



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

Meeting
September 08, 2021 at 7 P.M.
Via Zoom

Present: James Coyle Daniel C. Levine Dave Cronin (Joined at 7.30)
 Roberta Barbieri Jean Linville Allan Welby (Joined at 7.02)
 Jack Kace Erik Keller Jim Liptack (Joined at 7.03)
 Matt Sharp Kitsey Snow (Joined at 7.04 and Left at 7.25)

Guests: Robert Jewell Chris Glidden Dane Unger

Jim Coyle chaired the meeting. Ms. Campbell-Gibson took the minutes.

Mr. Coyle asked to add a discussion of the POCD as item number 5

UPON motion duly made (Keller), seconded (Barbieri), and carried, it was **RESOLVED** to add a discussion of the POCD as item number 5. Vote: 7:0

(Ms. Barbieri voted as an alternate member because not all commissioners were present at this time.)

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

UPON motion duly made (Keller), seconded (Sharp), and carried, it was **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meetings of August 16, 2021 and August 23, 2021 be approved and ordered filed in the Town Hall.

2. ENFORCEMENT ACTION

2.1 25 Tanglewood Court - Mr. Zusel has begun planting a border of trees to provide a permanent boundary line between his property and the open space parcel. CEO, Andy Hally, will inspect the property to determine if the violation can be closed as resolved.

2.2 90 Canterbury Lane - A NOPV was issued for mowing of open space. Mr. Unger, the homeowner, was present at the meeting to give input. Mr. Unger said he had spoken to the tree warden about removing multi-flora rose and other invasives on the boundary of his property and the open space parcel. The tree warden had given permission. However, Mr. Hally noted that the removal of invasives had gone well beyond the boundary line, at least 25 ft. into the open space. This area had been mowed. Native sensitive fern has grown in the mowed area and it is Mr. Hally's opinion that this is beneficial for the area. Mr. Hally suggests this issue be closed as resolved as long as the homeowner agrees to never clear or mow beyond his property boundary again. He proposed large rocks are placed to demarcate the boundary line. Mr. Unger said there are large rocks on the boundary and said he only mowed the area because he was under the impression he was doing the town a favor by removing invasive plants from open space. Mr. Unger agreed never to mow on open space again. The CEO will periodically monitor the property.

2.3 Norrans Ridge - Dumping along Norrans Ridge Drive into open space is taking place again. Mr. Hally will send out a general letter appealing to residents not to dump in open space.

2.4 34 Rustic Road - This item will be discussed at the next RCC meeting to give the commissioners time to go over the documents sent by Mr. Jewell, the homeowner's attorney. Mr. Jewell explained where they were in the process.

2.5 Other Mr. Hally has compiled a list of native plants suitable for various types of planting requirements. He said he would welcome comments from the RCC.

3. BENTHIC STUDY

Ms. Barbieri created a summary of the Ridgefield Bio Assessment to take place in the fall. DEEP uses a citizen science program to look for macro invertebrates in riffles. These indicate water condition since most macro invertebrates are only found only in clean water. DEEP offers training. The leader training will take place on October 2 and is half a day; volunteer training is a two-hour Zoom session, with a half day sampling session the next day lead by trained leaders. Ms. Barbieri has identified four locations eligible for the program and asked for suggestions of more locations – Kiah's Brook and Titicus River were suggested by Mr. Hally. Ms. Barbieri is also looking for volunteers to do the sampling. Mr. Sharp said the scouts need conservation hours and could sign up to do the Bio Assessment sampling to earn these hours. Dr. Linville, Mr. Hally and Mr. Coyle volunteered to participate.

(Ms. Snow left the meeting. Ms. Barbieri will be a voting participant for the rest of the meeting.)

4. OPEN SPACE

4.1 Land Donation - The commission needs to vote to accept the parcel of land off Rt. 7 offered as a donation to open space. Mr. Coyle had spoken to Mr. Marconi about the donation and Mr. Marconi has requested that 2-acres of the parcel be used for low cost housing and the rest be kept as open space. Mr. Coyle proposed this to the donor's attorney and had received a reply that the entire parcel is to be donated as open space. The commissioners expressed concern about the added maintenance burden of keeping the existing mowed area mowed in perpetuity. Mr. Coyle has requested a Phase 1 investigation of the property. Jake Muller has arranged for this study.

UPON motion duly made (Barbieri), seconded (Linville), and carried, it was **RESOLVED** to accept the donation of parcel G08-0012 as open space. Vote: 9:0

Mr. Coyle will respond to the donor's attorney and report to Mr. Marconi.

4.2 Maintenance until December – Mr. Coyle asked the commissioners if a temporary hire is required to cope with the maintenance requirements at McKeon until the end of the year. Mr. Cronin said that last year RCC hired a temporary worker and this year should be the same. Mr. Sharp said he was coping well with the maintenance mowing at McKeon and said he does not think hiring someone to do this work was necessary.

4.3 Parking on Knollwood/Twixt Hill entrance of Seth Low Pierrepont Preserve – Mr. Glidden, a Ridgefield resident has asked the commission if parking spaces could be created near the entrance mentioned above. Mr. Cronin told Mr. Glidden that Pierrepont is a State park. Therefore, the commission would not create parking spaces on town land for its use. He directed Mr. Glidden to the existing parking lots available to hike this preserve, but he added that there is space for two cars at the entrance gate and enough parking on Old Barlow Mountain Road, to cater for parking needs of this preserve entrance.

4.4 Other – Mr. Welby asked about the mowing/haying of Lauzen field. Mr. Coyle said he had contacted Carlos last week but had to leave a message and had not heard back from him. Ms. Campbell-Gibson to follow up with Carlos regarding haying/mowing this field.

5. POCD

The RCC had four items to complete for the POCD. Two items are complete – the Open Space Plan has been submitted and the Open Space Inventory is up to date. The two remaining items are to update the Town GIS with open space parcels and an increased awareness in the public of chemical applications on lawns. The GIS data for the assessors' maps is in the process of being updated. Mr. Coyle will ask Mr. Muller about the status of the GIS update and request that an open space data layer be added to the system. Nobody volunteered to create an information sheet regarding chemical lawn application and alternatives to chemical use. Mr. Keller will report to the POCD committee at their next meeting.

6. COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Mr. Levine has submitted a draft of the Fall Newsletter to Mr. Coyle for review. Once the edits are complete he will submit the draft to the commissioners for their input. Mr. Coyle commended Mr. Levine on the newsletters he has produced this year.

7. MEETINGS FOR ATTENDANCE

Mr. Levine is not available to attend the IWB meeting on August 9. Ms. Barbieri will swap to attend this meeting on his behalf.

8. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

Mr. Coyle had no remarks.

ADJOURNMENT

UPON motion duly made (Barbieri), seconded (Liptack), and carried, it was RESOLVED that the meeting adjourn at 8:24 P.M. Vote: 9:0.