

Conservation Commission

Town of Willington

Minutes

Wednesday August 17, 2022 at 7:00 PM

[Remote Meeting via Zoom]

- I. **Call to Order:** Meeting was called to order @ 7:07 pm by Chairman Kathy Demers
- II. **Roll Call / Seating of Alternates:** Regular members present included: Chairman K. Demers, Peter Andersen, Marilyn Schreiber and Patty Phillips. Jackie Kulig joined the meeting at approximately 7:30 pm.
- III. **Approval of Minutes:** On a motion by PA/MS: **"The minutes of the July 20, 2022 meeting be approved as written."** Unanimously approved.
- IV. **Present to Speak:** none
- V. **Treasurer's Report:** none
- VI. **Old Business**
 - A. **Talmadge Estate Property:** At their 8/1/2022 meeting, the Board of Selectmen granted management authority of the Talmadge Estate property to the Conservation Commission. The commission is working on fulfilling the tasks required by DEEP so that the matching Open Space grant funds can be released. DEEP is currently reviewing the survey. This fall the commission will work on signage, laying out a new trail and cleaning up some scrap metal and old tires on the property. The Commission decided the dedication of the property and new trail should take place early next spring.
 - B. **Properties Management**
 1. Fenton-Ruby Park / Drobney Sanctuary:
 - Maintenance/Fishing Platform: P. Andersen and resident Chris Demers installed pipe anchors and 2 new benches on the fishing platform.
 - Boundary Encroachment/Tree cutting – The commission is still waiting to hear back from the First Selectwoman regarding any action the Town may plan to take related to trees on the Park side of the boundary that were cut by a resident living at 222 Moose Meadow Road.
 - Next Park Work Day: Commission members discussed that work is needed to remove brush around the old Taylor Homestead site and the small meadow on Taylor Pond Trail. KD suggested some possible dates in October and will send out an email to all members so they can check their schedules and comment on their availability. Trail stewards and park volunteers will be invited to attend and assist with property maintenance.
 2. Knowlton Preserve / Talmadge Tract:
 - Maintenance/Trail report: None
 - Parking Lot Signage: Still waiting to hear back from the Eagle Scout re: potential project.
 - Forest Management Plan: At their 8/1/2022 meeting, the Board of Selectmen awarded the contract for the 10 year Forest Stewardship and Wildlife Management Plan to Connwood Foresters, Inc., based on the CC's recommendation. The new Talmadge Estate Property will be included in this plan. AARP-26 funds for \$2800 have already been approved for this project.
 - C. **Town Development:**
 - Planning and Zoning Commission* application PZ-22-10. Chairman KD attended the Public Hearing on August 16 via Zoom and presented highlights from the CC's letter related to a zone change and concept plan which includes a large warehouse and parking areas on 158

acres on River Road. The public hearing remains open; next meeting is Sept 6th.

- *Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission* has agreed to split the cost for the \$120 annual membership fee for the CT Association of Conservation and Inland Wetland Commissions.

D. Collaborative Organization News & Communication: A newsletter from the CT Association of Conservation and Inland Wetland Commissions was sent to all CC members via email and has informative articles about vernal pools. CACIWC will be holding their annual meeting this fall; date TBA. CC members are encouraged to attend.

Membership dues: 1) On a motion from KD/PA: **"The Conservation Commission will expend \$60 to continue its annual membership in the CT Association of Conservation and Inland Wetland Commissions. This represents half of the \$120 cost for two town commissions that is being split with the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission."** Unanimously approved.

2) On a motion from KD/PA: **"The Conservation Commission will expend \$100 to continue annual membership in the CT Land Conservation Council."** Unanimously approved. Members noted CLCC supports land trusts and towns by advocating for state open space funding and providing education related to land conservation.

E. Regional Pollinator Pathway Initiatives: The Girl Scout's Pollinator Garden at Fenton Ruby Park is now registered (mapped) on the Pollinator Pathways website.

F. Open Space Opportunities: 72 Burma Road. The owner had contacted the CC in July offering to sell her property to the Town to add onto Fenton Ruby Park. There were concerns about maintenance needs on Burma Road. KD noted that the commission is still waiting to hear back from the First Selectwoman about the status of Burma Road. PA suggested that the Town would also need to evaluate the condition and status of the dam on the property's pond before considering any acquisition.

Other Discussion:

-KD noted that Peter Andersen's name has been added to the Daley Award list on the CC's webpage.

VII. New Business

A. Communications: None.

B. Other: On a motion by KD/PA: **"The Cadlerock Property item will be added to the Agenda under New Business."** Unanimously approved. KD noted that the BOS from Willington and Ashford held a joint meeting on August 15th and set a date for a joint public hearing on Sept 8th at 6:30 pm to discuss possible uses for the Cadlerock Property, located off RT 44, that is jointly owned by the towns. Members discussed that a portion of the Blue-blazed Nipmuck Trail crosses a corner of Willington's portion of the property. The commission discussed that Willington's portion could be maintained as Open Space to protect the trail and offer other passive recreation. J. Kulig will make some maps that show the trail location and any other natural resources that may be on the property. The commission may hold a special meeting later in August to walk the Nipmuck Trail and Willington's portion of the property to see the topography and determine if there are natural resources of interest. KD will contact CT Forest and Park Association's Trail Director to alert her about the upcoming Public Hearing.

VIII. Next Scheduled Meeting: September 21, 2022

IX. Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at approximately 7:45 pm.

Minutes submitted by K.Demers, Chairman and secretary pro tem

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