



APPROVED MINUTES
Ridgefield Conservation Commission
Town Hall Annex, 66 Prospect Street
Ridgefield, CT 06877
(203) 431-2713 • conservation@ridgefieldct.org

December 11, 2017

A meeting of the Ridgefield Conservation Commission was held at the Town Hall Annex, 66 Prospect Street, Ridgefield, Connecticut 06877 on Monday, December 11, 2017 at 7:30 p.m.

The following members were present:

Susan Baker	Eric Beckenstein	Tim Bishop
Carroll Brewster	Jim Coyle	Dave Cronin
Jack Kace	Daniel C. Levine	Ben Oko
Alan Pilch	Kitsey Snow	

Mr. Coyle chaired the meeting. Colleen Lake was present to take minutes.

Beth Peyser, Robert Cascella, Roy Shanholtz, Attorney Edward Schenkel, Ryan Tucker and Mike Malwitz were also in attendance.

1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the November 27, 2017 meeting were reviewed.

UPON motion duly made, seconded and carried, it was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of November 27, 2017 are approved and ordered filed in the minute books of the Commission and the Town Hall.

2. ENFORCEMENT UPDATE

23 Stonewall Lane – The homeowner, Mr. Shanholtz and his attorney, Edward Schenkel, discussed the easement violations and their proposed solution. The homeowner proposed a 2:1 land swap that would meet the four criteria listed in Guidelines for Easement Changes and Land Swaps established by the RCC in November, 2016. The proposed adjusted easement would allow the owner to keep his patio and driveway in their current location but the aluminum fence around the property would have to be moved onto the new easement line.

UPON motion duly made, seconded and carried (with 2 abstentions and 1 nay), it was RESOLVED to accept the 2:1 land swap with the understanding that the fence will be moved onto the new easement line and that P&Z/IWB applications will be submitted by December 31, 2017.

25 Stonewall Lane – No update.

30 Encampment Place – Homeowner states encroachments have been removed.

32 Encampment Place - No update.

78 Old Trolley – Trees and brush have been removed. A 60 day extension will be granted to move the shed from the easement area.

Ms. Peyser will visit the sites following the December 31, 2017 compliance deadline. If violations remain, Ms. Peyser will issue citations.

3. TREASURER'S REPORT – Mr. Brewster informed the commission that \$4610 has been received from 51 donors for the annual appeal. In addition, Mr. Brewster discussed invoices received from Ms. Freeman for an aerator rental (\$190), seed (\$287.98) and electrical contractor (\$1500) used at McKeon farm.

UPON motion duly made, seconded and carried, it was RESOLVED to approve payment of the seed and aerator invoices from the McKeon fund. Mr. Brewster will look into the grant and Ms. Freeman's contract before submitting payment to the electrical contractor.

4. CAPITAL & ANNUAL BUDGET REQUESTS FOR FY18-19

Mr. Coyle discussed the capital request of \$20,900 for a tractor to be used at McKeon Farm, and the 9.3% increase being requested in the annual budget.

UPON motion duly made, seconded and carried, it was RESOLVED to send the capital and annual expense requests for FY18-19 to the finance department.

5. COMMUNITY OUTREACH

RHS Intern Program – Ms. Snow reported that the high school intern program will run from May 15th to June 8th next spring. The Garden Club and Woodcock Nature Center would like to share two or three students with the RCC for the three-week program. The RCC agreed this would be an excellent educational opportunity. Ms. Snow will coordinate with RHS.

6. OPEN SPACE

East Ridge Trail – The ½ mile trail is cleared, connected and ready to blaze. An extension will be added to the dog park that would allow walkers to connect to the rail trail. Mr. Coyle would like to have a "trail opening" event in the spring.

Pine Mountain Trail – Ryan Tucker and Mike Malwitz from NEMBA discussed the new orange trail created up to the lookout. The commission thanked the men, and the organization, for a job well done and their continued partnership with the RCC. The RCC hopes to work with NEMBA on another trail that would lead to a second lookout on Pine Mountain.

Kiosk Maps – Map supplies are running low and costs to print the last 11x17 trifold map were high. Ms. Lake will obtain prices from other vendors for an 11x17 and an 8-1/2x11 version of the map.

7. PLANNING & ZONING COMMISSION, INLAND WETLANDS BOARD

a) Meetings for Attendance

Dec 19 – Ms. Snow (Mixed Use Overlay)

Jan. 2 – Mr. Pilch

Jan. 16 – Mr. Beckenstein

Jan. 23 – Ms. Baker

b) New and Continued Business

500 Main – Approved

278 Ridgebury Road – Approved

8. 2018 Chairman Selection – Mr. Coyle’s one-year commitment is up on December 31, 2017.

UPON motion duly made, seconded and unanimously carried, it was RESOLVED to elect Mr. Coyle for another one-year term. Mr. Coyle accepted the election.

Mr. Coyle asked the commission to consider Dr. Kace for Vice Chairman.

UPON motion duly made, seconded and unanimously carried, it was RESOLVED to elect Dr. Kace for Vice Chairman for a one-year term. Dr. Kace accepted the election.

UPON motion duly made, seconded and unanimously carried, it was AGREED to add Charter Revision Committee to the Agenda.

CHARTER REVISION – The sub-committee held their first meeting December 9th and decided to explore separating P&Z from IWB. The sub-committee will create a position statement to submit to the CRC and will announce that intent at the public hearing on January 8, 2018.

UPON motion duly made, seconded and carried, it was RESOLVED that the RCC will send a letter of intent to recommend a charter revision at the CRC hearing on January 8th.

Dr. Oko presented a new initiative called Sustainable CT. The program encourages communities “to be thriving, resilient, collaborative, and forward-looking. They build community and local economy. They equitably promote the health and well-being of current and future residents, and they respect the finite capacity of the natural environment.” There will be a presentation for our region in Wilton on January 9, 2018, 1:00 - 2:15 p.m. - Comstock Community Center (Room 13). The website is www.sustainablect.org.

9. EXECUTIVE SESSION – Open Space Acquisition

UPON motion duly made, seconded and unanimously carried it was AGREED to enter executive session at 9:55 pm. The executive session concluded at 10:30 pm.

10. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS – Mr. Coyle asked commissioners to look over the McKeon Farm list and the Goals & Projects for discussion in January.

ADJOURNMENT

UPON motion duly made, seconded and unanimously carried, the meeting adjourned at 10:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Colleen Lake