

**Conservation Commission Meeting
Town Hall Meeting Room
April 3, 2008**

Minutes

Attendance:

Members present: William Rutherford, Lisette Henrey, Sue Baker, Nancy Dickinson, Alexander Brash, Gary Silberberg, and Suzanne Graham

Staff: Denise Savageau and Aleksandra Moch

Audience present: Winston Robinson, Parks and Recreation; James Arnold; Patricia B. McDonald; Matthew Popp; Peter Olson, Robinson & Cole, LLP; Susan Kisken, Redniss & Mead, Inc.; Megan Raymond, William Kenny Associates

Commission Discussion Session – 7:00 p.m.

Called to order at 7:07 p.m. by Rutherford

- 1) **Seating of Alternates:** Graham was seated for Seblatnigg and Silberberg was seated for Brower.
- 2) **Review and approval of minutes** for the March 1, 2008 site walk and March 6, 2008 regular monthly meeting. A motion was made by Silberberg and seconded by Graham to approve the March 1 minutes as presented and the March 6, 2007 minutes with the following corrections: page 1 should read “Cece Saunders”, “Terry Coates”, and “Peter Pratley”; page 3 should read “legislature” instead of legislator; and page 4 replace “Cece” with “Saunders”. The motion carried.
- 3) **Review of Correspondence:**
 - a) Savageau reviewed correspondence asking the Commission to review a local ordinance addressing the planting and growing bamboo in Village of Saltaire. Since this invasive plant has become an issue in Greenwich, it was suggested that the Town should consider taking some steps to control its landscaping use. Savageau will provide Commission with the state invasive list for discussion at a future meeting.
 - b) The current issue of *CT Wildlife* was distributed.

4) **Chairman's Report:** Rutherford reported on the workshop held by the Selectman's Nomination Advisory Committee for Town boards and commissions. Items included FOI, use of computers/email, and other procedural and ethics issues.

5) **Staff Report:**

a) Wildlife Management

i) Goose Management Program – 2008: Savageau reported on changes to the US Fish and Wildlife registration for the egg oiling program. This will allow municipalities to help with registering sites located on the private properties.

ii) Critical Habitat/Conservation Areas

(1) Fishway – Open House – April 5: The Earth Day proclamation ceremony is scheduled for 10 a.m. with First Selectman Peter Tesei followed by a presentation about the fishway by Brian Eltz and tours of the fishway. A good crowd is expected.

iii) Town Properties

(1) Greenwich Point Conservancy: The GPC has been approved to renovate the outside of the building. The goal is to update the building and meet the LEED certification standards. Savageau is working with the committee to move this forward.

iv) Legislation 2008

(1) Water company lands: was not discussed

(2) River protection: The legislation proposes to provide better protection to the watercourses and their buffers. This is meeting with opposition from the home builders association

(3) Bottle bill: The bill has a lot of support from the environment committee but a huge lobby including bottled water companies and grocery stores are against it.

6) **Committee/Liaison Reports:**

a) **Cos Cob Power Plant Cleanup and Redevelopment:** The Department of Parks and Recreation and the Conservation Commission met to discuss the park redevelopment plans. Parks and Recreation is looking to develop two playing fields. The Conservation Commission is supportive of the plan presented by the Cos Cob Power Plant Committee that has one field and more room for passive recreation. Savageau discussed the process that Peter Tesei has put forth to move this project forward. First and foremost is the need to cap the site according to DEP and EPA standards. Secondly, the plan that has in development by the consultants, that includes two fields, will be on the Board of Selectmen's agenda April 10. This is just to start the process. A public hearing will be held on April 28 and then this will be on the BOS agenda in May. Savageau also reminded folks that the Commission will see this again during site plan review. Savageau indicated that at a staff meeting with Tesei, he had asked that the two boards work together to come up with a plan both could endorse.

b) **Park and Recreation Board:** was not discussed

c) **Environmental Task Force**

- i) **Pesticides:** Baker reported that the committee drafted a resolution banning pesticide use on the public grounds. The resolution was presented to the Environmental Task Force and forwarded to the First Selectman. It is expected that the resolution will be endorsed this year. The Department of Parks and Recreation took the initiative to use alternatives to pesticides in the maintenance of North Street School. A motion was made by Baker and seconded by Henrey to support the resolution as presented. Motion carried.
 - ii) **Artificial Turf:** Henrey reported that there seems to be no clear consensus as to the harmful side effects of the artificial turf. The group is considering making a recommendation that a moratorium be put in place until more information is available.
 - iii) **Energy Conservation:** Graham stated that the subcommittee is developing a report that highlights the need of energy audit and setting goals for the energy conservation. The Department of Public Works could be responsible for the plan since they manage most of the town buildings. Savageau indicated that the subcommittee is looking at some policy issues as a starting point.
 - iv) **Recycling:** Dickinson stated that the committee would perform an audit of the Town buildings to determine the recycling efficiency. The recycling policy does not seem to be implemented to its full extent in several locations.
- d) GRAB: Dickinson reminded that May 10th is the Hazardous Material Day.
- e) Land Acquisition: was not discussed.

7) **Old Business**

- a) Stanwich School – status report: The applicant has not yet provided the results of test holes for the new location of the leaching fields to our consultant. Savageau is following up.
- b) 487 North Street – 5 lot subdivision: Rutherford and Silberberg recused themselves and left the room. Savageau summarized the previous findings and highlighted the proposed changes. Olson pointed out the changes to the access that were made to address the zoning regulations. Raymond discussed the proposed landscaping plan and open space enhancement. Kisken addressed drainage issues. Motion was made by Baker and seconded by Henrey to adopt the following resolution:

Whereas the proposed subdivision at 487 North Street includes approximately 2.17 acres of dedicated open space and another 3.151 acres of conservation easement area: and

Whereas this combined open space area totals approximately 37.35% of the

property; and

Whereas, this creates an opportunity to create and maintain over 5 acres of meadowland on the property that will be clearly fenced for protection;

The Conservation Commission recommends approval of the proposed subdivision with the following amendments:

- 1. That any conservation easement area required by an IWWA conceptual approval become formalized on the subdivision maps and in the deed records and that any inconsistencies between P&Z requirements and IWWA be worked out for the deed. The open space and easement areas should be subject to the same declaration of restrictions and the areas maintained by the association regarding mowing and maintenance rather than on a lot-by-lot basis.*
- 2. That the proposed biofilter/rain gardens be designed using bioengineering, reducing the need for rip rap protection at the pipe outlets and that the overall design be softened and better coordinated between the landscape/habitat features and the engineered drawings.*
- 3. That vegetated drainage swales be considered as part of the overall stormwater design on each lot rather than piping.*
- 4. That the recommendations for Phase Ib archaeology be done as soon as possible in the process since there is a large portion of the lots that will require such work. This could be done on the individual lot level but is best done as a whole prior to individual ownership of lots.*

Motion carried unanimously.

- c) Energy Resolution: The Selectmen's Committee approved the resolution allowing the Town to join the "20 in 2010" plan. The plan results in 20% of all electricity generation being taken from truly renewable energy resources (wind, solar, select forms of biomass) by the year 2010. The program is accomplished by adoption of a national Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS). Savageau reminded the Commission that part of the resolution including the Commission appointing a task force. Savageau and Joan Sullivan, Director of Purchasing will serve on the task force. She will be making other recommendations to Rutherford.

8) New Business:

- a) April 22 is the Earth Day. The event calendar for the month is posted on the Conservation Commission website.

A motion was made by Dickinson and seconded by Silberberg to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

Meeting was adjourned at 9:55 p.m.

Submitted by,

Aleksandra Moch