Dear Neighbor

For over 50 years, the Conservation Commission has worked on habitat preservation, open space acquisition, and trail maintenance for our 300 properties. We have had a busy year with a variety of important accomplishments:

- **Bear Mountain Property** – We purchased a beautiful 14-acre parcel adjacent to Hemlock Hills. It links together Hemlock Hills and a 3-acre formerly isolated open space parcel. We have started to add trails to this new section.
- **McKeon Farm** – We continue to maintain the fields and trails; we are planting apple trees and a large Pollinator Pathway garden. McKeon’s Henny Penny Farm, boasts the presence of sheep, goats, and llamas. Cornerstone Home and Gardens maintains a large vegetable garden for individuals on the autism spectrum and related disabilities. We installed birdhouses for bluebirds and tree swallows. A planned Eagle Scout project will remove invasive plants along the stone walls.
- **Trail Maintenance including the cleanup of fallen and/or dangerous trees** - Our trail maintenance efforts have been enhanced by the feedback we receive from our Ridgefield Rangers who patrol our open spaces. This work is particularly important in the wake of Hurricane Isaias. About 100 fallen trees have been removed. FCNEMBA and Ridgefield Parks and Rec have contributed to this largely volunteer effort.
- **New Trails and Facilities** – Donations to the Conservation Commission help fund Ridgefield Eagle Scouts projects. This year new trail bridges at the Schlumberger, Casey Lane, Barrack Hill, and Hemlock Hills open spaces were constructed. Also constructed was an Interactive Trail at Ridgebury Slope/Peterson Gorge, a new trail in Hemlock Hills (green/orange), and the new Goodwill Trail on the Schlumberger property.
- **“Where in the Woods?” Contest** – This contest was created during the Covid crisis to enhance the ability of town residents to safely enjoy a fun outdoor activity in our many open spaces.

While the Town of Ridgefield supports our day-to-day operations, we rely on donations and grants for new open space. Additionally, increased maintenance requirements have strained our annual budget. Our fundraising efforts and private donations of land are so important to enable us to maintain and acquire more land towards the town’s goal of 30 percent open space.

Ridgefield’s open spaces and trails have offered residents much needed relief from months of quarantine and isolation during the Covid crisis. We are thrilled that families and individuals are enjoying the beautiful land in our care in safety and responsibly. We greatly appreciate your support. All donations help us preserve and protect more open space.

Thank you, from all of us,

James J. Coyle, Chairman, and our commission members:
Eric Beckenstein  Carroll Brewster  Dave Cronin  Jack Kace  Erik Keller
Daniel C. Levine  Jean Linville  Matt Sharp  Kitsey Snow  Allan Welby

Please send this form with your generous donation to the Open Space Conservation Fund, Town Hall Annex, 66 Prospect Street.

All contributions are fully tax deductible. If your company offers a Matching Gifts Program, please include the form.
For donations of $100 or more, you will receive a copy of our 2016 Walk Book.

Name: ___________________________________________  Email: _____________________________
Address: ___________________________________________  Contribution Amount: $__________