



**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, March 15, 2022, 7:00 p.m.
Virtual Meeting**

Members Present:

Molly Bernstein, Chair; Chris Bazinet, Randy Bell, and Marty Marx

Members Absent: Sheridan Bauman

Staff Present:

Heidi Wallace, Inland Wetlands Agent

Kathleen King, Recording Clerk

Call to Order

M. Bernstein called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Minutes- February 15, 2022

MOTION: to approve the February 15, 2022 Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes as submitted. **MADE:** by C. Bazinet; **SECONDED:** by M. Marx. **VOTED IN FAVOR:** C. Bazinet, R. Bell, M. Marx. **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINED:** None; **APPROVED:** 3-0-0.

Bills:

MOTION: to approve the time sheet from Recording Clerk Kathy King for a total of \$114.44. **MADE:** by R. Bell; **SECONDED:** by M. Marx; **VOTED IN FAVOR:** C. Bazinet, R. Bell, M. Marx; **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINED:** None; **APPROVED:** 3-0-0.

Correspondence –

The following correspondence was received: Zoning Commission 1/24/22 and 2/8/22 Regular Meeting Minutes and letter of resignation from Conservation Commission Member John Rie, dated 3/10/22.

Chairman's Report –

John Rie, Conservation Commission Regular Member, has resigned. M. Bernstein recognized him for his years of volunteer service and project involvement in the Conservation Commission, and she said he will be missed.

Most of the Tom O'Dell Memorial Open Space has been blazed by Chris Hallahan and crew. Phragmites still need to be cleared for the bottom loop.

M. Bernstein has been mailing Deb Rie regarding the pollinator pathway project. The Garden Club will be meeting in late March.

M. Bernstein attended the Capital Budget Request Meeting. She is planning to attend the annual operating budget meeting in front of the Board of Finance tomorrow. She will meet with M. Marx before the meeting to review the budget. The Conservation Commission is requesting \$50,000.00 a year for the next three (3) years to replenish the Open Space Fund. This amount was requested after a discussion of the Conservation Commission with Marilyn Ozols, Chair of the Planning Commission.

New Business:

Prioritize action plan items:

- Ponzillo Property – construct right-of-way along river off Breakneck Hill (BNH) Road to connect greenway to Chapman Mill Pond.

R. Bell will look into this further to see what land the Town owns, where the property lines are, and he will see if there's a possibility of putting in a walkway. There could potentially be an entirely connected greenway. R. Bell said if there's a feasible plan, he can talk with the CC about getting an estimate from a contractor for next year's budget. The cost will depend on how long the connector is and how high off the ground it will be. M. Marx suggested the construction of a walkway might be of interest to an Eagle Scout candidate.

- Seven (7) acres owned by town off Breakneck Hill Road with rock feature

R. Bell said this property is at the tail end of the Ponzillo Property. At one time, there was discussion of an easement to get to the Chapman Mill Property. He said he will review the documents on that.

There was discussion about putting a trail on a piece of town owned land roughly ten (10) feet wide and roughly four hundred (400) feet long. It will likely need to be surveyed. M. Molly suggested contacting Clinton's Conservation Commission to talk about connecting property with pathways. There is a piece of property owned by Westbrook nearby, but not adjacent. There are likely two (2) choices, the easement from the Ponzillo's or a connection from Clinton.

Open Space Projects:

- Purchase New Trail Markers

M. Bernstein suggested purchasing new trail markers that are rectangular, colored, plastic markers that are the shape of a dollar bill. They are easy to put up. She said she will look at the trails and see what's already marked. This would be instead of a painted blaze on a tree. She would like to have all of the trails in Horse Hill Woods have their own colors. M. Bernstein will look to see how much the trail markers cost, and she will bring an estimate for the CC to vote on.

- Summer Interns: prioritizing trail maintenance objectives

M. Marx can have the summer interns put up these new trail markers. He said he will add it to their job description.

Horse Hill Gorge is on hold until there is a parking lot agreement.

The interns can patrol the barrier islands. It's relatively easy to patrol Salt Island. Patrolling the other islands would take more negotiating. M. Marx met with the ranger at Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge in Westbrook last year. The ranger was very interested in expanding the patrols. He was interested in trying to form a coalition between the owners of the barrier islands, the State, the Federal Government and the Town of Westbrook. M. Marx recommended having the interns monitor Salt Island at a minimum.

- Daria Nettleton's property easement discussion at Horse Hill Woods trailhead off Breakneck Hill Road

M. Bernstein explained that D. Nettleton's property overlaps with Town Property at the entrance to the trailhead off of Breakneck Hill Road. D. Nettleton is not very comfortable with an easement. She's concerned about liability. Options are being discussed.

Old Business:

- Update on Toby Hill VIII formality; status of document re-signing by First Selectman John Hall

H. Wallace reported that J. Hall re-signed the documents, and they have been submitted.

R. Bell went to Horse Hill Woods to take the sign that needed to be remounted. He said he needs to pick up some posts to remount the sign.

Reports: Planning, Zoning, Inland Wetlands, Town Center, Preserve Ad Hoc Committee, and Harbor Management Commission

<p><u>MOTION:</u> to adjourn the meeting at 8:02 p.m., until the next Regularly Scheduled Meeting of the Westbrook Conservation Commission which will be on Tuesday, April 19, 2022. <u>MADE:</u> by R. Bell; <u>SECONDED:</u> by C. Bazinet; <u>VOTED IN FAVOR:</u> C. Bazinet, R. Bell, M. Marx; <u>OPPOSED:</u> None; <u>ABSTAINED:</u> None; <u>APPROVED:</u> 3-0-0.</p>

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathleen King, Recording Clerk