

CONSERVATION COMMISSION

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TOWN HALL

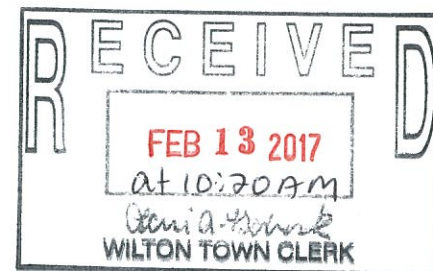
238 Danbury Road

Wilton, Connecticut 06897

WILTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 1, 2017 – 7:30 P.M.

TOWN HALL ANNEX - MEETING ROOM "A"



MINUTES

- I. PRESENT: Jackie Algon, Frank Simone, Colleen O'Brien, Jade Hobson, Susan DiLoreto
- II. ALSO PRESENT: Mike Conklin, Director of Environmental Affairs; Jennifer Fanzutti, Environmental Analyst; Liz Larkin, Recording Secretary; George Ongley, Connie Kamedulski, Kim McKessy, Lyn Marchellos, Gil Hollander, Lisa Somer, Anne & Martin Hamar
- III. CALL TO ORDER – Ms. DiLoreto called the meeting to order at 7:35 pm in the absence of a Chairman or Vice Chairman
- IV. KENT POND DISCUSSION

Ms. Algon explained that the commission had recently undertaken a project to assist the town with removing invasive lily pads from Horseshoe Pond. With the success of this program, neighbors of Kent Pond have asked what can be done with their invasive issue in this town-owned pond. Ms. Algon stated she and the Hamars spoke to the First Selectman who suggested a neighborhood group is formed, much like Friends of Horseshoe Pond.

Ms. Algon advised that a meeting was held in the fall for the neighbors where the Pond and Lake Connection provided feedback on what they found in their initial inspection. The Pond and Lake Connection recommended chemical treatment to treat two invasives species that were found. As the permitting for this treatment was needed for 2017, the commission spoke to the neighbors who donated funding in December to ensure they were okay with applying for a permit, even if the permit is not needed.

Mr. Conklin stated that he met with SNEW as the pond is in their watershed to get their opinion on chemical treatment. SNEW confirmed they would not allow chemicals in this water body that feeds to Huckleberry Hill Reservoir and Rock Lake.

Ms. Fanzutti explained that she is going to generate a long-term management plan which will include a scope of what is currently in the pond and what recommendations she has to eradicate the invasives. She plans on doing a watershed study and wants to keep a good diversity of aquatic plants. The two invasives that were found are curly leaf pond weed and Eurasian water milfoil. While herbicides were suggested by the Pond & Lake Connection, Ms. Fanzutti stated there are other options that would be better for long term management. As the pond is shallow, the bottom is on the littoral zone so light

gets through to the bottom. Dredging the pond to make it deeper would be ideal but is very costly. A biological option is to add grass carp to the pond, which is regulated by DEEP, to eat most, not all plants. She explained the fish take three years to grow to a size that is effective to remove the tops of invasive plants and they are restocked every five years.

Another option provided by Ms. Fanzutti is a lake bottom blanket that is placed on the floor of the pond in different sizes and moved periodically. An issue with the blanket is that aquatic plants reproduce by fragmentation and the invasives could spread if not careful.

Ms. Fanzutti explained there is an obvious algal bloom which presents as bright green. This is caused by an excess of nutrients which should be filtered out by naturally occurring bacteria. This issue is typically due to over application of fertilizer from surrounding properties.

Mr. Conklin stated that a realistic goal would be to eradicate 40% of the weeds currently present. He noted that typical lawn fertilizer is water soluble so when water mixes with it becomes liquid and mobile. He confirmed that this means 30% of the fertilizer evaporates into the air, 30% is absorbed by the plants, and the rest goes below root level in the pond. Mr. Conklin explained organic fertilizer is different in that it is mixed with healthy bacteria that would help the pond not go into an algal bloom.

Ms. Fanzutti will investigate and come up with a watershed action plan. Mr. Hamar noted when Keelers Ridge was built, there was a pipe installed under Route 33 that flows to the pond. Mr. Ongley asked where the catch basins from Ridgefield Road flow. Mr. Conklin confirmed this goes to Comstock Brook. Mr. Conklin also suggested that the water quality is monitored and metrics could be kept. As the pond is in a watershed, the water company was asked to provide input and they are adamant that no chemical treatment be used. They are requesting biological and mechanical removal, to which the town's Health Director agreed.

A discussion ensued relating to the permit payment that was provided to the Pond and Lake Connection late in 2016. The timing was critical to obtain a permit, even though the permit will not be acted upon. Mr. Conklin confirmed all donors were aware of this possibility. The neighboring pond, Henderson's, is privately owned and these neighbors are getting involved as well.

