

**TOWN OF DURHAM  
Conservation Commission  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, February 10, 2015  
7:00 at the Durham Public Library**

**Members present:** Carl Dahlman, Rick Huntley, Bob Melvin, Josh Miller, Bob Thody, and Bill Ward

**Members excused:** Jon Herzig, Bill LaFlamme, and Lucy Meigs

**Call to Order/Roll Call:** Rick Huntley called the meeting to order at 7:07 PM.

**Amendments to Agenda/Approval of Agenda:** Bill Ward, seconded by Bob Thody to approve the February agenda as distributed, made a motion. Motion passed with abstention by Bob Melvin.

**Approval of January regular meeting minutes:** Josh Miller, seconded by Bill Ward to approve the January 13, 2015 regular meeting minutes as distributed, made a motion. Motion passed with abstentions by Bob Melvin and Bill Ward.

**Payment of Bills:** Bob Melvin, seconded by Josh Miller to approve payment of \$35 to Pam Huntley for secretarial services, \$55 to Lucy Meigs for CT Invasive Plant Working Group Symposium attendance, \$45 registration for Rick Huntley to attend the Connecticut Land Conservation Council conference and \$50 registration for Rick Huntley to attend the UCONN Natural Resources conference, made a motion. Motion passed with abstention by Rick Huntley.

**Public Session:** Joe Pasquale was present and asked who will be managing new parcels on Guilford Road that have been acquired by the Town. Rick Huntley responded that the Conservation Commission would not be responsible for management since it was not acquired as open space. He has heard that the First Selectman is intending to form a management committee to include both the Conservation Commission and the Agricultural Commission for those parcels. Rick Huntley has suggested to the Town is perhaps in a position where it needs a land stewardship committee, perhaps independent of the commissions. Roger Passavant was present to inquire about the tank issue at Deerfield Farm.

**Mytowntrails.com Presentation and Proposal – Eric Francis:** Eric Francis and Tim Laubacher were present to give a presentation about mytowntrails.com. They were unable to give a live demo because of poor Wi-Fi access in the meeting room. The app uses official trail maps of the towns that participate. They will map the trails and put the features on the map. The app is free to users and the participating towns pay an annual fee. The app has real time alerts capabilities about trails. There is also an SOS feature. You can track yourself walking on a trail. There are game features that can be purchased to encourage community engagement. This may be of interest to the Park and Recreation department. A user would be able to print maps from their home computer. Discussion ensued. The Commission is interested in the \$500/year package provided that the contract terms are acceptable.

**Property Steward Reports/Parcel Status Updates**

- Whites Farm – Jack Stahl: no report.
- Pent Road – Melynda Naples: Melynda reported that the outside motion lights on the barn are not working properly. She would like to change out the interior lights in the barn with approval from the Commission. Josh Miller, seconded by Carl Dahlman to approve the upgrade of the interior barn lighting using Planeta as the electrical contractor, made a motion. Motion passed unanimously. Melynda gave an overview and update on the water quality issue. The routine water test that was done January 19<sup>th</sup> came back with high levels of coliform bacteria and positive for E. coli as well. She treated the well with a shock of chlorine and the well tested okay the next week. The water storage tank that was installed was leaking and has been sealed again. The water in the tank had a high coliform bacteria count and also was positive for E. coli. Discussion ensued. Rick Huntley read recommendations and requests from notes he took at a meeting about the water quality issue. The meeting was attended by Laura Francis, Bill Milardo, Kurt Bober, Rick Huntley, and Melynda Naples. The following were mentioned: 1) Development of cost to drill a new well, 2) recommendation to modify the tire around the well so that it doesn't collect water, 3) Health department recommends quarterly testing and testing after use, 4) request to move equipment so that it is not parked within 75-feet of the well head and 5) the Town will test the tank, Melynda should not open it and do testing.

Melynda requested a UV treatment system instead of chlorinating the well. She is unable to sell raw milk if she gets bad water test results. Rick Huntley, seconded by Bob Thody that the Commission states the water tank has been installed closer than appropriate to the existing well on Deerfield Farm and that the tank should be emptied and removed or relocated as soon as possible, made a motion. Further discussion ensued. Motion passed unanimously.

- Howd Road – Josh Miller: no report.
- Pisgah Mountain and Cream Pot Valley – Bill LaFlamme & Rick Huntley: no report.
- Curtis Woodlands – Mark Smolley & Charles Ingold: Rick forgot to bring the email from Charles.
- Portion of Wimler Property with Public Access – Dick Porter: no report.
- Sawmill Road – Ray Koba: no report.

### ***Current and New Business***

**Discussion of any available open space for development of soccer fields – Scheduling Coginchaug Soccer Club request:** The club has asked for a list of properties that could be developed for soccer fields. Rick received an email from Dave Stygar identifying what properties could be developed with outdoor recreation facilities. The only properties that could be developed for outdoor recreation activities are Sawmill, Curtis Woodland, Pent Road, and White Farm. He will forward that email to members. Bill LaFlamme emailed Rick indicating there are lots of other properties around town, mostly regional school district property, which may be more suited to this type of activity. The soccer club is looking at these as well. They want to make sure they explore all the options before moving forward.

**Status/review of proposed open-space regulations revisions:** no update.

**Status of Review of Plan of Conservation and Development:** no update.

**Index of all open areas as mandated by the Connecticut General Statutes, Section 7-131a (b):** Rick has a spreadsheet of properties in town that are dedicated under Public Act 490 and a list of all easements on properties in Town.

**Budget Request for 2015/2016 Fiscal Year:** The budget request has been submitted. Rick read what has been submitted. The budget meeting with the Board of Finance is February 21, 2015. Rick Huntley and Bob Thody will attend the budget meeting.

**Sign for Memorial Tree Grove:** Rick Huntley contacted Torrance Downes with the River COG to do design work for the sign. It would be a large panel design with a photograph of the area and an insert with an outline of the trees. There would be a legend with the outline indicating the species and who the tree was for.

**Status of ERT Requests:** The request for a Curtis Woodlands comprehensive management plan has been submitted.

**Website Content for Conservation Commission:** Rick suggests at least Memorial Tree information and a hunting lottery write-up. Alicia Fonash-Willett is willing to work with the Commission once there is something to post. Bob Melvin will check with Laura Francis to see if there are plans for a tree in memory of Ray Kalinowski.

### **Report of Co-Chairmen:**

- a. Review of January Launch by Cato Rocket Club – Rick Huntley and Bob Melvin attended the launch. The group was moved further west from where they had been launching. Rick sat in the driveway on John's Way during a small rocket and large rocket launch. The small rockets didn't make much noise. The large rocket made some noise. No loud speaker announcements were made while they were there.
- b. Status of water quality issues at Deerfield Farm – discussed earlier in meeting.

**Adjournment:** The meeting adjourned at 9:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Pam Huntley  
Recording Secretary