



Approved MINUTES
Ridgefield Conservation Commission
Town Hall annex, 66 Prospect Street
Ridgefield, CT 06877
(203) 431-2713 • conservation@ridgefieldct.org

MARCH 22, 2021 at 7 P.M.
Via ZOOM

Present:	Carroll Brewster	Jim Coyle	Allan Welby	Erik Keller
	Jean Linville	Matt Sharp	Jim Liptack	Dave Cronin
	Kitsey Snow	Jack Kace	Daniel Levine	

Guest Attendees: Peggy Thomas, Craig Hobbs, Colleen Lake

Mr. Coyle chaired the meeting. Ms. Campbell-Gibson took the minutes.

ADD AGENDA ITEM

UPON motion duly made (Keller), seconded (Kace), and carried, it was **RESOLVED** to add a discussion of Enforcement Action at Tanglewood Court to the agenda as item 3.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

UPON motion duly made (Keller), seconded (Sharp), and carried, it was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of March 8, 2021 be approved and ordered filed in the Town Hall.

2. OPEN SPACE

Designation of Open Space Properties

Ms. Snow asked how open space was derived by the commission and what is shown on the Open space Map. Mr. Cronin answered that a list of over 400 properties owned by the town, was taken from the assessor's grand list and crosschecked with documents in the office and deed information found on the town clerk's document imaging system. These include Conservation Commission owned land, Land Conservancy owned land, vacant land with deed restrictions designating the land as open space in perpetuity, Parks and Recreation land and some parcels that are in limbo. Not all properties listed are clearly or are partial open spaces – Shadow Lake is an example, as is Kiah's Brook. Some properties were included that should not have been – East Ridge is an example.

Dr. Kace suggested looking into changing the wording of those deeds that do not currently have wording to guarantee open space in perpetuity, because while the current administration looks favorably on open space, the next administrations may not. Mr. Levine suggested a subcommittee to look into this and suggested this could be something college interns could tackle. Mr. Coyle said he would approach the First Selectman first, to determine is support for this project. He asked Mr. Cronin to identify problematic properties as a start. He referred to a list Colleen Lake, the previous administrator, compiled of all the properties deed information to be found in the office and said he would send this list to the commissioners.

Mar-Joy Pond/Casey Lane – new trail

A neighbor at Mar-Joy pond has built a trail running from his property to the red trail. Mr. Cronin and Mr. Levine report that they have hiked it to the rocky outcrop overlook and both agree that is it a well-constructed

trail with a nice view. The problem is this trail will lead hikers to the neighbor's house. It was constructed on private land, which hikers will not know, with a portion build on open space land to link the new trail to the red trail. Constructing anything on open space land without the express permission of the commission, is in violation of open space rules. Mr. Cronin will approach the homeowner to find a solution.

Open Space Purchase

Mr. Coyle reported that discussion was continuing with the Boy Scouts regarding the purchase of property for open space. The Boy Scouts title search is proving difficult.

Other

North Salem Road parcel D10-0018 has been offered or purchase to the commission by the new owner. This property is an undeveloped wetland parcel. The commissioners plan to do a site walk on Thursday April 1 at 10 am. Ms. Campbell-Gibson will request permission from the homeowner. Further discussion will take place at the next commission meeting on April 5, 2021.

Mr. Welby reports that the fence protecting the plantings along the stone wall at McKeon, is down. Ms. Snow said she is aware it is being knocked over and that she regularly goes to McKeon to check and fix the fence when needed. He also reports that the rails left at Lauzen field are still there.

Mr. Welby asked the commissioners to think about whether Lauzen will be hayed this year.

3. ENFORCEMENT ACTION – TANGLEWOOD COURT

There has been a report of open space violations on the town open space parcel on Tanglewood Court (E19-0030) by the homeowner at no 25 Tanglewood Court. Mr. C. Hobbs of 143 Wilton Road West sent a report and photos via the First Selectman's office showing dumping of tree branches, a basketball hoop, partly cleared space creating a lawn, mowing and he reports this homeowner fertilizes the cleared area.

