

APPROVED MINUTES

MINUTES

Ridgefield Conservation Commission

Town Hall Annex, 66 Prospect Street

Ridgefield, CT 06877

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Meeting January 8, 2024 at 7PM

Present: Roberta Barbieri Jim Coyle Jana Hogan Erik Keller
Jean Linville Anthony Markert Pete Nichols Allan Welby

Absent: Jack Kace, Matt Sharp, and Jim Liptack

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 7 pm.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

UPON motion duly made (Barbieri), seconded (Keller), and carried, it was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of December 11, 2023 be approved and ordered filed in Town Hall. Vote: 8:0

2. COLONIAL HEIGHTS BRIDGE FINAL APPROVAL

Aiden McGrath with Eagle Scout 116 presented his final project on the Colonial Heights bridge. The bridge looks fantastic and the RCC thanked the scouts for everything they do and all the hard work they put into projects throughout the year.

3. 54 KETCHAM ROAD SUBDIVISION

Neighboring residents, Ruth Feldman and Chris Flynn expressed their concerns regarding the proposed four-parcel subdivision. Commission members explained the review process to them regarding the roles of Inland Wetlands, RCC, and P&Z and explained the position of RCC. The RCC then discussed the position letter to P&Z on the project. The next public hearing is scheduled for January 16 at P&Z, to address public concerns. All are encouraged to attend.

RCC drafted a letter to P&Z expressing concerns of the parcel proposed for donation citing isolation and fragmentation from surrounding conservation areas are problematic. Unless access to the open space is provided the RCC requests that P&Z decline the proposed land donation and instead request payment in lieu of 10% of the value of the land.

UPON motion duly made (Keller), seconded (Barbieri), and carried, it was RESOLVED that the RCC will submit the letter to P&Z as written. Vote: 8:0

4. 401 OLD SIB ROAD PROPERTY

Mr. Welby drafted a letter to a neighbor concerning a possible donation to RCC as open space. The open space is contiguous to the existing Old Sib Open Space. The letter will be sent to the property owner and the RCC will be updated if anything further develops.

5. 45 ST JOHNS ROAD NOPV

Mr. Coyle explained the property owner at 45 St. Johns dumped debris in open space and in wetlands. The owner has agreed to clean up.

UPON motion duly made (Keller), seconded (Barbieri), and carried, it was **RESOLVED** that the CEO will issue a NOV regarding dumping of materials in open space. Vote: 8:0

6. WALK BOOK UPDATE

Mr. Coyle along with the subcommittee Mr. Nichols, Mr. Liptack, Mr. Sharp, and Mr. Keller will meet every other Friday to work through new graphics and possible additions to the book. The RCC will begin a photo contest for the front and back of the Walk Book. More details to come.

7. MAR JOY POND BEAVERS

Concerns have been raised regarding beaver activities in the Mar-Joy Pond area. The RCC is looking into the use of flow control systems versus trapping the beavers. Mr. Markert will report back with more information on the systems and alternatives. The CEO will also follow up with the Highways Department as well. This topic will be further addressed at the January 22 meeting.

8. LEWIS AND THRIFT SHOP GRANTS

Mr. Coyle submitted the Lewis grant and is in process of finalizing the Thrift shop grant. Mr. Welby will reach out to Susan Baker for more information regarding permits and estimated costs for McKeon stream cleanup.

9. WOODCOCK NATURE CENTER COLLABORATION

Ms. Linville is working on our partnership with Woodcock Nature Center and upcoming meetings and events for 2024. Talks and walks enriched with hands on field experience. There are a number of events that will also coincide with our collaboration and talks at the Ridgefield Library. A schedule will be posted online, on social media and in our newsletter.

10. COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

Mr. Coyle reviewed the subcommittee assignments with the RCC.

- Ms. Hogan presented a draft of the new website and will continue to work on its progress.
- Mr. Nichols will reach back out to the American Chestnut Tree foundation to find out if they have been able to secure insurance.
- Ms. Barbieri will be meeting with Barlow Mountain School regarding their gardens and will be presenting the Native Plant Policy in February at the next School staff meeting.

Committee assignments will be discussed in more detail at the January 22 meeting.

11. MEETINGS FOR ATTENDANCE

P&Z

January 16 – Barbieri

IWB

January 11 – Hogan
January 25 – Kace

12. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

Mr. Coyle mentioned the capital budget request has been resubmitted. The BOS will begin to meet at the end of the month to discuss all budget items, annual expense and capital.

ADJOURNMENT UPON motion duly made (Keller), seconded (Barbieri), and carried, it was **RESOLVED** that the meeting adjourn at 9:01 P.M. Vote: 8:0.