

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

MINUTES

Regular Meeting – August 11, 2011

Call to Order:

The Essex Conservation Commission conducted their regularly scheduled meeting on August 11, 2011 in Room B of the Essex Town Hall. Members in attendance were Kay Tucker, Rich Helmecki, Jeff Lovelace, MaryAnn Pleva and Pam Bernardini. Also in attendance, Stella Beaudoin, Recording Secretary. Goody LeLash and Doug Demarest were excused.

Ms. Tucker called the meeting to order at 7:34 p.m.

Review and Approval of the July 14, 2011 Minutes:

The Minutes were reviewed and the following changes were noted in italics.

Page 3, third paragraph from bottom: “ ...manage the phragmites along *Quarry Pond*”.

The July 14, 2011 Conservation Commission meeting was a *regularly scheduled* meeting. The Minutes indicate that the July 14, 2011 meeting was a “Special Meeting”.

Motion made by Jeff Lovelace to approve the July 14, 2011 Minutes as amended.

Motion seconded by Pam Bernardini and passed unanimously.

Old Business:

Edit Viney Hill Brook Park Map Information

Mr. Lovelace suggested that he and Ms. Tucker meet in one week to discuss all of the changes that Mr. Lovelace has incorporated into the Viney Hill Brook Park map. Mr. Lovelace has put together pictures for the map and he has spoken with the printer. Mr. Lovelace indicated that he will get the final map to Anne Penniman. Tom MacWhinney, Mud River Services will assist with the identification of the trails that are noted on the map.

Ms. Tucker pointed out the location of the swimming hole, Quarry Pond and Old Quarry Pond on the proposed map.

Mr. Lovelace remarked on the following map notations: Trail #3 does not exist and the trail going around Wollock's pond will go all the way around the pond. Mr. MacWhinney is working on some minor changes on the Forest Glen trail.

Mr. Helmecki suggested that the Pedestrian footpath/walkway that the Eagle Scouts constructed go on the map.

Ms. Tucker stated that she received a new contract from All Habitat. Ms. Tucker was informed by Joe Budrow, Essex Zoning Enforcement Officer that for removal of the phragmites which are growing out of the water, a DEP permit is required. Ms. Tucker signed the agreement with All Habitat for completion of the work. An additional \$350 is needed to complete this work.

Trail Reports:

Viney Hill Brook Preserve

Mr. Lovelace visited Viney Hill Brook Preserve today and he praised the work that Tom MacWhinney, Mud River services performed. Mr. MacWhinney mowed with brush hog, a swipe down Broadwalk and he mowed the Yellow trail and did a fair amount of work at the Forest Glen trail. The work Mr. MacWhinney did cleaning up the trails came to \$400 and that is for the summer mowing. Mr. Lovelace will forward the Invoice to Ms. Tucker for her approval and submission. Mr. MacWhinney also did some work in the Old Quarry area to include clearing and mowing the area of the right-of-way that goes up toward the gate. Mr. Lovelace stated that Mr. MacWhinney also did a nice job on trail #3 where the beaver lodge was. He went into the meadow and created a circle. Mr. MacWhinney still has to finish the Forest Glen clean up.

Mr. Lovelace suggested a year plan for Mr. MacWhinney to include a spring clean up followed by summer mowing and a mow in the fall of the trails and the meadow. During the summer months Mr. MacWhinney will mow the trails only.

Ms. Tucker stated that the Commission's budget is \$10,000 and the Commission will additionally spend \$3500 on the phragmites removal. The blue trail where the phragmites is located will present a problem with clean up. The trail where the beaver dam is situated is difficult to cut.

Mr. Lovelace stated that the wildflower meadow is coming along.

Bushy Hill Preserve

Mr. Helmecki commented on the Essex Land Trust who will conduct a walk on August 17, 2011 at 5:00 p.m. Ron Nelson will lead the walk and discussion. Peg Tuttle is the contact person.

Canfield Woods

No report.

Other

Doug Demarest has contacted Mark Hiatt, Town of Essex custodian on three occasions requesting that he put up the framed pictures. Mr. Demarest has not received a response. Ms. Tucker will contact the selectman's office to inquire about having the pictures hung.

New Business:

Viney Hill Brook Park Family Day

Rick Audett, Essex Park and Recreation Director notified Ms. Tucker of a Family Day event at Viney Hill Brook Park which will occur on August 27, 2011.

Ms. Pleva stated that she will speak with Mr. Audett and determine what is needed from the Conservation Commission for this event. Ms. Pleva stated that she will attend the Family Day event.

Other

Ms. Tucker indicated that the Commission was asked to turn in by August 26, 2011 the Conservation Commission's report annual report. Commissioners discussed the events from the past year and the following items were suggested for inclusion as a part of the report:

- Construction of a diverter pipe at Viney Hill Brook Park.
- Steps taken to remediate an environmental hazard and obtain a professional licensed DEP trapper to remove the beavers who created a hazard to and compromised the integrity of the dam.
- Eagle Scout project which involved the construction of a 12' footbridge at Viney Hill Brook Park with the assistance of Tom MacWhinney, Mud River Services.
- Working on the removal of the invasives, i.e., Japanese Knotwood.
- Working on cutting the new Forest Glen trail.
- Trail maintenance and bridge repair
- Removal and clean up of a very large fallen tree at Bushy Hill Preserve.
- Paid for map replenishment.
- Identified 25 species of wildflowers.
- Planted a wildflower meadow.
- Annual New Year 's Day walk.

Ms. Pleva questioned the Town's relationship with The Gateway Commission. Ms. Tucker suggested Ms. Pleva speak with Fred Vollano. It was noted that on August 15, 2011 the Essex Zoning Commission will conduct their regularly scheduled meeting. At that meeting, Anthony Chiricco will make a presentation in conjunction with the Gateway Commission.

IWWC Report Goody LeLash:

No report.

Correspondence

The Army Corp of Engineers re-issuance of statewide CT General Permit for minimal impact activities within the State of CT. The prior Permit expired on May 31, 2011.

Motion made by Rich Helmecki to adjourn.

Motion seconded by MaryAnn Pleva and passed unanimously.

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Essex Conservation Commission adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Stella C. Beaudoin
Recording Secretary

The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Essex Conservation Commission will be conducted on September 8, 2011.