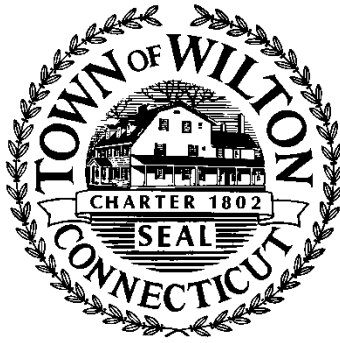


CONSERVATION COMMISSION

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TOWN HALL

238 Danbury Road

Wilton, Connecticut 06897

**WILTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MINUTES**

June 1, 2011 – 7:30 P.M.

TOWN HALL ANNEX - MEETING ROOM "A"

Present: Kristen Begor, chairman, Dave Hapke, Patrice Gillespie, Jeff Coppelman, Kim Young

Absent: Chris Coyle, Nick Lee

Also Present: Patricia Sesto, Director Environmental Affairs, Recording Secretary Liz Larkin

I. CALL TO ORDER – Ms. Begor called the meeting to order at 7:45 p.m.

II. INLAND WETLAND REFERRALS

- A. WET#2029(S) – RUDDY – 95 Old Boston Road – 2-lot subdivision including filling old curtain drain

All present commissioners indicated that they visited the site prior to the meeting. The commission discussed relocating the driveway to save some trees, including healthy hemlocks. Ms. Sesto confirmed that they require a curtain drain for the septic system and this curtain drain needs 50 feet away from the leaching fields. It was noted that there was a small house on the property at one time with a smaller septic system. The driveway does not have drainage due to the placement of the septic. The commission will request a pervious payment for the driveway on lot 1, the driveway be adjusted to preserve trees, and a tree save plan should be submitted.

III. PLANNING and ZONING REFFERALS - None

IV. ONGOING BUSINESS

- A. **Newsletter** – The commission discussed possible topics for the Fall 2011 Newsletter such as a Pesticide Registry Information article and an article on the recent news on recycling and trash collectors.

A discussion ensued about the recent Letters to the Editor in the Wilton Bulletin regarding haulers not properly recycling. Ms. Young stated that the haulers should

be fined if they do not recycle correctly. Ms. Sesto noted that residents may not know how to properly recycle so it is difficult to determine who is at fault. Mr. Hapke stated that residents are choosing their own haulers and if someone is not happy with their hauler, they can switch to another company. Ms. Begor suggested educating people on how to properly recycle, and prove the results by reporting statistics. Discussion ensued regarding the value of recycling and the misnomer that because Wilton's trash goes to a waste to energy facility, the value of recycling is diminished. Ms. Sesto confirmed that the State DEP has information on how much ash the town creates and just because it is burned does not mean there is no impact.

Ms. Begor noted that in Europe, they have less trash as they recycle everything. She added that it might be helpful to show a trail of goods from beginning to recycled product. Mr. Hapke noted that it works to the hauler's advantage to recycle as much as possible as it lowers their weight and cost at the transfer station. Ms. Sesto noted that this newsletter may be too late to rebut the recent letters to the editor and maybe the commission should take action sooner. Ms. Begor said she was working with Jennifer Fascitelli from Department of Public Works to address the concerns. Mr. Hapke stated that town should speak to the "Moms".

Ms. Sesto suggested that the haulers leave a notice of some sort to a resident if their recyclables were contaminated so the resident is aware. Ms. Begor added that the hauler should have a right not to accept contaminated recyclables. Ms. Sesto stated that DPW could define the problem and provide potential solutions. Mr. Hapke and Ms. Begor will work with Jennifer and First Selectman Brennan to avoid further issues.

B. Parks – Ms. Sesto noted that Mike Conklin sent a staff report prior to the meeting.

Ms. Sesto noted that everyone should be walking their parks and to report any issues to the staff so the work can get done by the end of the fiscal year.

Ms. Sesto reported that Dave Francefort recently found an illegal bike trail on the east side of the Town Forest near the blue trail. She stated that the cyclists built a 500 ft. long straight-run trail which is not sustainable. This kind of work is considered vandalism. A discussion ensued about installing a game camera in the area to catch the culprits. Ms. Sesto checked with the Chief of Police who said this would be okay. Ms. Begor suggested putting a sign up stating that it's illegal to cut new trails. Ms. Sesto was not sure this would be a deterrent as these individuals are diligent.

