



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

Meeting
November 29, 2021 at 7 P.M.
In person

Present: James Coyle Roberta Barbieri Erik Keller
 Jack Kace Jim Liptack Jean Linville
 Daniel C. Levine Matt Sharp Kitsey Snow
 Allan Welby

Guests: J. Capocci

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

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

UPON motion duly made (Keller), seconded (Kace), and carried, it was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of November 1, 2021 be approved and ordered filed in the Town Hall. Vote: 7:0 (Absent from the November 15 meeting were Levine, Liptack, Linville)

2. ENFORCEMENT ACTION

Mr. Hally was not available to give an update.

3. CAPITAL AND ANNUAL EXPENSE BUDGET

The Capital Budget request for fence replacement at McKeon is going to be \$4,500.00 for the next 5 years.

Mr. Coyle has prepared a draft annual budget for commissioners' review and comment. The deadline for comments is Monday December 6.

4. OPEN SPACE

4.1 G08-0012 Land Donation – This item is on the agenda of the Town Meeting on December 8. Mr. Marconi asked the donor to consider splitting the land into two parcels in order to donate one parcel for development by the town and one parcel for conservation, but the landowner is not willing to split the parcel. An article in the Ridgefield Press has misquoted the definition of conserved open space causing confusion among the town's residents.

4.2 The purchase of the Boy Scout Property is to be discussed at a Public Hearing on December 8.

4.3 OSWA Grant – The documents have been resigned by Mr. Marconi and FedEx'd to DEEP. Feedback from DEEP indicate there is a 7-10 day period for funds to be approved. It will then take 7-10 days for an electronic transfer of funds directly in to our bank account.

4.4 Tree of Heaven – A patch of approximately 20 trees was cut down and treated by Mr. Sharp and Mr. Cronin. Mr. Sharp reports that there are many saplings to eradicate in the spring.

- 4.5 Tarps for McKeon Farm – Ms. Snow reports that the price of 7ml thick 50X30 foot tarps is approximately \$500. Mr. Welby reports that the price of 11ml thick 20X60 foot billboard vinyl is \$192. They are to bring definitive costs back to the commission at our next meeting for approval.
-

5. OLD GROWTH FOREST NETWORK

Mr. Levine has been in contact with the NE regional manager of the Old-Growth Forest Network regarding one of Ridgefield's forests being declared an old-growth forest. The goal of the OGFN is to create a national network of protected old-growth forests and to have at least one old-growth forest per county. There are currently no designated old-growth forests in Fairfield County. Mr. Levine and Ms. Snow have volunteered to work with Sarah Barnett of the OGFN and recommend Hemlock Hills as a designated old growth forest. The benefit to Ridgefield of having one of our forests declared an old-growth forest is press coverage and awareness of the conservation efforts in our town.

Commissioners were asked to suggest other forests to include in this initiative since there are no limits to the number of old-growth forests a county can have. Ms. Barbieri suggests Florida Preserve.

Mr. Coyle raised the concept of presenting a cluster of sites including Hemlock Hills that could amount to thousands of acres.

6. RIPARIAN ZONING AMENDMENTS

Planning and Zoning have discussed the new legislation regarding riparian buffers in Connecticut. The purpose of this legislation is to protect the Long Island Sound. Stonington has passed legislation upon which Ridgefield have modeled their proposed legislation. Ms. Snow will give further feedback on how the Conservation Commission could contribute to the terms of the proposed legislation.

7. COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Mr. Levine is working on the next newsletter.

Mr. Sharp has had a request from a scout from Troop 19 regarding installing fencing around the pollinator garden at McKeon. Ms. Snow suggests using a 2-rail high fence to keep costs down.

8. MEETINGS FOR ATTENDANCE

Two sets of meeting dates for the 2022 meeting schedule are to be considered for a vote. One proposed calendar begins on January 3 and the other begins on January 10.

A roll call vote was taken to decide which calendar to adopt. Votes for the January 3 start date are Barbieri, Coyle, Keller, Kace, and Liptack. Votes for the January 10 start date are Levine, Snow, Welby, and Sharp. (Abstained: Linville)

The January 3 start date for the 2022 meeting calendar is the one to be adopted and filed with the Town Clerk.

Mr. Levine asks for coverage for the two meetings he is scheduled to attend in December. Ms. Barbieri will attend the P&Z meeting on his behalf and Ms. Snow will attend the IWB meeting on his behalf.

9. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

Mr. Coyle informed the commissioners that the RCC has lost the use of the small conference room at the Annex due to it being taken over by the Fire Marshall as office space. Future RCC meetings will take place in the P&Z conference room or the new conference room left vacant when BOE moved to their new meeting space. Ms. Campbell-Gibson will book this new meeting room for 2022 with Ms. Escribano.

The RCC has received a letter from Ms. Hanley, a Ridgefield resident who lives along the Titicus River, regarding flooding. Ms. Snow will respond to her with recommendations for plantings along the river to absorb excess water. Ms. Barbieri suggests recommending to Ms. Hanley to attend the Norwalk River Watershed Association Flood Damage Recovery Seminar being held this Thursday.

The RCC received a request from a college student regarding a winter internship. Ms. Campbell-Gibson suggested sorting, summarizing and loading to our website all NRI documents for the current NRI update project. This matter will be discussed further at the NRI Update meeting this Friday December 3. Ms. Campbell-Gibson will get more information regarding the student's internship requirements to see if this would be a good fit.

Ms. Snow reports that Ridgefield is being sued for not meeting MS4 requirements.

An update on the NRVT Ridgefield Ramble portion – Ms. Snow, Mr. Taney, and others from the NRVTA will walk Bobby's Court in the near future to determine the best path for the trail. This will be presented at future public meetings for discussion.

ADJOURNMENT

UPON motion duly made (Keller), seconded (Barbieri), and carried, it was **RESOLVED** that the meeting adjourn at 8:05 P.M. Vote: 10:0.