

TOWN OF ESSEX  
**Conservation Commission**

29 West Avenue • Essex, Connecticut 06426  
Telephone (860) 767-4340 • FAX (860) 767-8509

**Executive Board**

*Kathleen Tucker, Chairman  
Jeffrey Lovelace, Vice Chairman  
Frank Hall, Secretary*

**Regular Members**

*Richard Helmecki  
Adrienne Forrest  
Robert Ward  
Mark J. Reeves*

**Alternate Member**

*Jim O'Brien*

**Unapproved**

**Minutes Regular Meeting  
Thursday, September 14, 2017 at 7:30 P.M.**

The Essex Conservation Commission conducted their regularly scheduled meeting on September 14, 2017 in Room B of the Essex Town Hall.

**Attending Members**

Kay Tucker  
Jeffrey Lovelace  
Robert Ward  
Frank Hall  
Adrienne Forrest  
Richard Helmecki  
Jim O'Brien, Alternate seated for M Reeves

**Absent Members**

Mark Reeves

Staff: Stella Beaudoin, Recording Secretary

Audience: There were no audience members.

**1. Call to Order**

K. Tucker called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Seated for the meeting were K. Tucker, J Lovelace, F Hall, R Helmecki, A Forrest, R Ward, J O'Brien.

**MOTION** made by A Forrest to add item B. "Other" under New Business; **MOTION** seconded by F Hall. **Voting in Favor:** K. Tucker, J Lovelace, F Hall, A Forrest, R Helmecki, R Ward, J O'Brien; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 7/0/0.

**2. Review and Approve Minutes of August 10, 2017**

**MOTION** made by R Ward to approve the Minutes of the August 10, 2017 Regular Meeting Minutes with the following amendment: 1); Page 4, "J Lovelace reported that he visited the site and viewed the holes of the damaged ash trees in the rear parking lot, 10 Bokum Road."; **SECONDED** by A Forrest; **Voting in Favor:**

K. Tucker, J Lovelace, F Hall, A Forrest, R Helmecki, R Ward, J O'Brien; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 7/0/0.

### **3. Public Comment**

There was no public comment.

### **4. Old Business to include:**

#### **A. Viney Hill Brook Preserve**

- **Discuss French Drains and Trail Remediation**

F Hall read into the record an email from Mark Reeves in which Mr. Reeves reported on his meeting with Robert Doane, P.E. as related to the possible installation of the French drains that would cross over Broadwalk and the proposed installation of a French drain across the CL&P access road so that the water coming down from upland would be able to drain across. The anticipated outcome of this installation would be that the beavers would not be able to block the drain as it would be below ground level, and with the placement of the right size stones, water would percolate through the stones. The estimated cost for this project is \$1200 to contract with R Doane for mapping, engineering services, application fees to Inland Wetlands and Watercourse Commission and appearance fees by R Doane.

At the site meeting in August 2017 it was agreed that the installation of French drains is a good method to outlet the excess water and to keep the area drier. Additionally, the installation of French drains could prevent another event such as the one that occurred on Broadwalk. If the Commission approves the expenditure and this project, R Doane will move forward with mapping and apply to the Inland Wetlands and Watercourse Commission for a Permit to conduct the construction activity. The IWWC imposes a moratorium on construction between October 15 through March 14.

F Hall reported on the condition of the trail around Quarry Pond up to the area in which the beavers created a new pond: F Hall was at the site yesterday and he looked at the trails around Quarry Pond which he stated are passable and dry. There is some standing water in the area of the trench, however there is a bridge that crosses the trench.

F Hall reported that the area where the pond is situated is still covered with water although there has not been much rain in the past 30 days. The level in the newly created pond is currently 3-4". F Hall stated that the water level is low in Quarry pond. F Hall stated that there is no water in the culvert which is located in the vicinity of Dennis Robida's and there is no water that outlets from the pond that drains into Quarry pond. There is a slight amount of water going out of the main drain in the northern part of Quarry pond and he noted that there is no water flowing under the Eagle Scout bridge, however there is about 3" of standing water. F Hall stated that there is a need for additional trail maps.

J Lovelace stated that at the September meeting, the IWWC authorized administrative approval for the installation of the French drains. J Lovelace reported that in 2011 he met with R Doane to discuss the flooding and remediation of the Broadwalk and it has been an ongoing problem and he commented on a 2011 response memo from R Doane in which Mr. Doane recommended to elevate the area for about 300 feet in length, with the pipes going under the elevated area.

A Forrest stated that it is becoming more and more expensive to maintain the beavers and suggested that the Commission make decision to either let park go allowing the beavers to take over the area or to trap the beavers and eradicate them from Viney Hill Brook Park.

F Hall stated that the issue with the flooding, other than in the area where the beavers created a dam is not necessarily caused by the beavers and this is in fact a preexisting problem with the flooding in that area.

J Lovelace stated that he was on site on Wednesday and there is evidence that the beavers have vacated.

K Tucker asked members if they wish to proceed in trying to reclaim the entire Broadwalk area.

J Lovelace stated that he would like to see it left in its current state. It is nature and there is an educational component that could be promoted to the elementary school, etc.

R Helmecki stated that he is willing to wait and see the outcome over the next few months.

K Tucker stated that she would like to table the discussion.

R Ward questioned if the Commission should ask R Doane if there is a time element as to when the work should be done.

J Lovelace noted that there is a no construction period tied to the issuance of a Wetlands Permit from October 15 through March 14<sup>th</sup>.