The cost of a game camera is approximately \$100. Mr. Hapke suggested buying this based on Mr. Francefort's recommendation as he is well versed with the situation. Ms. Sesto will speak to Dave about his intentions with the camera such as what he would do when he finds the vandals. The sense of the commission was to try to post signage first.

C. Work with other Commissions/Committees

1. **Tree/Bench Committee** – Ms. Sesto reported that the Norwalk/Wilton Tree Festival was a success with 1,300 + people in attendance.

Ms. Sesto reported that there are a couple more trees to plant and one bench to install in the center. A discussion ensued about more places to plant trees. Ms. Young suggested the area in front of the greenhouse at the Comstock Community Center. Ms. Begor asked what is going on with the fake wall at the intersection of Route 33 and Route 7. Ms. Young confirmed that the soil is only 2 in. deep so they will only be able to put in planters.

2. **Energy Committee** – Ms. Gillespie reported on some changes in the committee members. She noted that things were stalled in the winter so they are now working to get back up and running. She is currently collecting data on energy conservation in the town.
3. **Go Green Committee** – The committee is in a lull now that the festival is finished this year. A discussion ensued relating to the new insurance for vendors. Ms. Begor reported that “Tom”, who attends all of these local festivals, noted that Wilton’s festival was the best one he had been to.

E. Regional Projects

1. **FFD Co. Deer Management Alliance** - Ms. Sesto reported that the Deer Alliance has a Freedom Of Information (FOI) Claim. Each participating town must post the agenda for each meeting to be in compliance.
2. **Norwalk River Valley Trail** – Ms. Sesto reported that the NRVT steering committee held public workshops in the five participating towns. Ridgefield had the highest attendance which consisted of many equestrians. The committee has 32 pages and 10,000 words in comments from these workshops. Ms. Sesto added that the committee has been involved in many events lately such as the Tree Festival, Go Green Festival, Patagonia Event, the Rotary Craft Fair and Georgetown Day.

A discussion ensued about horses on the Norwalk River Valley Trail. A concern was raised with the waste and clean-up. There is a Connecticut Horse Counsel which is a stewardship group of volunteers that monitor the trails. Ms. Young

added that horses are herbivores so the waste breaks down quickly. Ms. Sesto raised concern that the equestrian community was defensive at the workshop and hopes to get more constructive and productive ideas and feedback from this group. Ms Sesto added that there is still a lot to learn about the needs of persons with disabilities to make sure the trail is in compliance for handicapped access.

A discussion ensued relating to parking around the trail. Mr. Hapke noted that there needs to be ample room to park and navigate horse trailers. Ms. Young suggested hard packed dirt surface as it would be good for walking, biking, and horses.

A discussion ensued about the cost of the trail. Ms. Sesto noted that there is a fund raising committee and that the main funding is not coming from the town. She stated that the cost is 1 million for a little more than a mile. Ms. Gillespie suggested fitness organizations as possible donor candidates.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Georgetown Mine Tour – Ms. Begor reported that there is a tour of the mines on June 15, 2011 from 6 – 8pm sponsored by the Norwalk River Watershed Association.

VI. LIAISON REPORT

Ms. Begor reported that she went to the Commission Meetings in the month of May. She stated the most interesting piece to her was a Planning and Zoning Meeting where the amendments to affordable housing were discussed. This application was brought in by Grey Rocks. The chair of P&Z thinks the regulations should change as it has been so long since the originals were written.

A discussion ensued relating to the state statute that requires any affordable units be constructed exactly the same as the “non-affordable” units. This regulation brings down the property values for those who pay full price.

VII. DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Ms. Sesto stated that she had nothing further to report.

VIII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – 5/4/11 – Mr. Hapke MOVED to approve the minutes and Ms. Gillespie SECONDED the motion. The Minutes were APPROVED 5-0-0.

IX. ADJOURN – Ms. Begor MOVED to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Hapke SECONDED the motion. The motion CARRIED 5-0-0. The meeting was adjourned at 8:54 p.m.

Next meeting will be July 6, 2011.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Larkin
Recording Secretary