

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

**Ridgefield Conservation Commission
Flood and Erosion Control Board**
Town Hall Annex, 66 Prospect Street
Ridgefield, CT 06877 (203) 431-2713
January 9, 2012

A meeting of the Ridgefield Conservation Commission was held at the Town Hall Annex, 66 Prospect Street Ridgefield, Connecticut 06877 on Monday, January 9, 2012 at approximately 7:30 p.m.

The following members were present:

Susan Baker
Carroll Brewster
Dave Cronin
Terry McManus
Ben Oko
Alan Pilch
Patricia Sesto
Kitsey Snow

Ms. Snow chaired the meeting. Nancy McDaniel was present to take minutes.

MINUTES

The minutes of the December 12, 2011 meeting were reviewed.

Upon motion duly made, seconded and unanimously carried, it was

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of December 12, 2011 be and hereby are approved and ordered filed in the minute books of the commission and Town Hall.

EAGLE SCOUT PRESENTATION – Connor Tepfer, accompanied by his father Paul Tepfer and Jim Tobin, presented his plan to restore the Silver Spring and make it more accessible to the public. He would erect a split-rail fence with gate around the gravel parking area, build a trail of wood chips outlined with logs or flat stones from the gate to the spring, remove debris from the spring so that the silver sand would once again be visible, remove shrubs and invasives in the area and erect a sign that would explain the origin of the Silver Spring name. He was advised to find out if a permit for the work is necessary.

The commissioners supported Connors plan. On a motion by Mr. Cronin, seconded by Mr. Brewster and approved unanimously, it was

RESOLVED that Connor Tepfer's plan for Silver Spring be approved as presented.

MCKEON FARM – Hans Williams was present to discuss a number of issues at the farm:

- There are six apple trees on the town's parcel. One split down the middle during the recent storm. He removed the wood and burned it. The others are salvageable, but need heavy pruning.
- He mows from the John Katz property to the first barway on Lauzun Lane.
- The tractor that was parked opposite a neighbor's driveway on Lauzun Lane has been removed.
- Mr. Williams had seven cows this year, down from 10 the year before. The grass in the three fields is healthy, but a soil test revealed the need to lime the fields. It will be done in early spring. Because of the dust generated, he agreed to notify the neighbors before liming.
- New fencing is needed on Lauzun Lane, 10 new rails on Ridgebury Road should be replaced and the orchard fence is in need of repair. Mr. Williams will get a budget for the work and report back.
- He plans to remove the brambles from the stone wall near the entrance to the trail.
- He will work with Ms. Snow to choose a new mower to replace the ten-year-old mower.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Budget – Mr. Brewster reported that he and Ms. Snow had met with Kevin Redmond, the town comptroller, to go over several issues before they submit the commission's budget request on January 12. They were advised that a request for funds to purchase a new brush mower should be addressed in a new line item and justified in a separate written narrative. Clearing fallen trees on trails might qualify for FEMA funds, but they would not be released until the next budget year. Ms. Snow will prioritize the problem trees and discuss them with the tree warden, who may have some funds available.

Mr. Redmond advised that expenditures should be charged to the appropriate line item; e.g., the truck rental should be a line item, not an open space maintenance expense.

OPEN SPACE

Maintenance/Posting/Projects – Mr. Cronin described a problem on Tackora Trail where a trail that had been constructed on a 12 ft. wide piece of town property veered onto private property. The owner, who is about to subdivide the property, wants the trail removed from her land. If that were to happen, there would be a gap between the end of the relocated trail and Levy Park. Because there is a better entrance to Levy Park on Barrack Hill Road, members decided to stop maintaining the trail and ask for a small easement to Levy Park when the subdivision application comes up.

Footbridge on Mountain Road – Mr. Cronin will ask the owner to apply for a permit to build the bridge. If he refuses, Mr. Cronin will ask the town planner if the commission might apply on its own. Ms. Sesto offered to find out if the commission could be permitted to do so.

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION, INLAND WETLANDS BOARD

Meeting for Attendance

January 17 – Dr. Oko

January 24 – Ms. Snow

February 7 – Ms. Yanity

NEW BUSINESS

50th Anniversary & 2012 Goals – The Conservation Commission was started in October 1962. Ms McManus presented a tentative list of projects the commission might undertake in celebration of its 50th anniversary. She suggested that the projects be adopted by summer so that they could be launched in the early fall, although a monthly column in the *Press* could start sooner. Dr. Oko thought a higher profile for the commission would be good. The upcoming annual meeting would be a good place to begin the celebration, which could be tied in to the NRI report.

One suggestion was to write a monthly report on an open space parcel that would include its history and then invite the public to hike that property. Ms. Sesto offered to provide articles on conservation issues. The anniversary would provide a good opportunity to kick off a major fundraising effort. Dr. Oko will speak with Jack Sanders about a monthly column. Each member could take responsibility for a portion of the celebration.

Ms. McManus will put together a list of ideas and bring them back to the commission for further discussion.

Route 7 Development – Betty Brosius asked for guidelines on the portion of Route 7 that the town is interested in developing. There was not enough information for the commissioners to take a position. Ms. Snow will follow up with Ms. Brosius to find out specifically what she needs.

OLD BUSINESS

7-9 North Salem Road – Planning & Zoning approved 12 apartments for the lot. It will be known by January 10 if the developer accepts that decreased number of units.

OPEN SPACE ACQUISITIONS & DONATION

Ledges Road Acquisition - Dr. Oko described a meeting he had with Vincent Pelliccione, who clearly was unwilling to sell the property. He required a 10% unescrowed deposit to move ahead and would not perform several of the conditions of the contract.

After discussion, on a motion by Ms. Sesto, seconded by Ms. Baker and approved unanimously, it was

RESOLVED that the offer to purchase property on Ledges Road for \$850,000 be withdrawn.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion duly made, seconded and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy McDaniel