



TOWN OF ELLINGTON

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**CONSERVATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, JUNE 7, 2016, 7:00 P.M.
TOWN HALL ANNEX, 57 MAIN STREET, ELLINGTON, CT**

MEMBERS

PRESENT: Chairman Rebecca Quarno, Vice Chairman David Bidwell, James Gage, Robert Zielfelder, Jr., George Nickerson, and Alternate Ann Harford

ABSENT: Sean Dwyer and Alternate Walter Moody

STAFF: Lisa M. Houlihan, Town Planner and Troy M. Ciesco, Recording Clerk

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Rebecca Quarno called the June 7, 2016 regular meeting of the Conservation Commission to order at 7:04 PM.

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS (On Non-Agenda Items):

III. ACTIVE BUSINESS:

1. Open space recommendation for S201602 – Henry Aberle, Jr. Estate, owner/applicant, for a 13-lot subdivision known as Aberle Farm Estates on property located at 175 Mountain Street, APN 047-035-0000 in an R (Residential) Zone. **(CONTINUED FROM THE MAY 3, 2016 REGULAR MEETING)**

Rachel Dearborn of Landmark Surveys was present to represent the application. Lisa Houlihan, Town Planner, recapped the May 3rd discussion regarding this application. She reminded the commission about a past subdivision in which the open space requirement was satisfied with an agricultural easement. She recommended that if the commission recommends an agricultural easement in this instance that the easement area extend 25 feet west of the pond.

Ms. Dearborn reviewed the plan with the commission and concurred with the easement area. The commission, staff, and applicant briefly reviewed the agricultural easement document used in the past. The commission was agreeable to the fulfillment of the open space requirement with an agricultural easement.

MOVED (GAGE) SECONDED (HARFORD) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO RECOMMEND TO THE PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION ACCEPTANCE OF AN AREA OF LAND SUBJECT TO PERMANENT DECLARATION OF RESTRICTED USE FOR AGRICULTURAL PURPOSES AS PART OF LOT #13. SUCH AREA OF LAND SHALL INCLUDE 25 FEET WEST OF THE EXISTING POND AND LANDS TO

THE REAR OF LOTS 8 THROUGH 4 AND ALONG LOT 2 AS SKETCHED ON BOUNDARY SURVEY DATED 2/24/16 AND SUBDIVISION PLANS DATED 4/18/16, BOTH REVISED THROUGH 5/18/16, PREPARED FOR ABERLE FARM ESTATE BY LANDMARK SURVEYS, JOB NO 201511-4.

2. Discussion - Energize Connecticut Initiative
 - a. Clean Energy Communities, Presentation by Eversource - Path To Becoming Silver

Ali Jackman, Outreach Coordinator for Eversource, was present for the discussion with the commission. She explained the process for becoming a Clean Energy Community and pointed out that Ellington has already reached Silver status. She further described the process to reaching Gold status and stressed outreach to residents and businesses as a major goal.

Ms. Houlihan suggested a booth at the Farmers Market on September 17th in conjunction with their green energy theme that week. Ms. Jackman noted that a lightbulb swap has been a popular event in other communities and that Eversource takes the lead in many outreach efforts. The commission was agreeable to the Farmers Market event.

Ms. Jackman explained the benefits of partnering with local vendors to provide home energy audits within the community. The commission and staff reviewed the list of vendors and agreed to contact Aiello Home Services, Energy Efficiencies Solutions, and Fox Heating as potential partners.

There was further discussion on the next steps for public outreach, such as mailings, and Commissioner Bidwell volunteered to be the lead for the commission on the Clean Energy Community initiative. Ms. Houlihan will serve as liaison between the commission, Eversource, and partnering vendors.

BY CONSENSUS, THE COMMISSION ADDED TO THE AGENDA: A discussion regarding a potential open space set-aside and purchase of land associated with a potential eight (8) lot subdivision and abutting land on the west side of Tripp Road.

Ms. Houlihan informed the commission of a potential subdivision on the west side of Tripp Road and south side of Middle Road. She reviewed aerial imagery of the property with the commission and noted that the owner may be interested in an open space purchase, which would include his open space requirement for the subdivision and additional land abutting the subdivided parcel.

The commission and staff discussed possible use for the property and its potential value as an open space parcel. The commission generally agreed that the purchase area in question had low development potential and suggested a fee-in-lieu-of open space instead.

BY CONSENSUS, THE COMMISSION RETURNED TO REGULAR AGENDA ORDER.

3. Discussion – Open Space Ongoing Education
 - a. Open Space and Farmland Brochures

Troy Ciesco, Land Use Technician, explained that the brochures were updated with the suggestions from the commission and will be printed as needed.

NO MOTIONS OR DECISIONS. BY CONSENSUS, THE COMMISSION REMOVED THIS ITEM FROM FUTURE AGENDAS.

4. Update – Hockanum River Trail Association: Ann Harford – Lead

Commissioner Harford recapped a tour of the trails with Lori Spielman, First Selectman, and noted Ms. Spielman's suggestions of improvements to the trails and creation of new trails in areas such as the Batz Property and nearby the Senior Center.

Commissioner Harford further reported the trail maintenance work done by volunteers and that two more signs were installed, with two more remaining.

Chairman Quarno asked Commissioner Harford about outreach for more volunteers. Commissioner Harford explained that she is working on signage and has been speaking to a few groups about volunteer work over the summer. She mentioned the possibility of an adopt-a-trail program as well.

5. Report - Working Farmland Preservation Program: James Gage/Staff – Leads

Nothing to report.

6. Report - Open Space Preservation Program: James Gage – Lead

Nothing to report.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:

1. FY15-16 Budget Expenditure Update: Staff – Lead

Nothing to report.

2. Approval of the May 3, 2016 Regular Meeting Minutes.

MOVED (HARFORD) SECONDED (BIDWELL) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE the May 3, 2016 Regular Meeting Minutes as written.

3. Correspondence: NONE

V. ADJOURNMENT:

MOVED (HARFORD) SECONDED (BIDWELL) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:49 PM.

Respectfully submitted:



Troy M. Ciesco, Recording Clerk