

APPROVED MINUTES

**Ridgefield Conservation Commission
Flood and Erosion Control Board**
Town Hall Annex, 66 Prospect Street
Ridgefield, CT 06877 (203) 431-2713
December 12, 2011

A meeting of the Ridgefield Conservation Commission was held at the Town Hall Annex, 66 Prospect Street, Ridgefield, Connecticut 06877 on Monday, December 12, 2011 at approximately 7:30 p.m.

The following members were present:

Susan Baker
Carroll Brewster
Dave Cronin
Terry McManus
Ben Oko
Alan Pilch
Kitsey Snow
Beth Yanity

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

On a motion by Mr. Brewster, seconded by Mr. Cronin and approved unanimously, it was

RESOLVED that an Eagle Scout presentation by Brendan Sharp be added to the meeting agenda.

EAGLE SCOUT PRESENTATION – BRENDAN SHARP – Brendan Sharp described his plan to build a kiosk at Aldrich Park. He showed pictures of the entrance to the park and indicated that the kiosk would be to the right of the entrance at the beginning of the trail. He agreed to check out other kiosks on town open space and then submit a written design. When asked if the kiosk would be enough of a project to satisfy Eagle requirements, he said that he could design a map and do some trail work as well. He will complete the design, obtain pricing for materials, begin raising money and then return to the commission with his design and possibly request funding. He hoped to purchase the materials in the winter and begin the project in March or April.

MINUTES

The minutes of the November 28, 2011 meeting were reviewed.

Upon motion duly made by Mr. Brewster, seconded by Ms. Yanity and carried by the majority with Mr. Pilch abstaining, it was

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of November 28, 2011 be and hereby are approved and ordered filed in the minute books of the Commission and the Town Hall.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Mr. Brewster reported that \$11,021 had been received from 86 donors to the Open Space Appeal. 57 of those donors made gifts of \$100 or more.

OPEN SPACE

Maintenance/Posting/Projects – Mr. Cronin reported that many trees fell during the recent storm. Dr. Oko suggested using that problem as a way to reevaluate the Ranger program and reenergize it. Perhaps it is time to send a letter to all Rangers requesting reports on fallen trees on their open spaces. Two Rangers volunteered at a recent work day at Aldrich Park.

Mountain Road Bridge – Mr. Cronin reported that, if the property owner refuses to apply for a permit to replace the bridge, the commission may need to apply on its own.

PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION, INLAND WETLANDS BOARD

Report of P & Z Meeting – December 6 – Dr. Oko reported that there was a discussion about turning down the application for 7-9 North Salem Road. The sight lines for the entrance presented a safety issue, stormwater runoff is a problem and the parking area would be inadequate. There was 4-4 tie vote on denying the application, so the motion failed. Twelve units instead of 16 were considered as was a suggestion to repeat the perk testing in the spring. The application will be discussed at the next meeting.

Meetings for Attendance -

December 13 – Mr. Brewster excused from attending
January 3 – Mr. Cronin
January 10 – Mr. Pilch
January 17 – Ms. Snow

NEW BUSINESS

Printing of Natural Resource Inventory Report – Ms. Baker brought in a draft of the corrected NRI report. Dr. Oko will review it. Based on two estimates, she reported that printing 50 copies would cost around \$29 each; 100 copies would cost slightly less. Dr. Oko recommended ordering 100 copies.

On a motion by Mr. Brewster, seconded by Ms. Yanity and approved unanimously, it was

RESOLVED that an expenditure of up to \$3000 be authorized for the publication of 100 copies of the Natural Resource Inventory report.

Various photographs for the back cover of the report were discussed.

Capital Requests for Projects – The minimum figure for a capital request has been raised substantially, so that now necessary purchases must be added as one-time items in the operating budget. A new brush hog is needed at a cost of \$2700.

McKeon Farm Issues – It was decided that Hans Williams should be invited to appear before the commission to discuss pruning apple trees and moving a tractor that was left in the fields.

OTHER BUSINESS

Tree Committee Opening – Mr. Brewster read a portion of the town ordinance relating to the Tree Committee: “The Tree Committee shall be composed of seven members, three appointed by the Board of Selectmen and four appointed by the Conservation Commission. Each member of the Tree Committee shall be appointed for a term of three years, and terms shall be staggered so that at least two members are appointed each year. Members shall serve without compensation. To increase effectiveness, applicants for vacancies should meet with the Tree Committee before being considered for appointment to the Committee. Further, the Committee may suggest to appointing entities certain skills, experience or Committee preferences to be considered in applicants for appointment. The Tree Warden serves as a member ex officio.”

Mr. Brewster reviewed a motion passed at the last meeting to fill a seat on the Tree Committee. Members had mistakenly thought that they were discussing a seat to be filled by the Board of Selectmen and made a recommendation to the Board of Selectmen accordingly. The Selectmen’s office rejected the recommendation since they were not involved in the appointment and the seat was within the purview of the Conservation Commission. The motion passed by the Conservation Commission at the last meeting was therefore ineffective.

Mr. Brewster recommended that in the future the Conservation Commission discuss all candidates for its seats on the Tree Committee with that committee and learn their recommendations before taking any action. In this case, unbeknownst to the commission at the time of its vote, the Tree Committee had advertised the opening two or three times, met with the candidate and expressed a desire to have him join the committee.

On a motion by Mr. Brewster, seconded by Dr. Oko and carried unanimously, it was

RESOLVED that the motion passed at the November 28 meeting to recommend Chris McQuilkin to the Board of Selectmen for a seat on the Tree Committee be vacated.

On a motion by Mr. Brewster, seconded by Ms. Yanity and carried by a majority of three to two, it was

RESOLVED that, the Tree Committee having properly advertised the opening, met with Chris McQuilkin, the candidate, and having recommended his appointment to the Conservation Commission seat on the committee, Chris McQuilkin be named a member of the Tree Committee.

Mr. Brewster, Ms. McManus and Ms. Yanity voted in favor of the motion. Mr. Pilch and Ms. Snow abstained. Dr. Oko and Mr. Cronin opposed the motion.

OPEN SPACE ACQUISITIONS AND DONATIONS - EXECUTIVE SESSION

The commission met in executive session starting at 8:55 and ending at 9:10 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon motion duly made, seconded and unanimously carried, the meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy McDaniel