

Town of Stonington Conservation Commission  
Minutes of a Regular Meeting held on April 24, 2023  
Town Hall Meeting Room, 152 Elm Street, Stonington, CT

**1. Call to order** - Chairman Stuart Cole called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm. Members present were Frances Hoffman, Michael Schefers, Ben Baldwin and Stephanie Hayes-Houlihan. Members Jennifer Herbst and Jim Friedlander were not present. No members of the public were present.

**2. Review of Town Developments and Proposals**

**a. PZ2305ZC Paul & Sharyne Cerullo (Maple Lawn Farm, LLC)** – *Master Plan Zone Change application from the existing RR-80 & GBR-130 zones to the Agricultural Heritage District (AHD) zone. The proposed master plan seeks to create a campus for food, education, and events. Properties located at 343 Wheeler Rd. & Wheeler Rd. Stonington. Assessor's Map 94 Block 1 Lot 4 & Map 86 Block 1 Lot 4. Zones RR-80 & GBR-130. PH [PZC public hearing] Scheduled May 2, 2023.* The application had been emailed to Commission members. The applicant or representative was not present. Ben Baldwin noted the application appears to include just 2 of 3 owned parcels, excluding 10.22-acre 331 Wheeler Road which has a large farm field, and that the 21.56-acre is subject to a conservation easement held by the Town and cannot be subdivided or developed. The AHD regulation was reviewed. Members had questions about whether the application's master plan was complete. MOTION: We welcome the presence of farms in Stonington, but this application does not appear to meet the requirements of the regulation. The land area is not contiguous as required due to Wheeler Road; the plan does not appear to have been prepared by a professional planner and the bulk and the dimensional requirements, outside of parking, were not provided with any specificity. The survey does not show the barn and other outbuildings (Frances Hoffman, Michael Schefers). Passed unanimously.

**b. PZ2308ZC, SPA & CAM Town of Stonington (C. Frost)** – *Master Plan Zone Change, Site Plan & Coastal Area Management Review applications for creation of the Mystic River Boathouse Park. Property located at 123 Greenmanville Ave., Mystic. Assessor's Map 172 Block 1 Lot 1. Zone MHD. PH scheduled for 6/6/23.* A printed copy of the application was received and to be reviewed at our next meeting.

**c. Z2235SD Old Stoneridge, LLC** – *Residential Subdivision application for the creation of two lots. Property located at 111-113 Montauk Ave., Stonington. Assessor's Map 131 Block 3 Lot 6. Zone RR-80.* Stuart Cole and Frances Hoffman attended the PZC hearing on 4/4/2023. Stuart Cole described CC's motion to the PZC recommending an open space set aside. The hearing was continued until 4/18/2023 instead of the expected 4/25/2023 and they were not sent notice. Draft minutes of the decision have yet to be posted, but Ben Baldwin forwarded a copy of the approval stipulations he was sent by the Planning Department which are to accompany the decision. There was concern that the PZC had approved a combination of a conservation easement and a set-aside and that appeals based on the desires of applicants sets a poor precedent. Frances Hoffman and Stuart Cole are to compose a letter to the PZC.

Stuart Cole distributed copies of a memo prepared by Candace Palmer, ZEO at the request of the PZC regarding the authority of the Conservation Commission and described its advisory nature. Ms. Palmer noted the balance of the Open Space Fund is \$178,347 at the end of 2022 after the Rathbun Farm purchase of development rights and the Copps Brook Preserve acquisition. Ms. Palmer expressed her opinion that the likely set-aside land at 111-113 Montauk Avenue "appears less than worthwhile" compared to the possibility of receiving a fee in lieu of open space for the Open Space Fund.

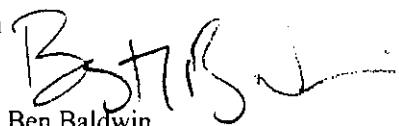
**3. Old Business**

*f. Discussion of process for preparing and adopting new Open Space Plan* – Michael Schefers said the Open Space Plan Committee has begun writing the open space plan, using Groton's plan as a template.

**6. Review of draft minutes – 3/6/23 – MOTION:** To approve the minutes for the meeting held on 3/6/2023 as written (Michael Schefers, Stephanie Hayes-Houlihan). Passed unanimously.

**7. Adjournment** - MOTION: To adjourn the meeting (Michael Schefers, Frances Hoffman). Passed unanimously at 8:36 pm.

Minutes approved at a Special Meeting on  
May 30, 2023 and submitted by



Ben Baldwin

Secretary, Town of Stonington Conservation Commission