

Conservation Commission
Monthly Meeting and Workshop Minutes
Wednesday, October 12, 2016
Mallory Town Hall, 7:00 PM

FINAL

Members Present: W. McCann, L. Hinkley and P. Bailey

Members Absent: C. Shulman, and J. Wozniak- Brown

Audience and Invited: R. Gorman and E. Gorman, owners of White Silo Farms Winery

Call to Order: Chair Wm. McCann Called the Meeting to Order at 7:04 p.m.

Correspondence:

First Selectman C. Cope- email in reference to State Grant Funding for Urban Green & Community Garden Programs.

Sherman Planning & Zoning- Notice of a Public Hearing regarding a new proposed regulation for Farm Wineries.

CACIWAC- correspondence regarding upcoming workshops and membership dues.

CT Wildlife Magazine- fall edition

Approval of Minutes of August 10, 2016

Commissioner P. Bailey Moved to Approve the Minutes of August 10, 2016 Regular Meeting as written.

Seconded by: L. Hinkley

Vote: For: Unanimous

New Business

Review Proposed Farm Winery Regulations

Ralph and Eric Gorman , owners of White Silo Farm Winery were invited to speak in reference to the new proposed Zoning Regulation regarding farm wineries. The Gormans are seeking the support of the Towns and residents. They have met with First Selectman C. Cope and Mr. Cope contacted the Town's Attorney for a legal opinion. A letter from Atty. R. DeBella was read into record in response to the opinion. The Gormans stated they feel the proposed Regulations will restrict their business to the point that it may compromise the success of the winery. The winery has been in operation for the past 15 years. They have received a grant from the State to build a commercial grade kitchen within the winery and were required to create 10 jobs. The success of the winery hinges on agri-tourism. With the new proposed regulations, the restrictions imposed will no longer allow for the majority of the activities they are currently offering. R. Gorman stated he is currently drafting a letter that he plans to share with the community requesting P&Z to reconsider creating the winery regulations. Chair B. McCann stated it is under the Conservation Commissions responsibilities to protect farming and farm activities. Mr. McCann has been looking online for other towns Regulations to compare the Regulations that Sherman is proposing. None of the other Towns Winery Regulations address food restrictions. R. Gorman thanked the Conservation Commission for

hearing their concerns and stated he hopes the Conservation Commission will write a letter to the Planning & Zoning Commission.

iii. **Knot weed update**

Chair B. McCann reported an update. The split rail fence was installed and a licensed pesticide applicator has sprayed the area of concern with glyphosate. The Commission discussed planting something in the spring as ground cover so that the knotweed would not be given a chance to return, rudbeckia was identified as a possibility.

Old Business

i. **Kestrel Boxes**

Commissioner P. Bailey provided an update regarding the installation of kestrel boxes. She was pleased to announce that the box that was installed on NAROMI property approximately seven years ago was reported to contain fledglings earlier this year. Ms. Bailey stated she would like to install another box sometime in October/ November with a cement base on the North Eastern Field at Happy Acres Farm. The First Selectman has already approved this location.

Commissioner P. Bailey Moved to Approve the expenditure of up to \$ 100.00 from the Conservation Commission Budget to pay for the cost of the construction of a kestrel box base to be installed at Happy Acres Farm in the North Eastern field.


Seconded by: L. Hinkley

Vote: For: Unanimous

Adjourn

Commissioner P. Bailey Moved to Adjourn the Meeting at 8:53 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:



Christine Branson, Commission Clerk

October 19, 2016