

TOWN OF ESSEX
Conservation Commission

Executive Board
Kathleen Tucker, Chairman
Jeffrey Lovelace, Vice Chairman

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

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

Unapproved

Minutes

Regular Meeting

Thursday, June 5, 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 June 5, 2014 in Room B of the Essex Town Hall.

Attending Members

Kay Tucker
Rich Helmecki
Pam Bernardini
Jeffrey Lovelace

Absent Members

Adrienne Forrest

Ms. Tucker called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

Old Business

a. Fiscal Year End Projects and Expenditures

Ms. Tucker reported that the Conservation Commission has an available balance of \$7,325 in the budget as of May 30, 2014. Prior to the end of the fiscal year, the Commission will expend \$4,500 for pre-contracted tick, phragmite, Knotweed and mosquito abatement and \$40 for Shirley Malcarne for inventory research. This will leave an available balance of \$2,785 for this fiscal year which expires June 30, 2014.

Mr. Lovelace stated that all of the trails in Viney Hill Brook Park need to be mowed and weed-whacked. Mr. Lovelace stated that Mr. Ken Bombaci, Windmill Hill Farm, charges \$100 per hour for use of the brush hog. \$45 per hour for weed-whacking, brush cutting and removing pipes in the winter.

Ms. Tucker approved the allocation of the funds necessary to complete this work prior to July 1, 2014.

b. Pedestrian Bridges Bushy Hill Preserve

Mr. Helmecki stated that he and Ms. Tucker visited Bushy Hill Preserve and attempted to make a bypass trail around the bridge that washed out. Ms. Tucker contacted Tom Rutherford and he indicated that he was aware that the bridges were out. Mr. Rutherford suggested that with enough manpower, the bridges could be moved back and anchored. If the relocation of the bridge does not remedy the problem, the Commission will possibly consider changing the trail.

Mr. Helmecki noted that the entrance to Bushy Hill Preserve was flooded. Mr. Helmecki speculated that the surrounding pipes were clogged. Ms. Tucker contacted Dave Caroline, Foreman of the Essex Town Crew and asked him to look at the culvert pipe and remove any clogs that are causing the back up.

Ms. Tucker commented on a letter sent to the Conservation Commission dated January 3, 1989 from Radcliffe Engineering, signed by Robert Doane, P.E. The storm water was calculated to discharge to the pond at Bushy Hill Park to flow at 50 cubic per seconds requiring a 30" diameter pipe to be located at the north side of the pond. Ms. Tucker noted that these calculations were based on conditions in 1989 and questioned if adjustment should be made to the size of the pipe.

c. Trail Reports

Viney Hill Brook Park

Mr. Lovelace walked the Purple trail at Viney Hill Brook Park and noted that the removal of the large white pipes enhanced the surrounding woods. Mr. Lovelace reported that within the Purple trail there is a swampy area with a stream that runs through. Stepping stones have been placed across the stream and Mr. Lovelace suggested that Mr. Bombaci may have been responsible for the placement of those stones.

Bushy Hill Preserve

Ms. Tucker reported that there is a standing, rotted tree situated near the Falls River. Members agreed to take no action at this time and to allow the tree to naturally deteriorate.

Canfield Meadow Woods

Ms. Tucker stated that the brush and saplings in the area around the Tulip tree need to be cleared.

Mr. Helmecki stated that he would prefer to perform this task in the fall.

d. Other

Ms. Tucker stated that it has been difficult to arrange for volunteer work from the Boy Scouts, however students at Valley Regional High School have come forward as a part of their class work and volunteered their time to work within the Preserves.

Ms. Tucker commented on a newspaper article on the wildflower meadow noting that the main part of the meadow is comprised of grass. Ms. Tucker indicated that the flowers themselves are almost ancillary, however the meadow is doing well.

Mr. Helmecki commented on a February 2014 newspaper article in which Jenna Klinck, former Conservation Commission intern was mentioned. Ms. Klinck participated in a study of the trees involving those that were cut down on Route 9 and the impact of the clear-cutting on those healthy trees.

Mr. Lovelace reported on the purchase of the 1000 Acre Preserve which encompasses the Towns of Essex, Old Saybrook and Westbrook. The owner of the property is seeking to develop the property as a residential subdivision and golf course. Mr. Lovelace stated that the State of Connecticut will donate 3 million dollars and the Town of Old Saybrook will donate 3 million dollars with a balance remaining due of 2 million dollars due toward the purchase of this property. The Essex Land Trust will facilitate several fundraisers with the intent of utilizing the proceeds toward the purchase of this property.

New Business

e. Discuss Attendance at the July 3, 2014 Regularly Scheduled Meeting

The July 3, 2014 regularly scheduled meeting will occur the evening prior to the July 4th holiday. Ms. Tucker asked members if they are available to attend the July 3rd meeting. Ms. Bernardini and Mr. Lovelace will be available for the July 3rd meeting and Ms. Tucker and Mr. Helmecki were uncertain of prior commitments. Members agreed to move forward with the meeting. If members cannot attend they must notify Ms. Tucker by June 27, 2014.

f. Other

There was no other new business.

Review and Approve May 1, 2014 Meeting Minutes

MOTION made by P. Bernardini to approve the May 1, 2014 Special Meeting Minutes as presented; **SECONDED** by R. Helmecki; **Voting In Favor:** K. Tucker, R. Helmecki, P. Bernardini; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** J. Lovelace; **Approved:** 4/0/1.

Inland Wetlands Report

Mr. Lovelace reported that the Essex Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission conducted a special meeting on Monday, June 2, 2014 to address a Cease and Desist order which was issued on May 23, 2014 to the Essex Land Trust for activities performed within a wetland at the Mill Race, Main Street, Ivoryton. Inspection of the property found that there are activities taking place within 100 feet of a watercourse without the approval of the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission; clear-cutting of trees and brush is a regulated activity as described in Section 6.1 of the Essex IWWC Regulations.

The purpose of the Special Meeting was to advise the Land Trust to submit an application and a site plan which reflect areas of clearing and proposed clearing, to Joseph Budrow, Essex Wetlands Enforcement Agent.

Correspondence and Invoices

No correspondence and no invoices.

Adjournment

MOTION made by J. Lovelace to adjourn the regular meeting at 8:40 pm. to the next regularly scheduled meeting to be held on Thursday, July 3, 2014 at the Essex Town Hall, Room B – second floor, 29 West Avenue, 7:30 p.m: **SECONDED** by P. Bernardini; **Voting In Favor:** K. Tucker, R. Helmecki, P. Bernardini, J. Lovelace; **Opposed:** None; **Abstaining:** None; **Approved:** 4/0/0.

Respectfully submitted,

Stella C. Beaudoin
Recording Secretary