



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

February 5, 2018

A meeting of the Ridgefield Conservation Commission was held at the Town Hall Annex, 66 Prospect Street, Ridgefield, Connecticut 06877 on Monday, February 5, 2018 at 7:30 p.m.

The following members were present:

Susan Baker	Eric Beckenstein	Tim Bishop
Carroll Brewster	Jim Coyle	Dave Cronin
Jack Kace	Ben Oko	
Alan Pilch	Kitsey Snow	

Absent: Dan Levine

Mr. Coyle chaired the meeting and took minutes.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the January 22, 2018 meeting (as amended) were reviewed.

UPON motion duly made, seconded and carried, it was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of January 22, 2018 are approved and ordered filed in the minute books of the Commission and the Town Hall.

2. TREASURER'S REPORT

– Mr. Coyle discussed the status of the commission's budget as of the end of Q2 (prepared by Ms. Lake) and requested that commissioners submit ideas for funding projects. Re our submissions for the capital and expense budget, Mr. Coyle indicated that we had preliminary approval for purchase of a used tractor and that our expense budget had been reduced to the 2017-18 approval levels.

3. ENFORCEMENT UPDATE

– Mr. Coyle indicated that all enforcement issues had been resolved except for the property at 25 Stonewall Lane where the home owner's attorney has said that a survey would be prepared. Mr. Cronin suggested that we should start reviewing aerial photography of our open spaces to see if we could identify other violations.

4. OPEN SPACE

Pollinator Pathway – Ms. Snow reported there is growing support for the project. A map is being drawn up and sites are being discussed. The kickoff will be a Panel Discussion at the library on April 18th, with the first planting to follow on April 22.

McKeon Farm – Maintenance Update – Mr. Coyle summarized the meetings held with Henny Penny Farm and Hans Williams re their activities at the farm. A meeting will be held on February 15 with Henny Penny to further continue the development of the maintenance plan.

Pine Mountain – Mr. Cronin described his work on a new trail to the second ledge at Pine Mountain. He also indicated that he would like to remove six to eight trees at the ledge. The commissioners supported that approach.

Wooster School – At the request of Mr. Levine, Mr. Coyle discussed the desire of the Wooster School to continue its work with the commission. Commissioners heartily endorsed working with the school. The students' work day would be June 7 with about 10 students for 4 hours. A possible project would be working with Dave Cronin on a new trail at Pine Mountain. Another student would like to work with the commission on an open space project as was done last year. Commissioners were encouraged to work with Mr. Levine on identifying and implementing projects.

5. PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION, INLAND WETLANDS BOARD

a) Meetings for Attendance

Meeting attendance was discussed and changed to the following:

Feb. 6 – Mr. Bishop & Brewster
Feb. 20 – Mr. Cronin & Kace
Feb. 27 – Mr. Pilch
Mar. 6 – Ms. Snow & Mr. Cronin
Mar. 20 – Mr. Beckenstein & Bishop
Mar. 27 – Mr. Brewster/Mr. Pilch/Ms. Baker

6. WHITBECK ESTATE

Mr. Coyle explained that Messrs. Coyle, Kace, and Brewster had objections to a letter filed by the executor to the court in 2017 and requested that it be withdrawn or substantially amended. A revised letter was received the day of this meeting. Mr. Coyle indicated that while the letter had been substantially changed, he still had some concerns and requested Messrs. Kace and Brewster to review the letter and indicate what next steps we should follow.

7. CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION

Ms. Baker updated the commission on subcommittee progress. They continue to develop information with a presentation date to the CRC on March 12. The next subcommittee meeting will be held on Saturday, February 10, 2018 at 1:00 pm in the library.

8. Chairman's Remarks – Mr. Coyle indicated that a date of August 1, 2018 was set for the Plum Island trip. All those wishing to attend need to get the appropriate personal information to Ms. Lake by May 1, 2018.

Mr. Coyle indicated that there were several openings on the Ridgefield Tree Committee. We have received one resume and that applicant will appear at our March 5 meeting.

Mr. Coyle indicated that the town had received the Reddington settlement of \$85,000. The net to the Conservation Commission was \$79,458 after legal fees. Ms. Baker indicated that we should use some of the funds to replant the open space area where the trees had been cut down by the violator and the commissioners agreed.

9. EXECUTIVE SESSION – Open Space Acquisition

UPON motion duly made, seconded and unanimously carried it was AGREED to enter executive session at 8:20 pm. The executive session concluded at 8:45 pm.

After the close of the Executive Session a motion was made by Mr. Brewster to authorize the expenditure of \$3,000 for a property appraisal. The motion passed unanimously.

Dr. Oko also updated the commission on several projects:

- The previously authorized sales of our property on Ledges Road will be discussed at the February 7, 2018 BOS meeting.
 - He is working with RACE on creating an Energy Commission for the town with a goal of more energy efficiency and cost savings at town facilities.
 - He will be discussing the Sustainable Connecticut program at the BOS meeting.
 - The fracking ordinance will go forward. It will be presented at the February 21 BOS meeting and then voted forward for a public hearing and town meeting. We got credit for our support in the discussion at the last BOS meeting.
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ADJOURNMENT

UPON motion duly made, seconded and unanimously carried, the meeting adjourned at 9:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
James Coyle