**MOTION** made by J Lovelace to table discussion on the beaver remediation project until March 2018 or at sometime earlier, if so determined. **MOTION** seconded by F Hall. **Voting in Favor:** K. Tucker, J Lovelace, F Hall, A Forrest, R Helmecki, R Ward, J O'Brien; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 7/0/0.

- **Review Rockfall Foundation Grant Application**

R Ward attended a Rockfall Foundation training course on Wednesday, September 13, 2017 related to the grant application process. There were 12 people in attendance and 3 of the attendees were from Essex. R Ward will write an outline for the Commission's proposal for funding of an educational outreach endeavor related to the beavers and demonstrate how it will fit into the Rockfall criteria. The deadline for submission is November 9, 2017 and recipients will receive a lump sum in April 2018.

**MOTION** made by J Lovelace to authorize R Ward to move ahead with his outline of the project for the Rockfall Grant application. The outline is due at the October 12, 2017 Conservation Commission meeting.; **SECONDED** by F Hall; **Voting in Favor:** K. Tucker, J Lovelace, F Hall, A Forrest, R Helmecki, R Ward, J O'Brien; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 7/0/0.

- **Schedule Maintenance and Clean-up**

K Tucker commented on the parking lot in Viney Hill Brook Park parking lot and noted that there is a broken rail that needs to be replaced and she noted that the overgrown grass and weeds in the parking lot also needs to be cleaned up.

F Hall suggested to put off the parking lot weeding project as the grass and weeds will die out as the weather becomes colder.

K Tucker stated that the screws on the bog bridges need to be replaced, particularly the Eagle Scout bridge and the Olive Autumn trees on the left side going down to the wildflower meadow need to be removed and hauled away. K Tucker suggested that if commissioners pull them out, the Town crew might be able to come in and remove them.

Members will meet at the passive parking lot on Sunday September 17, 2017 at 3:00 p.m. for a work detail.

- **Other**

There was no other business.

#### **B. Bushy Hill Preserve**

R Helmecki reported that he walked the trails within Bushy Hill Preserve on Saturday and they are in good shape. There are a few felled trees.

K Tucker suggested that she and R Helmecki meet to pull out the sticks in the culvert that flows into the pond. K Tucker reported that the Eagle Scout bridge needs new chicken wire. There is a fallen tree in the area of the red trail heading toward the Platt property and there is a broken tree that is hung up and needs to be removed. K Tucker reported on a rotted Spruce tree near the Eagle Scout bridge.

R Ward reported that he was informed that the pegs that define the driveway at the Oakledge entrance side have been moved.

#### **C. Canfield Meadow Woods Preserve**

R Ward stated that he has not visited the site.

#### **D. Other**

There was no other business.

### **5. New Business to include:**

Review and Approve Town Report Fiscal Year 2016-17

**MOTION** made by A Forrest to approve and send with photos the Town Report Fiscal Year 2016-17; **SECONDED** by J Lovelace; **Voting in Favor:** K. Tucker, J Lovelace, F Hall, A Forrest, R Helmecki, R Ward, J O'Brien; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 7/0/0.

#### **B. Other**

K Tucker reported that J Budrow will submit a membership on behalf of the Conservation Commission to the CT Association of Conservation and Inland Wetland and Watercourse Commission Inc. (CACIWC)

F Hall and K Tucker attended the walk facilitated by the Essex Land Trust on September 9, 2017 which occurred at the west side of the 1000-acre Preserve.

## **6. Financial Report**

### **A. Fiscal Year End 2016-17**

K Tucker reported on the FY 2016/17 end budget.

### **B. Fiscal Year 2017-18**

K Tucker reported on the FY 2017/18 end budget.

## **7. Inland/Wetlands Report**

J Lovelace reported on the IWWC Permit approval of Application #17-8 on behalf of L C Doane which is a proposal to remove underground contamination;

J Lovelace reported on IWWC Application #17-10 which is a proposal for the installation of a rain garden for property located at 9 Foxboro Road. This application will also go before the Planning Commission at their September 14, 2017 meeting and based on their decision, the applicant will present back before the IWWC. J Lovelace suggested that the 9 Foxboro Road proposal come before the Conservation Commission so as to be afforded the opportunity to exercise their purview as related to the conservation easement on this property.

K Tucker asked that J Lovelace notify the ZEO that the Conservation Commission would like to review this application which is to be made available for the October 12, 2017 Conservation Commission meeting. J Lovelace will contact the ZEO and put forward the request.

J Lovelace reported on IWWC Application #17-11, property at 151 River Road for the demolition of the existing house and the construction of a new 7,000 s.f. house on the same footprint. There are wetlands on the property and some of the construction is proposed within a wetland.

## **8. Correspondence**

CACIWC is facilitating a conference on November 18, 2018 in Cromwell on preparations for a changing climate and impacts on habitats.

J MacMillian tendered her resignation as alternate member on the Conservation Commission.

## **9. Adjournment**

**MOTION** made by J Lovelace to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 pm until the next regularly scheduled meeting which will be conducted on October 12, 2017 at 7:30pm, Essex Town Hall, Conference Room B, 29 West Avenue, Essex, CT; **SECONDED** by R Ward; **Voting in Favor:** K. Tucker, J Lovelace, F Hall, A Forrest, R Helmecki, R Ward, J O'Brien; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 7/0/0.

Respectfully submitted,

Stella C. Beaudoin  
Recording Secretary