

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
FAIRFIELD, CONNECTICUT  
MINUTES OF CONSERVATION MEETING  
AUGUST 19, 2010**

The Conservation Commission of the Town of Fairfield held a Meeting on August 19, 2010, in Meeting Room II of the Honorable John J. Sullivan Independence Hall, 725 Old Post Road, Fairfield, CT.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Frank Rice, Secretary; Landon Storrs; Joan Neiley; J. Paul DeMarrais and Kathleen Maxham. **ALTERNATES:** Douglas Jones; Elizabeth Jones; and Philip DiGennaro, Jr. **ABSENT:** Stanton Lesser, Chairman and Milan Bull, Vice Chairman. Also Present: Thomas Steinke, Conservation Director; Edward Jones, Open Space Manager, and members of the public and press.

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Frank Rice, Acting Chairman.

**APPOINTMENT OF ALTERNATES:** Philip DiGennaro, Jr., Elizabeth Jones and Douglas Jones were appointed to sit as full members.

**I. CONSERVATION**

**A. Bills and Communications:**

1. Approval of Minutes of the Conservation Commission Meeting of July 15, 2010: Kathleen Maxham *moved* and Philip DiGennaro, Jr. *seconded* to approve the meeting minutes of July 15, 2010. *Motion passed unanimously.*
2. Approval of Secretary's Bill for July 15, 2010: Kathleen Maxham *moved* and Philip DiGennaro, Jr. *seconded* to approve the Secretary's Bill for July 15, 2010. *Motion passed unanimously.*

Upon the arrival of Joan Neiley at 7:34 p.m., and J. Paul DeMarrais at 7:41 p.m., Philip DiGennaro, Jr. and Elizabeth Jones no longer sat as full members.

**II. OLD BUSINESS**

- A. CT DEP-OLISP, COP #201002053-TS; DOA-Corps of Engineers File #NAE-20101502, Issuance of Permits To The Town of Fairfield to Re-line the Triple 60" Culverts In Pine Creek Flood Control Dike and Installation of Helical Piers to Support Self-Regulating Tidegates: Thomas Steinke advised the Commission that the tidegate was installed in 1979 and that it is severely deteriorated. The town proposes a temporary repair solution which would last approximately five years until all permits, funding and construction of a perimeter flood control dike to replace the culverts are obtained. This temporary solution to reline the culverts includes inserting a plastic sleeve inside the culvert and pumping in concrete.

**DRAFT MINUTES SUBJECT TO REVIEW, CORRECTION AND APPROVAL BY  
THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION OF THE TOWN OF FAIRFIELD**

- B. Fairfield Organic Teaching Farm: Frank Rice noted that he has received calls from Commissioners on this matter, including Milan Bull, who is unable to attend the meeting this evening as he is leading a bird walk for the Aspetuck Land Trust. Kathleen Maxham noted that there was a study done several years ago on this site by Mr. Divine when the town was reviewing locations for the ball-fields by the Town Field Space Committee. It was determined that there were bird species at the Hoyden's Hill location which were on the State's list of special concern. Ms. Maxham suggested that consideration be given to having an updated diversity and density study be done. Ms. Maxham also requested that copies of the Divine Bird Study report be sent to the Commission members, and noted that she would prefer that Commissioner Bull be present, considering his expertise on bird species and habitat. Frank Rice noted that the Hoyden's Hill site has been a farm for many years, and that this may be a more suitable location for an organic teaching farm than the Parsell's location. Kathleen Maxham moved and Joan Neiley seconded to go table this matter to the September meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

### **III. NEW BUSINESS**

- A. Request of Bill Wargo of 383 Riverside Drive to Increase Tidal Flooding/Flushing of Riverside Marsh: Thomas Steinke provided the Commission with a brief history of the marsh restoration efforts in the late 70's and 80's, including self-regulating tide-gate installation in the Riverside Drive south marsh area. Mr. Steinke indicated that these efforts resulted in the return of a viable salt marsh, flood control, and reduced mosquito breeding, marsh fires, as well as elimination of objectionable odors. Mr. Wargo had acted as a coordinator of the area residents, and has been monitoring the tidegates over the years. Mr. Wargo is now requesting that there be increased tidal flushing of the Riverside marsh to restore the remaining 2/10ths of a foot of salt marsh in elevation. Thomas Steinke indicated that the floats can be adjusted to accomplish the increased tidal flushing and restoration, but also noted that he would recommend that the Commission not take any action until such time as the area residents are fully notified and provided an opportunity to comment. Mr. Steinke further indicated that he does not anticipate any adverse affects if the tidal flooding were increased, that it would result in a more viable marsh, and would likely recommend that it be done in increments of 1/10 of a foot over a two year period. This matter will be placed on the September agenda for further review and discussion.
- B. TP&Z Referral For Recommendation on Open Space Subdivision For 1610, 1638, and 1654 North Benson Road: Thomas Steinke provided the Commission with a brief summary of the property, noting that there was not any contiguous open space at the location. The Commission may decide to recommend to the TPZ that the Town accept funds in lieu of the proposed open space area. This matter will be placed upon the September meeting agenda to provide the Commission with an opportunity to inspect the site and review further.

- C. Notification of Submittal of A State DOT Application To The CT-DEP For A General Permit For Water Resources Construction Activities on State Route 15-Bridge #50-206 Over the Mill River In Fairfield: Thomas Steinke advised the Commission that they had reviewed this project in the past and had recommended approval. The construction activities are on-going and since the permit is scheduled to expire in January 2011, the State DOT is re-applying for the permit to complete the project. Following inquiry by J. Paul DeMarrais, Thomas Steinke confirmed that he has been to the site and that he did not find any concerns for the regulated area and activities proposed. Mr. Steinke recommended that the Commission endorse the application of the DOT. Landon Storrs *moved* and Joan Neiley *seconded* to endorse the application, and to send a letter to the CT-DEP recommending that it be approved. *Motion passed unanimously.*

**IV. OTHER**

- A. H. Smith Richardson Trust Account Statement Summary June 1, 2010 through June 30, 2010: Informational – Thomas Steinke advised the Commission that the funds remain unavailable while the past and present co-trustees, Bank of America and Bank of New York-Mellon, respectively, resolve conflicting language in the Trust through the Town Attorney's office. Kathleen Maxham noted that the trustees are continuing to finalize the reconciliation.
- B. Conservation Department Web Site Statistics: Informational.
- C. Connecticut Association of Conservation And Inland Wetlands Commissions, Inc. – Newsletter – The Habitat Summer 2010: Informational.
- D. Greenfield Hill Village Improvement Society Newsletter – July 2010: Informational.
- E. Open Space Trail Guide: Frank Rice provided the Commission with an estimated breakdown of the guide sales to date. Commissioner Rice suggested that the Commission consider re-printing or a new edition of the trail guide as well as offering inserts which would provide updated trail information on additional open space areas so that they may be included in the guides already purchased.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, Douglas Jones *moved* and Kathleen Maxham *seconded* to adjourn at 8:07 p.m. *Motion passed unanimously.*

Respectfully submitted,

Betty Gabriel