

TOWN OF ESSEX
Conservation Commission

29 West Avenue • Essex, Connecticut 06426
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Executive Board
Kathleen Tucker, Chairman
Jeffrey Lovelace, Vice Chairman

Regular Members
Richard Helmecki, Member
Pam Bernardini, Member
Adrienne Forrest, Member
Vacancy

Unapproved

Minutes
Regular Meeting
Thursday, August 7, 2014 at 7:30 P.M.
Town Hall, 29 West Avenue
Second Floor Conference Room B

The Essex Conservation Commission conducted the regular Meeting on August 7, 2014 in Room B of the Essex Town Hall.

Attending Members

Kay Tucker
Jeffrey Lovelace
Richard Helmecki

Absent Members

Pam Bernardini
Adrienne Forrest

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

Ms. Tucker amended the Agenda to begin the meeting with the discussion on the Request for Tree Topping Removal which is item A under New Business.

New Business

a. Discuss Request for Tree Topping and Removal

Tamara Sutfin presented. Ms. Sutfin stated that she has resided at the Middle Cove at Essex condominium for fifteen years and she currently serves as the President of the condo association. The Middle Cove condominiums are situated on northern border of the marsh. Ms. Sutfin stated that the treatment and care of the adjoining wetland is maintained with no regularity. Several years ago the DEEP treated the phragmite for two consecutive years. Ms. Sutfin stated that the DEEP however has depleted funding for this project and there have been no further efforts to mitigate the invasive phragmite.

Ms. Sutfin stated that in the past fifteen years the property has become overgrown with shrubs, trees and phragmite which has impacted the wildlife habitat dependent on the marsh and surrounding area. Ms. Sutfin has reached out to the abutting neighbors and Ms. Sutfin stated that the neighbors are amenable to cutting back some of the trees and shrubs. Ms. Sutfin stated that she has received permission from Joseph Budrow, Essex Zoning and Wetland Enforcement Officer to cut back the phragmite six or so feet, however moving

forward she would benefit greatly from the support, input and assistance and maintenance of the protected wetland. Ms. Sutfin stated that she would like to see the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission and the Conservation Commission formulate a long term plan to sustain the wetlands and to protect the wetland for the wildlife that are dependent on this wetland.

Mr. Lovelace indicated that Ms. Sutfin would benefit from a plan to mitigate the area which would be formulated in conjunction with the Wetlands Enforcement Officer. Ms. Sutfin stated that the condo association will absorb half of the cost of this project.

Ms. Tucker suggested that Mr. Lovelace coordinate with the Inland Wetland and Watercourses Commission and arrange for a site walk of this property.

Ms. Sutfin will speak with Mr. Budrow and ask to be placed on the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission Agenda for permission to thin out the trees and to discuss a long term plan to clean out the phragmite at either the August 12, 2014 or the September 9, 2014 IWWC meeting.

b. Discuss Comstock Ball Field Mowing

There is a riparian area along the Falls River at Comstock Park which the Public Works Department clears up to the water. Ms. Tucker referenced the July 2014 "Habitat" publication which, on page 8 discusses the benefit of riparian buffers. Ms. Tucker stated that she would like the Conservation Commission to work with Bob Rousseau, Park and Rec Commission to establish a riparian area zone and then make a recommendation to the Inland Wetlands and Watercourse Commission for the regrowth or replant of a riparian buffer in the area along the Falls River at Comstock Park.

Ms. Tucker authorized an invoice in the amount of \$300 for mosquito control at Viney Hill Brook Park

Old Business

a. Trail Reports

Viney Hill Brook Park Trail Mowing, Japanese Knotweed & Phragmite Reduction

Mr. Lovelace distributed a picture of the Japanese Knotweed which was taken at Viney Hill Brook Park. Ms. Tucker will check with All Habitat Services to inquire when the Knotweed will be cut back.

Bushy Hill Preserve Mosquito Control & Pedestrian Bridge Repositioning & Repair

Ms. Tucker spoke with Tom Rutherford who spoke with Ron Nelson, who is the steward and Mr. Nelson reported that the mosquitos were tolerable this 2014 year.

The Essex Land Trust expressed concern over the Pedestrian bridges which are out of position. Tom Rutherford stated that the bridges either need to be re-positioned or consideration will be given to cutting a new trail. Mr. Helmecki, Mr. Lovelace and Ms. Tucker will work together on bridge repairs. Ms. Tucker suggested that in September the members will visit the site.

Mr. Helmecki stated that there were a good number of maps in the various stations.

Essex Land Trust DEEP Signage

The DEEP asked the Essex Land Trust to install signage for the Platt property on Bushy Hill Road. Mr. Rutherford, Essex Land Trust asked for the signage to be installed by the road.

Canfield Meadow Woods

No report.

a. Other

Ms. Tucker reported that Jenna Klinck former Conservation Commission intern is applying for a position as Director of the Aquidneck Land Trust in Rhode Island. Ms. Klinck is seeking a recommendation from the Conservation Commission.

Review and Approve July 3, 2014 Meeting Minutes

MOTION made by J. Lovelace to table approval the July 3, 2014 Special Meeting Minutes as presented; **SECONDED** by R. Helmecki; **Voting In Favor:** J. Lovelace, R. Helmecki, K. Tucker; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 3/0/0.

Inland Wetlands Report

No report.

Correspondence and Invoices

No correspondence.

Invoices

Ms. Tucker presented an invoice from Windmill Hill Farm for 8 hours of mowing and brush cutting in the amount of \$360.

MOTION made by J. Lovelace to approve the Windmill Hill Farm invoice for work conducted on August 5, 2014 at Viney Hill Brook Park in the amount of \$360 **SECONDED** by R. Helmecki; **Voting In Favor:** J. Lovelace, K. Tucker, R. Helmecki; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 3/0/0.

Adjournment

MOTION made by R. Helmecki to adjourn the regular meeting at 9:00pm. to the next regularly scheduled meeting to be held on Thursday, September 4, 2014 at the Essex Town Hall, Room B – second floor, 29 West Avenue, 7:30 pm: **SECONDED** by P. Bernardini; **Voting In Favor:** K. Tucker, R. Helmecki, J. Lovelace; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 3/0/0.

Respectfully submitted,

Stella C. Beaudoin
Recording Secretary