One of the neighbors suggested installing an aerator to create a current which will help the water move. Ms. Fanzutti stated that helps with algae, not invasives. Mr. Ongley stated Henderson's Pond is deeper and spring fed. Mr. Conklin recommended mechanical and biological controls to the invasive plants.

Mr. Simone MOVED to APPROVE mechanical and biological controls to manage the invasive plants in and around Kent Pond, SECONDED by Ms. O'Brien and CARRIED 5-0-0.

V. INLAND WETLAND REFERRALS

A. WET#2432(S) – QUANTICAL, LLC – 57 Borglum Road – construction of a proposed single-family home, driveway, septic system, stormwater management system, site grading and erosion controls

Mr. Conklin noted this application is for a new 5-bedroom house in a mostly woody area. He confirmed there is a water main easement so there is a restriction in the middle of the property. He showed where 2 wetlands are noted. There is a driveway

and a courtyard included on the plans. There are also roof leaders and a second septic tank and leaching field with a stormwater management system. The limit of clearing is shown and Mr. Conklin's staff comments will include one tulip tree to be saved, a smaller run for the septic design and asking to reconsider the parking lot in the front. The commissioners agreed the Tulip Tree should be saved.

VI. PLANNING AND ZONING REFERRALS - None

VII. ONGOING BUSINESS

A. Parks Reports –

- i. Vista Road – Ms. Algon reported that they discovered during the weekend walk at Vista that the trail with two loops is overgrown and inaccessible. The Land Trust may want to get involved with this and Mr. Conklin confirmed he has spoken to Donna Merrill about this issue.
- ii. Ms. O'Brien stated she would like to take over the Conservation Facebook page from Dan Berg who has left the commission.

B. Conservation Activity Log Updates

Quarry Head Trail Consolidation – Ms. Algon stated she met with Donna Merrill, Louise Washer, and Mary Flynn. They are creating new signage for the trails. She noted they are creating an Alice in Wonderland type theme and there will be an event in the Spring to create the new section of trail.

Horseshoe Pond Long-Term Management Plan – Ms. DiLoreto asked if we should start planning the spring work now with Jeff Lapnow. Mr. Conklin asked her to hold off a bit so he can meet with her and Ms. Fanzutti to create an action plan.

Park Walks & Talks – Ms. Algon confirmed 40 people attended the Vista Walk. The next walk will take place on March 12th at Belknap Preserve.

C. Work with other Commissions/Committees

- i. Tree Committee – Ms. DiLoreto confirmed the committee came to an agreement with the Garden Club relating to the placement of the tree planted in April 2016 at the Memorial Garden. The tree will be relocated 10 feet. She also confirmed the committee walked the center and counted the Ash Trees. They recommend 30 to be taken down and 10 to be topped for habitat.
- ii. Deer Committee – Mr. Conklin confirmed the hunter and landowner surveys have been sent for the 2016 hunting season. These surveys assist the committee in making adjustments to the program for the next hunting season.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Town Wide Clean Up** – Mr. Conklin stated that Townwide cleanup needs to be scheduled. Ms. Fanzutti stated that April 22nd is the best date with the school

calendar. Mr. Simone and Ms. Hobson confirmed they are available to assist on the day. A meeting will take place with all participants towards the end of February.

B. 2017 Commission Elections –

Mr. Simone MOVED to NOMINATE Ms. DiLoreto as the Chairperson, SECONDED by Ms. Hobson and CARRIED 5-0-0.

Mr. Simone MOVED to NOMINATE Ms. Hobson for Vice Chair, SECONDED by Ms. O'Brien and CARRIED 5-0-0.

Mr. Simone MOVED to NOMINATE Ms. O'Brien and Secretary, SECONDED by Ms. Algon and CARRIED 5-0-0.

- C. Park Assignments –** With the departure of Mr. Berg and Ms. Merrill, the park assignments were adjusted slightly. Ms. Hobson is now in charge of Cherry Lane. Ms. DiLoreto is now in charge of Horseshoe Park. Ms. O'Brien is now in charge of Olmstead Hill/Black's Farm and Ms. Algon now has Quarry Head and Wild Duck. Sackett will remain open until one or two members join to replace the open position. Mr. Conklin noted 3 people were interviewed for 2 open positions.

XI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES –

1/4/16 Meeting Minutes – Ms. Algon MOVED to APPROVE the Meeting Minutes, SECONDED by Ms. O'Brien and CARRIED 5-0-0.

- XII. ADJOURN –** Ms. O'Brien MOVED to adjourn at 9:21pm, SECONDED by Ms. Algon, and CARRIED 5-0-0.

Next meeting will be March 1, 2017.

Respectfully submitted,
Liz Larkin, Secretary, Environmental Affairs