



**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, May 17, 2022, 7:00 p.m.
Mulvey Municipal Center - Multi-Media Room and via Zoom
Hybrid Meeting**

Members Present:

Marty Marx, Vice Chair; Sheridan Bauman, Chris Bazinet, Randy Bell and Steve Bergeron

Members Absent:

Molly Bernstein, Chair

Staff Present:

Heidi Wallace, Inland Wetlands Agent
Kathleen King, Recording Clerk

Call to Order

Vice Chairman M. Marx called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. He welcomed new member Steve Bergeron.

Minutes- April 19, 2022

MOTION: to approve the April 19, 2022 Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes as submitted with the following amendment: under Trail blaze markers to purchase from Voss Signs, M. Bernstein went to the CT Forest and Park Association Headquarters, not S. Bauman. **MADE:** by S. Bauman; **SECONDED:** by R. Bell. **VOTED IN FAVOR:** S. Bauman, C. Bazinet, R. Bell and S. Bergeron. **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINED:** None; **APPROVED:** 4-0-0.

Bills:

MOTION: to approve the time sheet from Recording Clerk Kathy King for a total of \$128.75. **MADE:** by R. Bell; **SECONDED:** by C. Bazinet; **VOTED IN FAVOR:** S. Bauman, C. Bazinet, R. Bell and S. Bergeron; **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINED:** None; **APPROVED:** 4-0-0.

Correspondence –

The following correspondence was received: 4/25/22 Zoning Commission Regular Meeting Minutes, an updated CC budget report and an instructional sheet on the Town Hall panic alarm activation and response.

Chairman's Report –

M. Bernstein planted the plants purchased for the Tom O'Dell Memorial Open Space, and the interns will be watering and maintaining them.

M. Bernstein started a job with the CT Forest and Park Association. She may not be available to attend some of the upcoming CC meetings. M. Marx will chair the meetings in her place.

There was discussion about the best location to store older, important Conservation Commission documents for Commission members and for public access. K. Butterworth said he could set up something on the town's web site. M. Marx said he will discuss this with K. Butterworth further.

New Business:

- Ivey Gianetti – 28-acre parcel on Horse Hill Road, Map 155/ Lot 003. owned by J.B.W. Group, LLC.

Ivey Gianetti was present to represent J.B.W. Group, LLC., at the meeting along with her sister Katie Wright and her partner John Williams. This 28-acre parcel abuts a 59-acre parcel owned by the State of CT which is currently land locked. The CC needs to decide whether or not to move forward with the process of acquisition. I. Gianetti said that she has talked with Matthew Starr from the CT DEEP, and with First Selectman John Hall. The property is along Route 145. Parking spaces can be created. The CT DEEP reviewed the property, and it was deemed available for acquisition. M. Marx and M. Bernstein decided to bring this land acquisition opportunity to the Conservation Commission to discuss next steps. The State property is south of the Horse Hill Gorge property. There are 2 parcels in between. To the north is another land locked parcel. M. Marx said this property would provide access to the Horse Hill Gorge property. The Leatherman's Cave is nearby as well.

MOTION: to explore the acquisition of the 28-acre property owned by J. B. W. Group, LLC., on Horse Hill Road, Map 155/ Lot 003. **MADE:** by R. Bell **SECONDED:** by S. Bauman; **VOTED IN FAVOR:** S. Bauman, C. Bazinet, R. Bell, S. Bergeron; **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINED:** None; **APPROVED:** 4-0-0.

M. Marx said the next step is to have an appraisal done on the property. H. Wallace can recommend appraisal companies. There is \$4,000.00 left in the Open Space Budget. M. Marx would like to talk with J. Hall, and he suggested H. Wallace contact M. Starr. They could look to the State for matching funds. There is also the option to reach out to the Trust for Public Land (TPL) to help with seed funding, attorneys, etc.

There was a Town Meeting last week, and funding was approved for Open Space Purchases at a sum of \$50,000.00 per year. The purchase of this land would have to go to Town Meeting for a vote.

