



**TOWN OF WESTBROOK
CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

Mulvey Municipal Center
866 Boston Post Rd.
Westbrook, CT 06498
Tel. 399-3046 – FAX 399-2084

**Westbrook Conservation Commission Regular Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 18, 2014 7:00 p.m.
Mulvey Municipal Center - South Meeting Room
(Approved)**

Members Present

Tom ODell, Bob Peterson, Marty Marx, Mike Oryl, Don Harger, John Rie, Randy Bell

Call to Order

Chairman Tom ODell called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

MOTION: to add Harry Rupernicker, III to the agenda. **MADE:** by B. Peterson; **SECONDED:** by M. Marx; **VOTED IN FAVOR:** B. Peterson, M. Marx, M. Oryl, J. Rie, R. Bell, D. Harger; **OPPOSED:** none; **ABSTAINED:** none; **APPROVED:** 6-0-0.

H. Rupernicker III talked to Commissioners about his idea to create a Natural Heritage Tour map similar to the one Old Saybrook has for his Eagle Scout project. His plans will include graphic design of the map, choosing sites, designing map routes, and putting the final finished product on a sign board and Westbrook web site. He needs to present this idea to his scouting group to make sure they approve it as his Eagle Scout project. He'd like the Conservation Commission's help in selecting the sites and perhaps applying for a grant to cover the costs of design and printing. He'd like to map out possible routes and bring them back to Commissioners for their review. He has a copy of Westbrook's Plan of Conservation and Development.

The grant application is due to the Westbrook Foundation by 4/1/14. This money would pay for the graphic designer and printing costs which he estimates at \$5,200.00.

T. ODell suggested H. Rupernicker check with Lou at the Westbrook Town Library for information on potential sites for the Natural Heritage Tour.

MOTION: to support Harry Rupernicker, III in his Eagle Scout Project which is to create a Westbrook Natural Heritage Tour map. **MADE:** by M. Marx; **SECONDED:** by J. Rie; **VOTED IN FAVOR:** B. Peterson, M. Marx, M. Oryl, J. Rie, R. Bell, D. Harger; **OPPOSED:** none; **ABSTAINED:** none; **APPROVED:** 6-0-0.

Minutes- January 28, 2014

MOTION: to approve the minutes of January 28, 2014 as presented. **MADE:** by D. Harger; **SECONDED:** by M. Oryl; **VOTED IN FAVOR:** B. Peterson, M. Marx, J. Rie, R. Bell, M. Oryl, D. Harger; **OPPOSED:** none; **ABSTAINED:** none: **APPROVED:** 6-0-0.

Bills

MOTION: to pay \$200.29 to Kathleen Noyes, Conservation Commission Recording Clerk. ;**MADE:** by D. Harger; **SECONDED:** by R. Bell; **VOTED IN FAVOR:** B. Peterson, M. Marx, M. Oryl, J. Rie, R. Bell, D. Harger; **OPPOSED:** none; **ABSTAINED:** none: **APPROVED:** 6-0-0.

Correspondence

The following correspondence was received: 1/28/14 & 11/25/13 Zoning Commission Meeting Minutes, a packet from the CT Federation of Lakes communicating what they do and soliciting Conservation Commission membership, the Winter 2014 issue of “The Habitat” and a letter from Aquarion Water Company requesting nominations for “Environmental Champs.”

MOTION: to add **Support for Legislation for Open Space** under **New Business**. **MADE:** by R. Bell; **SECONDED:** by D. Harger; **VOTED IN FAVOR:** B. Peterson, M. Marx, J. Rie, R. Bell, M. Oryl, D. Harger; **OPPOSED:** none; **ABSTAINED:** none: **APPROVED:** 6-0-0.

Chairman’s Report

T. ODe'll will be attending a meeting with potential engineers for designing a fish ladder for the Chapman Mill Pond Dam on 2/28/14. Things are progressing well.

Open Space Program

Trail Maps: CRCCD Contract: Review Attached

Members received a copy of the contract from the CT River Coastal Conservation District, Inc. for the Proposal to Conduct an Open Space Trail Mapping Project for the Town of Westbrook. The total cost is \$1,620.00.

MOTION: to approve \$1,620.00 for the contract to Conduct an Open Space Trail Mapping Project for the Town of Westbrook. **MADE:** by M. Marx; **SECONDED:** by J. Rie; **VOTED IN FAVOR:** B. Peterson, M. Marx, J. Rie, R. Bell, M. Oryl, D. Harger; **OPPOSED:** none; **ABSTAINED:** none: **APPROVED:** 6-0-0.

Russo, Miele: Open Space Grant- update

T. ODe'll reported that the grant is due on 3/15/14. He’s working on it now.

Salt Island

>>Wayside Signs Project: Sign Location

T. ODell said some of the snow needs to melt before a precise sign location can be chosen. One sign will be erected in the parking lot at West Beach and one in the parking area at Middle Beach. There is a grant from the Audobon to support this project. Also, the Board of Selectmen have contributed to this project.

>>Management Guidelines: update

Rick Potvin from the US Fish and Wildlife Service will be giving an update on management guidelines at the next Friends of Barrier Islands Meeting on 2/19/14.

