

NORTH STONINGTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION

January 20, 2022 @ 6:00 pm
Old High School Media Center
Regular Meeting

Minutes

Call to order: 7:00

Present: Bill Ricker, Steve Colgan, Arnie Vleiks, Jason Mancini

Regrets: Doug Farrand, Mike Charnetski, Bob Degoursey,

Guests: First Selectman Bob Carlson, Will Raggon (10th grader at Wheeler)

Minutes of November Meeting: Accepted as written

Citizen Comments: none

Old Business:

- Submitted 2022-2023 budget and Land Acquisition Fund request of \$20,000 to the Board of Selectmen
 - Established initially at 20K year.
 - This has recently been cut to placeholder status or greatly reduced
 - Currently the fund has \$ 72K
 - Previously, our \$40 K request to give to Avalonia money to support the Sheets Property purchase on Putker Road was rejected by the town
- New CC schedule for 2022: **3rd Thursday**
- Solar Farm (update)
 - We were successful in articulating to the Solar farm Co that we did not want the trees on the north side of the road touched and that they should put the solar farm on the southern portion of the property. Currently, the town has agreed not to fight further with the solar because they have now agreed to restrict development to the southern portion of the property.
- Fire Fly Farm monitoring. No progress and this is still with Attorney Callaghan to act on.
- Water testing at Hewitt Farm (memo referred to WPCA: no response). Testing will be done next Thursday, January 27th at 11:00 a.m. Brown foaming is most likely naturally occurring. The iron color precipitate will be looked at as well.
- CE signs on lower Chester Main Trail. Bill and Will completed this in December. Note that this is a private CE.
- Community Calendar sales: **sold out** \$1120 returned to the town general fund with about \$140 additional coming in from the library. Total \$1,120+/-The 2023 will highlight new and old schools
- Historic Hiking Trail with Middle Schoolers – Bill
 - Dick Seager along with Mark Tardif and Bob Carlson met with the middle schoolers.
- Budget – essentially unchanged from last year. \$2,175
- Development of NoSto Bike Trail – Steve
 - Steve met with Jim Russel (NoSto IT Department) who agreed to start working on the bike trail map with the following input provided:
 - The map will include trails for road bikes, mountain bikes, motorbikes (enduro) and for equestrians.
 - Roads to be considered for road bikes include Cossaduck Hill, Chester Main, Grindstone, Boombridge, Wyassup Lake, Button Road and Route 49, Northwest Corner Road, Reutaman,

- Scenic portions as noted on Page 30 of the 2013 POCD will be highlighted.
- Points of interest will be noted (such as the winery, the brewery, Wheeler Library, Bison Brook Farm, the Eastern Pequot reservation etc). Additional points of interest will be noted.
- Trails suitable for mountain bikes and equestrian use will be detailed using the map on Page 36 of the 2013 POCD as a starting point.
- The portion of the Pachaug Forest enduro trail in the Wyassup and Billings Lake part of town will be detailed.
- Bill noted that bikers would like trails marked with distance, vertical climb, and degree of difficulty.
- Jim Russel has been adding details to the “Historic Trails Map” via the QR code which can be accessed with any smart phone. He will continue this work, time permitting.

New Business:

- Youth participation in the Conservation Commission was discussed. The CC also would welcome female members (as we currently consist of all males)
- Draft letter re: Pocket Park cutting
 - On January 8th, the CC removed a tree limb that was blocking sunlight and hindering the growth of the evergreens at the park’s back. An abutter indicated that he thought the limb was on his property. After reviewing town maps, it appears that the limb was on State Property and not on the abutters. Regardless, the CC decided to pen a letter to him indicating that we are sorry for any confusion regarding the boundary of his property. Done: mailed 1/25/22
- Eastern CT Conservation District: Financial support for several organizations were discussed.
- Avalonia’s new Puttker Road Property
 - Avalonia has requested that use of part of the property for parking. Nate, Bill and Avalonia to meet tomorrow to see their proposal for space for the parking of 2 - 3 cars.
 - Note that this property will include a fishing area for the disabled.
- New initiatives (goals) for 2022
 - Connecticut Trails Day – First weekend in June – the 4th and 5th. The CC discussed sponsoring a hike and to inviting members of Best Buddies to attend. Potential trails include the Assekong borderlands trail or the yellow trail on the Tri-Town preserve.
- Website needs an update (e.g. Bob is now Vice Chair) – Steve to contact Jim Russel about this
- Continued review of Plan of Conservation & Recreation section of the 2013 POCD
 - This discussion was deferred

Correspondence: None

Handouts: Wildlife Magazine, maps, draft documents

Adjourned @ 7:34 pm Voted: 4-0-0

Respectfully submitted,
Steve Colgan, Secretary