

Conservation & Open Spaces Commission
Meeting Minutes
January 26, 2009

Members present: Michael Westerfield, Patty Szczys, Dean Fiona and Kay Haskell

Member who recently resigned: Marsha Hildenrad

Town Representative: Charlie Olbrias of the Recreation Dept.

Meeting was called to order at 7:03pm. No one wished to speak at Citizens and Delegations.

Minutes: There were no minutes because of lack of quorum at last meeting in December.

Correspondence: Only correspondence was from James Finger regarding the request of citizens and Zoning Commission is appear before their Commission to urge them to adopt our Conservation & Open Spaces regulations to protect and preserve the natural Resources; and especially the ground water from contamination that may harm any living thing. Michael stated that these regulations were offered as a guide for the Town and not necessarily "Regulations." Conservation and Open Spaces Commission should always be consulted before any Zoning is approved as they do now before the Wetlands Commission. Patty asked if we could begin to move forward to making these areas protected areas. Our Commission will be setting priorities areas that need special designation for Conservation in the next few meetings.

Concerns: Also there is still concern regarding the land for the Ash Landfill near the previous Franklin Mushroom Farm and Windham's Industrial Park. We have sent a letter offering our feelings on this area.

Joshua's Trust is in the process of purchasing the area around Lake Marie to protect it for conservation and protection.

Kay asked about the new Magnet School property off Tuckie Road. The group feels that we should be consulted before a purchase is made since this school is an environmental school and protect of the land should be one of their goals. Patty also felt that the school should be built in the downtown area if possible. **Patty will draft a letter regarding our feelings about these areas.**

Considerations of Land Use Proposals: Mr. Finger stated he had nothing to bring before at this time.

Discussion: CL & P Proposed Transmission Line Routes. Kay shared maps and booklets on CL & P's possible line routes through Windham. She stated that Mansfield has voted no on the preferred route that CL & P had requested. Others in the group had not heard that so Michael will check into it. Then **Michael will write CL & P a letter from the group noting our disapproval with any lines going through Windham.**

Discussion: River Access for "Quiet Water" Canoeing and Kayaking: Michael had not talked to Joe as yet. The group felt that we needed to wait until Spring and better weather to go forward. Need two take out/enter river places. Charlie asked which two we decided. One behind Lauter Park and one at the Plains Road Rec. area. Believe costs will run about \$500 per point. Michael felt we need to contact Baltic as to sprucing up their take out point at the Recreation Area. It gets overgrown at times and hard to locate from the river. Patty suggested that we get the Boy Scouts or Eastern students maybe to help clear area before area is built. Charlie mentioned the UConn Eco-Huskies may want to help.

Discussion: New Green Way Trail from Airline Trail South to the East Coast Greenway and Hop River State Park Trail. Kay stated that the Whitewater Group is working hard on getting all the land needed to complete the trail from Mansfield to connect to the Hop River State Park Trail. She will get update for us from Dan Mullins for the next meeting. Charlie mentioned that Mark Pacquette at WINCOG may have information on this too.

Charlie requested a Foot Bridge of sorts across the river at 103 and Highway 6 so his run could be easier.

Next Meeting we will begin to work on Setting Priorities for the Open Spaces in Windham and continue working on this through 2009.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm.

ADDENDUM: Kay asked Commission members to stay on top of the Stop & Shop use of Open Space in front of VFW. Believe they are moving along without consulting us!!!!