NFWF Hurricane Sandy Coastal Resiliency Grant: update

R. Potvin from the USFWLS thought the Town of Westbrook would hear back about this grant by the end of February. There has been no word yet.

Friends of Westbrook's Barrier Islands: Update – John Rie

J. Rie reported that the \$618,000.00 grant to NFWF has been submitted. *Kit* Bishop has committed to participate in an environmental education program with Westbrook fourth graders. The students will learn about the Barrier Islands and wildlife on these islands. They will be given a tour of the islands in the spring.

Old Business

Budget 2014-2015: Open Space Funding

T. ODell met with the Board of Selectmen, 2-18-14 to discuss appropriation to the Open Space Preservation Fund. Andrew Urban, Finance Director, suggested that funds could be allocated when capital improvement funds are allocated under the Capital Improvement Program. A small percentage of the Town Budget goes into that fund. When the Board of Selectmen and Finance Director know how much money they have to put into the Capital Improvement Program, they could allocate a proportion to the Open Space Fund. T. ODell will write a short resolution and submit it to the Board of Selectmen for for review on Feb. 20, 2014.

EPA Environmental Award: Review Attached

The Environmental Protection Agency's regional representative suggested the Conservation Commission write a letter of support for their nominee, the Sciongay family, because of their persistence and devotion to land conservation in the CT Department of Environmental Protection's acquisition of the 155 acre Sciongay property. T. ODell did write this letter, and Commissioners received a copy for review in their meeting packets.

MOTION: to support the nomination letter for the Sciongay family for the Environmental Protection Agency New England 2013 Environmental Merit Awards. **MADE:** by J. Rie; **SECONDED:** by D. Harger; **VOTED IN FAVOR:** B. Peterson, M. Marx, J. Rie, R. Bell, M. Oryl, D. Harger; **OPPOSED:** none; **ABSTAINED:** none; **APPROVED:** 6-0-0.

Mulvey small boat & dock – update

DOCKO has been notified that their proposal for this dock has been approved.

Kirtland Landing: update

This grant is due by 3/1/14. It is being worked on now. Senator Art Linares is trying to get a DOT official to work with R. Potvin from the USFWLS, John Riggio Director of Public Works and T. ODell. DOT approval is integral to the grant approval for this project.

New Business:

Support for Legislation for Open Space

In a report from the CT Council on Environmental Quality, it was stated that many state parks, forests and agricultural lands do not have the language in their deeds to protect them in perpetuity. Once land is designated as open space, it should only be used for the purposes under which it was purchased.

This bill is intended to properly cover land of high conservation value, clarify that the state will preserve these lands, place conservation restrictions on deeds and make the state conveyance process more transparent.

T. ODell would like to show support for this bill at a meeting at 8:00 a.m. on 2/19/14. Land that the Conservation Commission has purchased as has a conservation easement on it, so conservation protections are in place.

MOTION: to send testimony to the committees hearing the bill, RB 70, in support of legislation, for open space. **MADE:** by D. Harger; **SECONDED:** by J. Rie; **VOTED IN FAVOR:** B. Peterson, M. Marx, J. Rie, R. Bell, M. Oryl, D. Harger; **OPPOSED:** none; **ABSTAINED:** none; **APPROVED:** 6-0-0.

Reports

Planning Commission

Zoning Commission

Inland Wetlands Commission – T. ODell explained the outcomes of the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses referrals and Zoning Commission referrals that were sent to the Conservation Commission for their review and recommendations at their 1/28/14 Special Meeting. The details and motions for all of the referrals are in the Inland Wetlands & Watercourses and Zoning Commission’s meeting minutes.

**Harbor Commission
Town Center Committee
Adopt –A- Spot**

D. Harger said the Chairman of the Westbrook Garden Club asked him if the Conservation Commission was discussing the tree cutting being done by CL&P & UI. D. Harger told the person said that the Conservation Commission would investigate the situation before they got involved.

T. ODeIl suggested Commissioners read the article published in “The Habitat” which was written about actions that came out of the state legislature 2 years ago regarding tree cutting, and a tree cutting task force put together by Governor Malloy. The issues of protecting trees versus recognizing problems with trees were discussed. T. ODeIl also mentioned that there is great information on the DEEP’s web site on tree cutting and placement of trees.

MOTION: to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 p.m. until the next Regularly Scheduled Meeting of the Westbrook Conservation Commission which will be on Tuesday, March 18, 2014 at 7:00 P.M. in the South Meeting Room of the Mulvey Municipal Center, 866 Boston Post Road. **MADE:** by M. Marx; **SECONDED:** by D. Harger; **VOTED IN FAVOR:** M. Marx, B. Peterson, M. Oryl, D. Harger, J. Rie, R. Bell; **OPPOSED:** none; **ABSTAINED:** none.; **APPROVED:** 6-0-0.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathleen Noyes
Recording Clerk

cc: Planning Commission
Zoning Commission
Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Commission

There was one correction made. The spelling of Kit Bishop’s name was corrected on page 3.