



Chairman
Mike Marelli

TOWN OF LEDYARD

Conservation Commission

Meeting Minutes

741 Colonel Ledyard Highway
Ledyard, Connecticut 06339

Regular Meeting

Tuesday, February 14, 2023

6:45 PM

Town Hall Annex - Hybrid Format

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:47 p.m. by Chairman Marelli.

II. ROLL CALL

Present Commissioner Roberta Levandoski
Commissioner James Harwood
Commissioner Betsy Graham
Commissioner Michael E. Marelli

Excused Commissioner Amy Stephenson
Commissioner David Holdridge
Commissioner Kathleen Edgecomb
Alternate Member Jessica Buhle
Alternate Member Barbara Kil

Town Councilor Mary McGrattan was also in attendance.

III. CORRESPONDENCE

None.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

V. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

Chairman Marelli said that he settled on a date for Team Rubicon to send volunteers to clear the trails. The date will be April 15, 2023. More details to come as the date gets closer.

During the next Land Use/Planning/Public Works Committee meeting the Committee will finalize the assignment of all of the Town owned properties to the different Commissions. Chairman Marelli will attend this meeting. He would like to make sure that all of the land he has sent to the Committee through the years gets reported also Chairman Marelli would like to request that one of the parcels comes to Conservation.

Chairman Marelli attended the January Planning and Zoning meeting, there was a presentation on the Gales Ferry Dow plant. It was said that since the State of Connecticut and the Federal Government have not finalized regulations for dredge materials it was put on hold. He suggested that the Commission listens to the recording of the meeting on the Town's website.

Chairman Marelli attended a Zoom DEEP meeting for the Recreational Trails Grant which is grant money to improve or connect trails. The program is run by Kimberly Bradley. There was 120 participants. The grant would require that the Town matches 20%, which could be in labor.

SECCOG is compiling a map with all of the trails in Southeastern Connecticut. Chairman Marelli will send a map of Ledyard's trails. The Visionary workshop will include 22 towns, Jessica Cobb is the contact.

Chairman Marelli sent the open space acquisition plan to GOSA (Groton Open Space Association) and Avalonia.

At some point there may be a request to the Town and the Conservation Commission to transfer the property at 538 R Colonel Ledyard Highway, which is 3.2 subdivided acres that borders the Conservation property (where the dry land is). Chairmn Marelli said if the request happens the Commission can discuss the pros and cons of the transfer.

Avalonia expects to take possession of Pike-Marshall property in May.

Planning & Zoning has newly proposed regulations concerning Conservation subdivisions. For example, new criteria of what can be given as open space such as accessibility to the road (can't be landlocked), also will need to take ecology, streams and unique features into consideration.

Avery Brook development - Stoddards Wharf Road #100. Awaiting renovation analysis information.

Lantern Hill Valley Park property has been leased by Town of Ledyard. Discussion is ongoing with regards to parking and landscaping possibilities.

VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Motion to APPROVE Regular Meeting Minutes from January 10, 2023 as written

Typo found in spelling of Jessica Buhle's name in Pollinator Pathway Project paragraph.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Michael E. Marelli

SECONDER: Betsy Graham

AYE 4 Levandoski Harwood Graham Marelli

EXCUSED 5 Stephenson Holdridge Edgecomb Buhle Kil

VII. OLD BUSINESS

1. Property Walks

Chairman Marelli walked Burton and posted medallions on the property line that borders the farm. The building on the property is a water pump site, not used any longer. It used to pump water from the Loftus well field on Shewville to downtown, this was confirmed with the Mayor. The Mayor said the pumps/machinery are still in good condition and would like it to be removed.

Great Oak Preserve - Chairman Marelli walked site for potential trails, there are a few possibilities. Some areas are very clean without any invasive plants or streams to cross, easy for creating trails.

White-Hall - Chairman Marelli reported that the trails were very clear other than one section where a tree had fallen. Mr. Harwood took care of the fallen tree to clear the trail. There is a possibility of a trail loop from trail end to observation (overlook) site, however the overlook area is very steep. Ms. Graham said maybe the loop would not be a good idea because of the steepness, she believes that walkers would be reluctant to go on it unless there were stairs. Could stair building be a Boy Scout project? Mr. Harwood added that there is a lot of loose rock that could be removed to build the stairs. Chairman Marelli also walked the area from the river to the agricultural fields with pine/hemlock forest. The forest is very dense. He did not think it would be worth the effort to put trails there.

Kettlehole - Mr. Harwood reported that the trails were clear.

2. Financial Reports

White-Hall: \$22,514.89

Conservation General: \$3575.00

Trail Maintenance: \$5932.09

3. Continued discussion of OWSA grant

Potential of purchasing 154 Stoddards Wharf Road property. Following conversations with the Town Council, Land Use, the Mayor, Avalonia and the Real Estate Agent it was decided that it would be best if the negotiating and grant applications is undertaken by Avalonia. There is a piece of property behind the area that the Town owns. The Town property contains and old pump house that is only used by Public Works for filling Town trucks. The town will want to retain that land.

4. Pollinator Pathways Project

Jean Pillo from Eastern Connecticut Conservation District will be contacting interested Commission members.

Still looking for areas for pollinator meadows and rain gardens.

5. Burton Property Maintenance Plan

No action.

6. Any Other Old Business to come before the Commission

Ms. Graham contacted the Eastern Pequot regarding signage with historical information. It was suggested to her that she contacts Joshua Carter, Mashantucket Pequot Museum Director which she did. Mr. Carter referred Ms. Graham to their Tribal Historian Nikai Northrup. Ms. Graham contacted Mr. Northrup and is awaiting his reply.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS**1. Any Other New Business to come before the Commission**

Reimbursement for Ms. Graham and Mr. Holdridge's attendance to the Connecticut Land Conservation Council's Summit on Housing and Conservation. Since the Ledyard Conservation Commission is a member of CT Land Conservation Council, the sponsor, it was \$30 per person.

Motion to APPROVE reimbursement of \$30.00 each for Dave Holdridge and Betsy Graham (\$60.00 total) for attendance of the Connecticut Land Conservation Council's Summit on Housing and Conservation held on February 1, 2023 in Hartford, CT.

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Michael E. Marelli

SECONDER: Roberta Levandoski

AYE 4 Levandoski Harwood Graham Marelli

EXCUSED 5 Stephenson Holdridge Edgecomb Buhle Kil

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to ADJOURN the Regular Meeting at 8:14 p.m.

A motion was made by Commissioner Marelli, seconded by Commissioner Graham, that this be Approved and so declared. The motion carried by the following vote:

RESULT: APPROVED AND SO DECLARED

MOVER: Michael E. Marelli

SECONDER: Betsy Graham

AYE 4 Levandoski Harwood Graham Marelli

EXCUSED 5 Stephenson Holdridge Edgecomb Buhle Kil

DISCLAIMER: Although we try to be timely and accurate these are not official records of the Town.