

Essex Conservation Commission
Town of Essex
29 West Avenue
Essex, CT 06426

MINUTES

Regular Meeting – February 10, 2011

Call to Order

The Essex Conservation Commission conducted their regularly scheduled meeting on February 10, 2011 in Room B of the Essex Town Hall. Members in attendance were Chair, Kay Tucker, MaryAnn Pleva, Doug Demarest, Pam Bernardini, Rich Helmecki and Goody LeLash. Also in attendance, Stella Beaudoin, Recording Secretary.

Ms. Tucker called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.

Review and Approval of the January 2011 Minutes

Page 3 under Surveys: Change the T in Tucker to uppercase.

Page 5, second sentence to read: "The Commission is looking to add to that map to include the thirteen acres contributed by Herb Clark to Viney Hill Brook Park."

Page 2 under Old Business to read: "Mr. McGirr will take a look at the bridge."

Page 2, fourth line: "typical *litter* size".

Page 2 under Viney Hill Brook Park: Add to those who walked the 5th annual New Year's Eve hike: "*Richard of Helen's Beauty Studio*."

Motion made by Goody LeLash to approve the Minutes as amended.

Motion seconded by Pam Bernardini and passed unanimously

Old Business

Viney Hill Brook Park

Goody LeLash left a message for Joe Budrow, Essex ZEO regarding the beaver remediation at Old Quarry Pond, Viney Hill Brook Park. Ms. LeLash has not yet heard back from Mr. Budrow however Ms. LeLash has contacted a few licensed beaver trappers. The trappers can offer various ways to control the beavers. The cost to remove the beavers is \$1,000 or more.

Ms. LeLash was informed that there are very few locations left remaining within the state to which the beavers can be transferred. Michael Salafia, licensed trapper will remove the beavers at no cost providing he does so prior to the end of March 2011. Ms. LeLash indicated that she has not had an opportunity to speak with the Department of Environmental Protection.

Maryann Pleva referenced a DEP print-out on the management of the beavers. In this literature, the DEP notes that transplanting the beavers to another location is not a viable option. The DEP recommends that the beavers be destroyed. The beavers prefer to live in an area populated with people and a water source. The benefit of allowing the beavers to remain is that they provide a habitat for a wide variety of animals and insects, noting that dead standing trees killed by floods are home to blue heron.

Ms. LeLash indicated that Essex is home to an urban preserve and that this is the first time that a beaver population has been experienced in this park.

Doug Demarest stated that the best thing to do would be to trap the beavers and get rid of them.

Maryann Pleva questioned that if they are trapped and taken away, will other beavers find their way to this location.

Mr. Demarest stated that if they come back, they will be trapped again.

Ms. Tucker noted that before the beavers are trapped, approval should be obtained from Joe Budrow, Essex Wetlands Enforcement Officer.

It was the consensus of the Commission members that extermination is the only viable option for eradicating the beavers.

Ms. LeLash will email Mr. Budrow to seek approval to eradicate the beavers at Viney Hill Brook Park.

It was noted that the time constraint involves beaver pelts which are rich and ready to go now.

Mr. Helmecki suggested that the first Selectman should also be informed.

Motion made by Rich Helmecki to authorize Michael Salafia, licensed trapper to catch and remove at no fee, all of the beavers at Old Quarry Pond in Viney Hill Brook Park, with the approval of Joe Budrow, the Essex Wetlands Enforcement Officer. The First Selectman's office will also be informed of the proposed activity.

Discussion

Ms. LeLash will call and email Mr. Budrow to discuss this activity and seek the approval from the Wetlands Enforcement Agent. Ms. LeLash will request that Mr. Budrow confirm his approval in writing. Mr. Budrow will advise the Conservation Commission if any other persons should be notified of this activity. The Trapper will be required to provide a copy of his trapping license and insurance. Ms. LeLash will inquire if the traps are all situated in the water. Ms. LeLash will contact the Town's attorney to discuss the liability of this project.

Motion seconded by Doug Demarest and passed unanimously. Motion carried.

Ms. Tucker commented on the new proposed map noting that the Commission is waiting for Mr. Don Carlson to finish the survey and to update the map. Ms. Tucker asked for a volunteer to verify if the big swimming hole is referred to as Wollock's Pond. Ms. Tucker noted that Old quarry Pond is referenced in a different location other than where the pond currently exists. Ms. Tucker asked members to look over the maps and think about revising the wording on the maps.

Ms. Pleva indicated that it was her understanding that Mr. Lovelace was updating the maps.

Mr. Helmecki will look into if the big pond is referred to as "Wollocks pond" or the "swimming hole."

Bushy Hill Preserve No report.

Canfield Meadow Woods

The Essex Land Trust expended \$528 on maps and it was noted that the quality was not as good as previous.

Motion made by Maryann Pleva to contribute \$264 to the Essex Land Trust for maps of Canfield Meadow Woods.

Motion seconded by Pam Bernardini and passed unanimously.

Ms. Tucker called Al Macgregor to remind him that in December 2008 the Commission paid \$600 toward lumber for the kiosk at Canfield Meadow Woods. Mr. Macgregor will contact George Atwood of Deep River who had previously stated that he has the kiosk all ready to go.

Ms. Pleva spoke with Wendy Arnold this evening and Ms. Arnold who was assisting with the GIS project was not sure what she needed in order to complete the job. Mr. Reichenbach had previously done research and Ms. Arnold will go back and look at his emails regarding the old maps. Ms. Arnold will be in touch with Ms. Pleva when she has made a determination on how to move forward.

Wendy Arnold noted that all of the research she has done is stored on the computer utilized by Cheryl Haase in the Health Office. Ms. Haase was placed on paid, administrative leave in early December. As such, Ms. Arnold did not think she would have access to that workstation or computer.

Ms. Pleva will contact Mr. Budrow and inquire if the computer in Ms. Haase' office is available for Ms. Arnold.

New Business

Essex Park and Recreation will hold an "Essex Go Bragh" parade on Saturday march 19, 2011. Contact Maryellen Barnes at Essex Park and Rec for further instructions.

The River Museum is conducting a lecture on Invasive Species from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. on February 17, 2011.

The Essex Transportation Commission will conduct a public forum on February 15, 2011 from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. to discuss their recommendations. There is a top notch group of presenters. Zoning changes may be necessary in order to enact these changes which include bike and pedestrian trails.

March 3, 2011, the library, the Garden Club, and the Essex Land Trust will present a talk at 7:30 p.m. lurking in the trees about the Asian longhorn beetle.

IWWC Report

The February 2011 regularly scheduled meeting of the Essex IWWC was cancelled.

Correspondence

DEP Applications for 14 Rackett Lane and 20 River Road requesting permission to construct a fixed pier/dock.

Ms. Tucker stated that she and Ms. Pleva will be absent for the next regularly scheduled meeting on March 10, 2011.

Motion made by MaryAnn Pleva to adjourn.

Motion seconded by Goody LeLash and passed unanimously.

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Essex Conservation Commission adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Stella C. Beaudoin
Recording Secretary

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Essex Conservation Commission will be conducted on March 10, 2011.