

Town of Stonington Conservation Commission
Minutes of a Regular Meeting held on September 22, 2014
Police Station Community Meeting Room, 173 South Broad Street, Pawcatuck, CT

1. Call to order: Called to order by Chairman Stanton Simm at 7:05 p.m. Commission members also in attendance were Stuart Cole, Ben Baldwin, Walter Grant, Sheila Lyons and Tim Bell. Members Jim Friedlander, Bob Dewire and Town Planner Keith Brynes were absent. Members of the public were present.

2. Review of Town Developments and Proposals

2a. a. PZ1414ZC, SPA & CAM Mystic Seaport Museum, Inc. (Kent & Frost, LLC) - Applications for Zone Change (Master Plan), Site Plan Approval, & Coastal Area Management Review for changes to current MHD properties/structures, including construction of a 14,000 SF exhibition building, demolition of three structures, and associated landscaping. Properties located off Greenmanville Ave., Williams St., & Bruggeman Pl., Mystic. Town Planner Brynes had distributed a site plan, architectural rendering and applications by email prior to the meeting. Brian Kent, principal of Kent + Frost Landscape Architecture, introduced the application and architect Chad Floyd of Centerbrook Architects and Planners described the proposed 15,100-sq. ft. gallery building near Mystic Seaport Museum's north entry at Rossie Pentway. The project will replace approximately 30,000 sq. ft. of buildings and will add about 1/2- acre of public greenspace along Greenmanville Avenue. The G.W. Blunt White Memorial Library building, almost 50 years old, will be demolished along with the North Boat Shed and attached Packard Cabin. The library's collection has long since been moved to the Collections Research Center in the former Rossie Mill, per Ken Wilson, the director of facilities at the museum. The objective of the project is to strengthen the winter season vitality. An engineered wood structure has been proposed. Sightlines from Route 27 and Rossie Field to the river will be improved. Notable trees, such as a large linden on Greenmanville Avenue will be preserved, but some will be removed where they grow close to buildings that will be removed. Anchor Square on the museum grounds will be redesigned. The Museum may apply for a drop-off lane that would extend the street into the front green space at some future time. **MOTION:** The Conservation Commission feels that this is a better alternative to the previously approved plan (Stuart Cole, Tim Bell). Passed unanimously.

2b. Any pending applications and new preliminary proposals. None.

3. Old Business

3a. Mystic River Dam Committee – Tim Bell said that no activity had yet occurred at the Hyde Pond Dam. Ben Baldwin presented him with the US Fish & Wildlife Service's webpage description of the dam removal to be done by the Connecticut Fund for the Environment (CFE) [see <https://www.fws.gov/hurricane/sandy/projects/HydePondDam.html>]. The project to remove the Griswold Textile Dam on the Pawcatuck River, accessed from the end of Alice Court, was also discussed.

3b. Discussion of Stonington's 200 Greatest Roadside Trees – Ben Baldwin he will try to contact someone at the Stonington Garden Club regarding the tree project again. The tree floating off Sandy Point which became stuck during a removal attempt was also discussed.

3c. Discussion of Open Space and Conservation Easement Transfers for Ongoing and Past Subdivisions. The status of the Blueberry Pond/Rockledge Estate open space held by Skirig was discussed. Ben Baldwin noted that the owner/developer's website shows the 13.43-acre parcel between Parkwood Drive and Spellman Park as "open space." The parcel contains a much-used trail in need of a boardwalk through wetlands. The status of converting Moss Park from recreation land to dedicated open space last was discussed. Ben Baldwin is to research the deed of the Town-owned land abutting Moss Park which has 10 ft. of frontage on South Broad Street.

3d. Discussion of 2014 Plan of Conservation and Development. Walter Grant, our representative to the 2014 POCD Subcommittee, distributed a reference handout titled "How to be proactive and ready before the Environmental 911 call" [see <http://www.caciwc.org/library/CACIWC-ENV911.pdf>].

He is awaiting the draft POCD, due 9/26/2014. He said the text amendment submitted by the Economic Development Committee (EDC) which suggests a zone change to allow commercial use of the Perkins Farm owned by the estate of Mr. Lattizori was not included in the draft as the POCD is not site specific.

3e. Discussion of Updates to 2007 Open Space Plan – Deferred to the October 2014 meeting.

3f. Installing signs on Town open space properties. No new signs were posted as all Town-owned dedicated open space parcels have signs except in specific situations where it is not appropriate, such as a lack of trees. A sign at the open space behind the Pawcatuck post office was suggested. Ben Baldwin is to research the deed of this Town-owned land abutting Moss Park which has 10 ft. of frontage on South Broad Street. It was noted that posts such as the one erected at Bittersweet Way might be appropriate.

3g. Any Other Old Business. None.

4. Open Space Parcels

4a. Discussion of parcels for preservation – No discussion was held.

5. New Business

5a. Ben Baldwin noted the following:

- A current school plan has proposed a new middle school to serve the entire town that would be located adjacent to the high school and this might affect Spellman Park. It was asked whether a boundary exists between the school and park portions of the property.
- The Coogan Farm was dedicated this month, opening a 45-acre park with a 23.94-acre conservation easement to the public.
- A Town of Stonington Task Force to Address Climate Change Issues had been established
- A Connecticut Land Conservation Council (CLCC) Conservation Policy Summit will be held on 10/8/2014.

5b. Ben Baldwin noted that some Commission members' terms had expired or were expiring shortly.

5c. Ben Baldwin said the 2015 schedule for the Commission was requested by the Town Clerk. Members decided to meet on the 4th Monday, as usual, with exceptions for May and December when we will meet 5/18/2015 and 12/14/2015.

5b. Ben Baldwin distributed the draft 2013 Annual Report, written 3/21/2014, and asked for feedback.

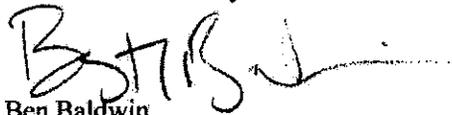
5c. Sheila Lyons asked whether the Commission wished to continue its pursuit of Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) funds for the acquisition of the Walsh Property on Anguilla Brook Road, site of the execution of Narragansett sachem Canonchet in 1676. The consensus was that the Commission should continue with the acquisition which has been allocated place-holding funding of \$1. The amount of frontage that this parcel has on Town roads was questioned.

6. Review of draft minutes – 7/28/2014

MOTION: Approve the minutes of 2/24/2014 as submitted (Tim Bell, Stuart Cole). Passed unanimously.

7. Adjournment – Motion to adjourn (Stuart Cole). Made at 9:10 p.m.

Minutes submitted by



Ben Baldwin

Secretary, Town of Stonington Conservation Commission