

WESTBROOK CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Regular Meeting Minutes – March 16, 2010

Members present: Chairman Tom ODell, Bob Peterson, Marty Marx, John Rie, Don Harger Mike Oryl and Randy Bell.

Call to Order: Chairman Tom ODell called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m. Chairman ODell stated that Don Harger was now an official member of the Commission.

Minutes – February 22, 2010: Upon a motion by Mike Oryl, seconded by Randy Bell, it was: **VOTED:** Unanimously to approve the minutes of February 22, 2010 with the following correction: Under “Members Present” – change John “Sie” to John “Rie”.

Bills: Upon a motion by John Rie, seconded by Marty Marx, it was: **VOTED:** Unanimously to approve payment of the following bills: \$18.47 to Kathleen Kelemen for Secretarial duties.

Correspondence:

1. Survey from CRERPA concerning view shed protection in the CT River Estuary and Gateway Region. All members were asked to complete the survey.
2. Letter from First Selectman Noel Bishop stating that Don Harger was appointed as a member of the Commission.
3. Information on the legal procedure for acting upon land use applications.
4. 2/2/10 IWWC minutes.
5. 3/2/10 IWWC minutes.
6. 11/4/09 IWWC corrected minutes.
7. February IWWC Agent report.

Chairman’s Report:

1. Chairman ODell stated that he attended the CT statewide forest roundtable regarding visions and principals.
2. Chairman ODell asked for a motion to add 2010/2011 Budget to the agenda.
Upon a motion by Marty Marx, seconded by John Rie, it was:
VOTED: Unanimously to add “2010/2011 Budget” under Old Business.

Open Space Program:

- **HH Gorge: Parking and potential addition of Ross 7.5 acres:**
Chairman ODell stated that he has had numerous conversations with Steve Ross. Mr. Ross stated that after all of the discussions that he has had with his family, he feels that it is best that hire his own appraiser. Once he does this, they will develop a minimum price that they will accept. Chairman ODell had a Real Estate Agent look at other lots in town and his research shows that lot prices range from \$70,000 to \$299,000 south of Route 1 and \$45,000 to \$169,000 north of Route 1. We have a copy of the previous purchase & sale agreement to have reviewed by the Town Attorney. The Commission should come up with a maximum price that the Town could or would pay for the property, or determine if we want to spend the money for this property because of other possible purchases. Mr. Ross has also stated that he wants to move the proposed parking area 10’ closer to the road.
- **Russo Property: Land appraisal:** Chairman ODell stated that a summary appraisal has been done by Steve Flannigan. The appraisal includes

everything from raw land to land with buildings on it as well as approved sub-divisions. The bottom line is \$541,000 with sub-division approval (\$160,000 per lot) or \$1,920,000 with sub-division approval. TPL had contacted Mr. Russo and he has stated that he wanted \$3,000,000. Chairman ODell remembers his originally stating that he wanted \$2,000,000. We have until June to get the grant together. Mr. Russo has stated that at this time, he is not interested in negotiations less than \$3,000,000 because of all that he has spent up to this point. He is before the Planning Commission at this time, and then will go before the IWWC for a Public Hearing on April 6th. Chairman ODell is waiting for Amy of TPL to get back to him. If the Town does not purchase the property and it is developed, we will still get 50% as open space.

- **Horse Hill Woods: Schedule GPS review and trail clearing/markings:** Chairman ODell and John Rie will coordinate a time. All members will be notified when this will take place. Some clearing has already been done.
- **Salt Island Overlook – Restoration – next steps:** Chairman ODell will be writing a Long Island Sound Futures Grant. It was stated that the Town Engineers have a lot of experience in writing grants. Chairman ODell will find out how much it would cost to have Woodard & Curren write the Grant or review the grant after written. It is not sure whether the parking lot will be covered by this grant. Chairman ODell walked the property with a Long Island Sound UConn program representative.
- **Chapman Mill Pond: Dam Maintenance: schedule meeting:** Chairman ODell stated that the meeting with the Sciongays to look at the dam will be held on March 30th or 31st. While there, the trails on the west side of the pond can be looked at.
- **Open Space Plan: Incorporating ground water recharge areas:** Nothing to report.
- **Open Space Fund: Community Investment Act State grants:** Nothing to report.

Mulvey Environment Education Walkway: Intern: Chairman ODell stated that he would like to look into applying for a grant through the Westbrook Foundation for the purpose of installing a dock that can be used for the use of canoes, kayaks and crabbing.

Plan of Conservation and Development: There was a workshop held on 3/15/10 which Chairman ODell attended. A lot of good comments were made.

Old Business:

- **Mapping ground water recharge areas: Update:** Chairman ODell stated that students had this week off, but they did meet with him, Meg Parulis and the Clinton Town Planner. They are interested in the Menunketesuck as being part of their work, as well as the Patchaug all the way up to Haddam.
- **Russo Conservation Sub-division: IWWC Public Hearing:** The Public Hearing was extended from April 6 to May 4, 2010.
- **Conservation Commission Budget 2010/2011:** Chairman ODell stated that the Board of Selectmen has cut the budget by 48%. Upon further review, this is not the case.

- Chairman ODell stated that \$1,591.43 is owed to All Habitat for the invasive control treatment for Salt Island Overlook.
Upon a motion by John Rie, seconded by Mike Oryl, it was:
VOTED: Unanimously to approve the payment of \$1,591.43 to All Habitat for the invasive control treatment for Salt Island Overlook.

New Business:

- **Zoning appeal No. 10-06: Lot 17 Pointina Road: to allow 6.1' set back where 50' is required:** Commission Member Bob Peterson recused himself from this matter. Chairman ODell stated that this is a small lot that backs up to the salt marsh. The applicant is requesting 6.01' setback instead of 50' in order to build a new house and install a rain garden. The septic will be located in the front. They are proposing an engineered storm water system which will be located in the 6.01' area. ZBA has not requested a DEP review.
Upon a motion by Randy Bell, seconded by Mike Oryl, it was:
VOTED: Unanimously to write a letter to Mary Beth Hart of DEP requesting a DEP review of this application.
- Adopt-A-Spot Program: Potential for Commission involvement: Chairman ODell has spoken with Deb Rie about this and feels that this is a really good program. Other towns have this program. The purpose is to take on places that have historically not been looked at. Getting someone to adopt the Mulvey walkway would be great. The program is still being worked on and they are looking at the level of interest. Chairman ODell stated that he is looking for support this program. If anyone has any ideas or suggestions, contact Deb Rie.

Reports:

- Planning Commission: Nothing to report.
- Zoning Commission: Nothing to report.
- Inland Wetlands Commission: Nothing to report.
- Harbor Commission: John Rie gave an update on the status of dredging.
- Town Center Committee: Nothing to report.

Upon a motion by Marty Marx, seconded by Don Harger, it was:

VOTED: Unanimously to adjourn at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

Kathleen H. Kelemen, Secretary