J. Williams asked if the family should attend future meetings regarding this land acquisition. M. Marx said there may be Ad Hoc meetings that the property owners will be invited to. In addition, there will be Board of Finance and Board of Selectmen meetings.

- Coastal Resiliency Grant from Long Island Sound Futures Fund – letter of support from the Conservation Commission

H. Wallace wrote a letter of support from the Conservation Commission for the Coastal Resilience Grant from the Long Island Sound Futures Fund.

- Town Ordinance for the protection and preservation of historic stone walls – Bill Neale asked the Conservation Commission to write a letter of support to the Board of Selectmen

M. Bernstein attended a meeting to speak in favor of the preservation of historic stone walls. She will be writing a letter of support on behalf of the Conservation Commission as well.

Open Space Projects:

- Ponzillo Property

M. Marx reported that this property goes from Chapman Mill to Break Neck Hill Road. M. Bernstein is trying to see if it would be feasible to build a walkway to go from Chapman Mill to Horse Hill Woods. If not, the Conservation Commission can request an easement from the Ponzillos to access Break Neck Hill Road for a greenway. A walkway may be able to be built across Chapman Mill, but there are a lot of wetlands there.

- Purchase Voss Signs trail blaze markers & 1 ½ inch aluminum siding nails (\$500.00 budget)

M. Bernstein has received a couple of quotes. One is for 300 tags in 6 different colors for \$1,800.00, and the other option is 500 tags in 6 different colors. M. Marx felt, and Commission members agreed, that 300 tags for \$1,800.00 would be enough to get started. Ten boxes of nails would be \$98.00. There is money available in the Ground Maintenance line item, 225.5, of the Conservation Commission budget to pay for the tags and nails.

- Summer Interns

M. Marx reported that Summer Intern Zach will be back this summer. He is very happy Zach will be back. M. Marx had an interview today with Colin Heilman. He's an Eagle Scout, and he just finished his first year of college. M. Marx made him an offer, and he will let M. Marx know by late tomorrow. If he accepts the offer, they will be all set with summer interns. M. Marx said he's confident that Zach and Colin will do a great job.

Old Business:

- Pollinator Pathway mapping corridors, metal signs – Sheridan updates

S. Bauman looked at a GIS map of the towns abutting Westbrook regarding locations for pollinator pathways. Pollinator pathways are created with native plants that will attract bees and butterflies.

K. King suggested for the town of Clinton that S. Bauman contact Sherry Hynes, the Conservation Commission Clerk, who will put her in touch with the Clinton Conservation Commission.

H. Wallace said forty packets of seeds were given away at the Town Hall for Earth Day in April. All of the packets of seeds were taken and hopefully planted.

- Conservation Commission hike from Chapman Mill Pond to Ponzillo/Break Neck Hill Road boundary

There was nothing new to report at this time.

- CT Trails Day Hike at Chapman Mill Pond – Saturday, June 4 from 10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.

The Conservation Commission encourages people to join the hike and park in the State-owned lot at the end of Chapman Mill Pond Road. S. Bauman will share this information with the ecology teacher at the high school. People can sign up in advance or just come to the hike.

- Toby Hill VIII update

H. Wallace reported that the Town Attorney is working on the drainage rights and the easement to the Toby Hill VIII property. The owner has to own the property for 10 years to obtain the designation of a forest. The owner has not owned the property for 10 years. If the details of the purchase don't get resolved by June 30, 2022, the CC will have to find the money to create the Toby Hill Management Plan next year. The money will not carry over.

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

<p><u>MOTION:</u> to adjourn the meeting at 8:03 p.m., until the next Regularly Scheduled Meeting of the Westbrook Conservation Commission which will be on Tuesday, June 21, 2022. <u>MADE:</u> by S. Bergeron; <u>SECONDED:</u> by R. Bell; <u>VOTED IN FAVOR:</u> S. Bauman, C. Bazinet, R. Bell and S. Bergeron; <u>OPPOSED:</u> None; <u>ABSTAINED:</u> None; <u>APPROVED:</u> 4-0-0.</p>

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathleen King, Recording Clerk