

Conservation Commission
Monthly Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, June 10, 2015
Mallory Town Hall, 7:00 PM

FINAL

Members Present: Bill McCann, Patricia Bailey, Colette Shulman, Joanna Wozniak- Brown, and Lucille Hinkley

Absent: John Foley and Geoff Gwyther

Also Present: Rolph Martin, and Christine Branson, Commission Clerk

Call to Order:

Chairman B. McCann Called the Meeting to Order at 7:10 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

P. Bailey Moved to Approve the Minutes of May 13, 2015 as amended: L. Hinkley agreed to work on "Open Space" for the NRI.
Seconded by: L. Hinkley Vote: For: Unanimous

Correspondence:

No correspondence was received.

General Discussion Items:

P. Bailey proposed an idea to the Commission about writing a letter to the BoS regarding the desire to return Munch Meadows to a more natural landscape, mowing less to allow a better habitat for butterflies and birds etc. The Commission agreed this would be a very good idea, and would probably be well received since the need to mow would be significantly reduced to once a year.

Budget Discussion:

Chair, Wm. McCann reported the end of the Fiscal Year 2014-15 is over by \$ 196.00 which was anticipated. Mr. McCann additionally reported he will need to request a discussion with the First Selectman regarding the NRI update funding. It looks like it was not included in the BoS approved funding of FY 2015-16 Budget, but was included in the request. Perhaps it was overlooked.

New Business

Natural Resource Inventory Report

Chair, Wm. McCann suggested the Commission meet from time to time to conduct workshops to go over updates instead of using meeting time. The purpose would be to work on particular points of the NRI in a less formal setting. C. Shulman stated the Kent NRI was a well written extensive report with in depth and descriptive topics. She felt the section entitled " the Highland Study" would also apply to Sherman. Another aspect discussed was the implementation of recommendations and who to contact i.e. - DEEP or local authorities. Chair, B. McCann stated he felt the Sherman NRI didn't need to be as comprehensive, but would like the Commission to look at the Kent NRI for ideas. Mr. McCann proposed the Commission try to meet in August for a workshop, he will send out an email to work out the dates.

Weed Warrior Days

The Commission discussed the present state of the knotweed which is growing near the school, it is currently about 8 feet tall. It is best practice to remove the brush once it has been cut. It is possible the knotweed may need to be cut approximately 4 times before suffering enough damage to weaken the root system. Because this is school property NO herbicides can be applied. Another way to weaken the root system is to tarp the area which it is growing, however this may be difficult since it is over a large area. It is very important not to allow flowers to form.

Wildlife Corridor presentation from Ralph Martin:

Mr. Rolph Martin of Barlow Farm, aka the "Blueberry Guy" presented to the Commission a concept called a "Wildlife Corridor". This could be a topic discussed in the NRI under the "Open Spaces" section. Mr. Martin shares a slide show with the Commission that was sent from Judy Wilson regarding the cottontail rabbit. Mr. Martin suggested designating particular areas to protect migrating animals such as turkey, woodcock, deer, as well as others mentioned. Mr. Martin also discussed re-introducing the hognose snake. Mr. Martin recommended seeking student involvement to inventory flowers, trees, as well as fauna to spread the tasks and hopefully attract the younger generations to being conservative minded.

Rock Wall Program

Tabled to the next meeting.

Old Business

Happy Acres update

The farm had a very successful open house on Memorial Day weekend, over 400 burgers were served. There will now be vegetables available at the farm stand. There is still ongoing controversy concerning the mowing practices along the roadside. The Commission discussed an Ordinance recently put in place from the Town of Kent regarding the "Right to Farm", the Commission plans to discuss further at a future meeting.

Adjourn

P. Bailey Adjourned the Meeting at 8:45 pm

Respectfully submitted by:

Christine Branson, Commission Clerk
APPROVED AS FINAL September 9, 2015