

## Unapproved

**Town of Essex  
Conservation Commission  
29 West Avenue, Essex, ct  
essexct.gov**

**Special Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, December 6, 2012  
7:30 p.m.**

The Essex Conservation Commission conducted a special meeting on December 6, 2012 in Room B of the Essex Town Hall.

Present: Chair, Kay Tucker, Pam Bernardini, Jeff Lovelace and Richard Helmecki.

Excused: Doug Demarest and MaryAnn Pleva.

Absent: Susan Malan and Ron Skinner.

Staff: Stella Beaudoin, Recording Secretary.

Guest: Jenna Klinck and First Selectman Norman Needleman

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

**Motion** made by Jeff Lovelace to move ahead on the Agenda the Inventory Easement Project prior to the Review and Approve November 1, 2012 Minutes.

Motion seconded by Richard Helmecki and passed unanimously 5/0/0.

### **Discussion of Conservation Easement Inventory Project**

Ms. Klinck stated that she has reviewed all of the easements to ensure that they are free of encroachments. She has looked at the land to ensure that no trees have been cut down, that there has been no alteration of the streams or the wetlands and that there was no indication of all terrain vehicle or snowmobile usage. Ms. Klinck stated that she walked the boundaries of all of the easements with the exception of those that involved extremely steep terrain or water bodies which made access to those easements impassible. Ms. Klinck took four or so pictures of each site capturing the general ecosystem along with the entrance of each easement for future reference among the Commissioners. Ms. Klinck compiled a data sheet which embellishes on each of the easements to include the date, map number, general observations about the ecosystem, signs of wildlife, observations of invasive species, encroachments or other issues with the land, and she further noted how well they are maintained and a review for the possibility of hiking trails or uses for recreation. Ms. Klinck stated that the easement on Stonebrook Drive was so thick with invasives, she had to revisit donning canvas clothing. The terrain in that area is rocky and thick with invasives.

Ms. Klinck commented on an easement on Bushy Hill Road in the vicinity of the four lots that were part of a subdivision. Ms. Klinck noted that this area is filled with invasive scrub species which alters the environment and adds nitrogen to the soil which assists in the growth of other invasives. Most of the other easements had nice forests with clear under-stories and native species.

Ms. Klinck commented on Primrose Ledge noting that this trail which leads to Canfield Woods would provide a good location for access and a great place for signs or tree markers.

Ms. Tucker stated that the homeowners in that area might be opposed to a public access-way.

Ms. Klinck will provide the Commission with a data sheet to chart future inventory easements and this data will be housed in the Land Use office.

### **Review and approve October 4, 2012 meeting Minutes**

The following corrections are noted in italics:

- Page 2 under Discussion of Conservation Inventory Project: "*In an email dated October 14, 2012...*"
- Page 2 under Discussion of Conservation Inventory Project, last sentence: "Ms. Klinck stated in her *email...*"
- Correction on the Agenda: The next regularly scheduled meeting is January 3, 2013.

**Motion** made by Rich Helmecki to approve the November 1, 2012 meeting Minutes as amended.

**Motion** seconded by Jeff Lovelace and passed unanimously 5/0/0.

### **Discuss Annual New Year's Day Trail Walk**

Members will meet at 10:00 a.m. at the Passive Parking area for the annual New Year's day trail walk.

### **Discuss November 17 Tromp and Plunge Trail Walk**

Ms. Pleva provided a letter which discussed The Essex Land Trust and the Park and Recreation Department Tromp and Plunge event on November 17, 2012. MaryAnn Pleva reported that twenty people attended and ten took the walk. The 45-minute walking tour which began at Viney Hill Brook Park Active Recreational parking area occurred from 10-11:30 a.m. and there was one plunger. Refreshments were served by the Essex Land Trust and t-shirts were provided by the Park and Recreation Department. Mr. Helmecki participated in the walk and he noted that the protrusive tree roots in the area of the Green Trail presented a problem for some of the people who participated in the trail walk. Mr. Helmecki suggested the placement of pressure-treated wood. Ms. Tucker stated that members will review the area on the New Year's Day walk.

### **Discuss Trail Maintenance and Projects**

#### **a) Viney Hill Brook Park**

Mr. Lovelace stated that the park is in good shape. Mr. Helmecki and Mr. Demarest constructed the two bog bridges and they cleared a tree on the White Trail. Mr. Helmecki noted that there are felled trees further up the trail that will require removal. Ms. Tucker stated that she will assist with the removal of those trees. Mr. Helmecki stated that the town crew cleaned and opened up the Broadwalk trail.

Ms. Tucker stated that there was a tree down in the vicinity of Broadwalk which needs to be cleaned-up and another tree down in the area of the wildflower meadow.

Ms. Tucker presented an invoice for the wood used to construct the Bog bridges from Beard Lumber in the amount of \$98.55. This expenditure had been previously approved.

Ms. Bernardini will purchase a new mailbox to house the trail maps.

**a) Canfield Meadow Woods**

No report.

**b) Bushy Hill Preserve**

Mr. Helmecki reported that he and Bob Howe cleared an area of the Red Trail in the vicinity of the large Hemlock trees. The town crew cleared a large tree that was leaning over the entrance.

Ms. Tucker indicated that Don Carlson filed the survey map for Oakledge Drive which is labeled "Survey access to Bushy Hill Preserve." Mr. Carlson submitted his invoice in the amount of \$100 for the Mylar along with a \$10 filing fee to place the Mylar on the Essex Land Records.

**Motion** by Pam Bernardini to pay Don Carlson \$110 for the preparation and filing of the Mylar.

**Motion** seconded by Jeff Lovelace and passed unanimously 5/0/0.

**Appointment of Conservation Commission Members**

Mr. Helmecki and Ms. Tucker have been reappointed and both have been sworn in.

Members Susan Malan and MaryAnn Pleva have resigned from the Commission.

**Inland Wetlands Liaison Report, Jeff Lovelace –**

Mr. Lovelace stated that the IWWC reviewed the Sunset Pond project.

**Correspondence**

No correspondence

**Motion** made by Jeff Lovelace to adjourn the December 6, 2012 Special Meeting at 8:45 p.m. to the next regularly scheduled meeting on January 3, 2013 at 7:30 p.m. in Room B of the Essex Town Hall.

**Motion** seconded by Rich Helmecki and passed unanimously 5/0/0.

Respectfully submitted,

Stella C. Beaudoin  
Recording Secretary