sites is on Plains Road in Tolland. Ms. MacDonald explained that Vickie Wetherell of the WRA asked if the Conservation Commission would be able to write a letter to the property owner on Plains Road to learn if the property could be publicized as an access site. Mr. Symonds explained that a good contact would be Tom Galvin and that Mr. Galvin may be able to reach the property owner. A letter from the property owner allowing access would be needed. Mr. DiGenova asked if this would be a liability for the property owner and a general discussion on the topic ensued.

Ms. MacDonald explained that Eric Thomas provided an update on the DEP water testing and that the water is impaired for recreational swimming due to bacteria in a section of the Willimantic and all of the Hop and Skunkamug Rivers.

Ms. MacDonald noted that the Alliance is looking at the impact of a proposed travel stop and its possible effect on nearby tributaries. The area is located off route 84 at exit 71.

Lastly, Mr. DiGenova inquired as to whether the Alliance maintains the rivers in a similar fashion as the Tolland Conservation Corps maintains the trails. Ms. MacDonald explained that how the Alliance keeps the river clear is an ongoing issue.

d. Tolland Conservation Corps – 15 minutes

Mr. Hankinson explained that the markers to connect the trail through the meadow (discussed at the previous meeting) have been removed and the issue resolved.

He went on to add that half the trails still need to be blazed and the plan is to have them done by the end of summer. Gravel has been spread at the Schindler/Schmidt property and the stump has been removed from the Knofla lot.

Mr. Hankinson suggested that an opening be held at either the Knofla or Parciak property, preferably at Parciak. He would like the event to be publicized and introduce the public to the property perhaps during the first weekend of October. Discussion took place regarding advertising the event. Two possible dates under consideration are October 3<sup>rd</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>. (The October 29<sup>th</sup> hike at the King property is still on as planned). An article would need to be submitted to the Tolland Monthly early since September becomes busy quickly. The goal would be to submit the information to the Tolland Monthly by August 6<sup>th</sup> and have it published in the Journal Inquirer's Calendar the Thursday before the event. Mr. Hankinson will contact Peter Marteka (Hartford Courant) as well to invite him to walk/preview the property. Mr. Moreschi and the Commission brainstormed on who should receive invitations. The list included: the town manager, the town council, the Conservation Corps, the Garden Club, Joshua's Trust, the CT Land Trust, State Representative Bryan Hurlburt and any organized hiking clubs. Mr. Koss has written articles in the past to promote these types of events and will work with Mr. Symonds on this. Ms. Query suggested that the event begin at 1p.m. and Mr. Hankinson added that the Conservation Corps could be hiking guides.

5. Old Business - None

6. New Business

- Clearing of dam on Weigold Property
- Metcalf Road improvements

Ms. Farmer had previously circulated a PowerPoint presentation on this topic. Discussion took place regarding chip sealing the road and general talks of dirt roads. Ms. Query explained that the Commission understands that Metcalf has a particular problem in the maintenance of the dirt road that needs to be addressed but as a Commission it would like to retain dirt roads when possible and that the character from dirt roads is something that it would like to keep. Ms. Query will draft a letter with Mr. DiGenova in this regard and send it to Ms. Farmer on Monday. Mr. Koss added that there are some citations in the Town's Plan that could be used in the letter as well.

Lastly, Mr. Symonds reminded the Commission that an annual report for '09/'10 will be due soon and that budget/expenditures for the '10/'11 fiscal year should be on an upcoming agenda.

7. Adjournment

Mr. Symonds motioned that the meeting be adjourned at 9:15 p.m. and that the clerk be paid. Ms. MacDonald seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Pascuzzi  
Clerk