



APPROVED MINUTES
Ridgefield Conservation Commission

Town Hall Annex, 66 Prospect Street
Ridgefield, CT 06877
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February 24, 2020

A meeting of the Ridgefield Conservation Commission was held at the Town Hall Annex, 66 Prospect Street, Ridgefield, Connecticut 06877 on Monday, February 24, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Eric Beckenstein Carroll Brewster Jim Coyle Dave Cronin
 Jack Kace Jean Linville Matt Sharp Allan Welby

Absent: Erik Keller, Daniel C. Levine and Kitsey Snow

Mr. Coyle chaired the meeting. Ms. Lake took the minutes.

Cece Berger was also in attendance.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the February 10, 2020 meeting were reviewed.

UPON motion duly made (Cronin), seconded (Brewster) and unanimously carried, it was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of February 10, 2020 be approved and ordered filed in the Town Hall.

2. OPEN SPACE

Cornerstone Gardens – Ms. Berger updated the commission on the success of the 2019 garden program. Five students participated, along with several other volunteers, cultivating, planting and donating the vegetables to St. Stephen's Food Bank. Ms. Berger asked for three amendments to the license agreement. One, expand the area of the garden to accommodate pumpkins. Two, use outside help to maintain the garden. And, three, begin work in April, instead of mid-May, weather permitting. Ms. Berger will mark up the current agreement accordingly. The commission agreed to the three changes and will draft a new agreement to be forwarded to the BOS for approval.

Great Swamp Boardwalk Trail – No discussion.

DEEP OSHA Grant – Mr. Welby will check with DEEP on grant specifics to see if it aligns with a prospective land purchase.

Open Space Presentation to BOS – Mr. Coyle and Dr. Kace presented the Status of Open Space in Ridgefield to the BOS. There was agreement that the town needed to become more proactive in land acquisition to meet the 30% goal. The RCC will focus on identifying potential properties when Mr. Keller returns. Mr. Sharp will reach out to contacts in the local scouting council regarding their Pine Mountain property.

P&R Tree Removal Help – Mr. Sharp and Mr. Cronin worked with a P&R worker on Saturday, removing several downed trees in various open space areas. They will continue clean-up in other areas on March 21st.

Peaceable Refuge – A rough structure was found near the blue trail but appears to be outside open space. There has also been dumping in the refuge. Mr. Cronin will ask Ms. Peyser to investigate. Mr. Cronin suggested abandoning the trail due to lack of use and major trail issues. The commission agreed with Mr. Cronin's suggestion. A sign will be posted notifying the public.

3. FUTURE COMMISSION ACTIVITIES

Ms. Linville has begun working on the RCC logo with Mr. Levine.

Ms. Linville also discussed the STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics) Kit program in the Ridgefield children's library section. She suggested the RCC might develop/sponsor a kit that focuses on conservation issues. She will get more information on the program.

4. MEETINGS FOR ATTENDANCE

a) P&Z

Feb 25 – Sharp (POCD/183 Great Hill)

Mar 3 – Welby

Mar 11 – Snow

Mar 24 - Beckenstein

b) IWB

Feb 27 – Cronin (Canceled)

Mar 12 – Kace

Mar 26 - Linville

5. EXTRA CURRICULARS –

Earth Day – April 22, 2020 – Mr. Sharp has offered to lead a hike the weekend before (April 18). Mr. Welby will also do a hike. Mr. Beckenstein will organize a Route 7 river clean-up. Ms. Lake will send the link to publicize the events.

Annual Meeting Planning – The tentative date is Tuesday, May 19 (depending on speaker availability) and will be held at ACT of CT. Ms. Lake will look into a getting a speaker from the Wolf Conservation Center or Audubon.

Edith Meffley Award – There will be no recipient this year.

6. LAND ACQUISITIONS

UPON motion duly made (Kace), seconded (Cronin), and carried, it was RESOLVED that the commission supports the purchase of the 14-acre Bear Mountain Property in Ridgebury and directs the Chairman to start the acquisition process. The commission also approves the expenditure of up to \$3,000 for attorney's fees, title search, and appraisal.

UPON motion duly made (Kace), seconded (Welby), and carried, it was RESOLVED that the commission supports the purchase of the 1-acre property on Craigmoor Road and directs the Chairman to start the acquisition process. The commission also approves the expenditure of up to \$1,500 for attorney's fees, title search, and appraisal.

UPON motion duly made (Kace), seconded (Cronin), and carried, it was RESOLVED that the commission approves the expenditure of \$1,000 for attorney Linda Francois to make a presentation to the board on tax and land use issues and approaches to the acquisition of open space.

7. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS – None.

ADJOURNMENT

UPON motion duly made (Cronin), seconded (Welby) and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned at 8:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted by,
Colleen Lake