Mr. Liptack has visited the area to assess. Mr. Hobbs addressed the commission. He has approached the homeowner when he saw their lawn care company fertilizing the lawn created by encroachment onto open space land. Mr. Hobbs reports that the homeowner said he was aware he was encroaching on open space.

Mr. Coyle will act as enforcement officer since a replacement officer has not yet been found after Ms. Beth Peyser resigned. Mr. Coyle will send a notice of probable violation to the homeowner of 25 Tanglewood Court.

A separate communication regarding parcel E19-0030 came to the conservation office from the homeowner at no 3 Tanglewood Court, requesting to purchase the parcel. The commissioners collectively agree that selling open space land is not something to consider.

4. ONE TREE PLANTED

Ms. Snow reported again on the request accepted by One Tree Planted (first report back was at the February 22 meeting). The commission are now getting +/- 100 shrubs and trees and +/- 200 saplings. The trees to be planted at Aldrich will be planted near the car park. A work party is needed to clear the invasive winged euonymus in preparation for planting. Ms. Snow will organize this.

5. COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP

Mr. Brewster is resigning his membership. He first joined the commission in 1968 (and then later starting in 1999 to the present). This was a time when farms were breaking up and many parcels come to the commission through subdivisions. Mr. Brewster feels he is leaving the commission when it is the strongest it has ever been, thanks to the leadership of Mr. Coyle and the people chosen to represent the membership. He gave special thanks to Mr. Coyle and Dr. Kace for their help and support.

Mr. Coyle thanked Mr. Brewster for the years of service. He will inform the Board of Selectmen. A new treasurer will need to be nominated since Mr. Brewster was the treasurer for the commission.

Mr. Coyle proposed a motion to instate Jim Liptack as a full member.

UPON motion duly made (Kace), seconded (Keller), and carried, it was **RESOLVED** to recommend the Board of Selectmen appoint Mr. Jim Liptack as a full member of the commission.

Ms. Campbell-Gibson will advertise the new alternate position.

6. PUBLIC OUTREACH

Mr. Sharp has given presentations at Troops 116 and 19 regarding conservation work this summer. He will be leading a work party of cubs on April 10 between 9am and 12 pm at McKeon to do some invasive clearing. There are life scouts who need conservation hours. Mr. Sharp asked the commissioners to think of jobs these scouts could do. Ms. Snow said scouts could help with the tree planting.

Mr. Levine will write a piece on the collaboration with the troops ahead of the summer season. He asked the commissioners to continue to look for and send him ideas for social media posts.

7. MEETING ATTENDANCE

No issues were reported with the required meeting attendance.

MEETING FEEDBACK – Ms. Snow attended both the last PZC and IWB meetings and reports:

- PZC: 900 Ridgebury Road Solar Panels app (Boeringher) Passed with conditions (receipt of SW report after 1/2" rainwater event and SW maintenance plan) 63-67 Prospect St app: This was to replace only the 2007 landscape plan for the site. Approved with about 30% native plantings, no invasives. It was not a public hearing so our letter was put into the file but we did not have the opportunity to speak. Changes to ADU regulations: Passed 8-1. The new regulations allow up to 1200 sq. ft. ADU (sq. footage is on a gradual scale dependent on the size of the main residence).
- IWB: Fulling Mill Lane Pool: Approved. 45 South St. (Ligi Way) discussion on materials to be used on the pilings and the walkways (applicant is going to straight cement (not bituminous) and was asked to consider using stone dust or pervious pavers). Discussion to be continued at the next meeting.

8. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

Emails have been circulating regarding the disposal of invasive species. Mr. Welby will send a link to the UCONN document dealing with this issue. Ms. Campbell-Gibson will add this onto the RCC website.

The advertisement for the two summer workers is out. HR is collecting applications.

The next RCC meeting will be held on **Monday** April 5, 2021 at 7:00 P.M.

ADJOURNMENT

UPON motion duly made (Brewster), seconded (Keller), and carried, it was **RESOLVED** that the meeting adjourn at 8:53 P.M.