

Town of Canaan
Inland Wetlands/Conservation Commission
Minutes of Regular Meeting
July 27, 2026

Members Present: Mark Burdick, Brant Burz, Ellery Sinclair, Susan Kelsey

Meeting was called to order at 7:07 p.m. Minutes of June 15, 2020 were reviewed. Sinclair made motion to accept minutes as presented; seconded by Burz; passed unanimously.

Public Input: None.

Old Business:

- 1. Town Tree Street Inventory:** Burdick and Kelsey have yet to conduct inventory of street trees on Beebe Hill/6 Rod Road and Page Road, respectively.
- 2. Water Diversion from Watercourses:** Burdick is still waiting to receive information from Bruce Bennett regarding regulations for the diversion of water from watercourses.
- 3. Railroad Herbicide Spraying:** No update regarding current Housatonic Railroad herbicide spraying plan for 2026.
- 4. Commission Members:** Kelsey will copy the State statute that addresses qualification requirements of town commission members. Sinclair had extended an invitation to Mark Gorzonsky, a potential Commission member, to attend tonight's meeting.
- 5. Resilient Forestry Practices Grant:** Kelsey will obtain a list of all Town-owned properties from the assessor to see if any of said properties may qualify for this grant that emphasizes protective forest management practices.
- 6. Coolidge Property:** Kelsey shared the email she sent to Carol Flaton, an individual experienced in land conservation, requesting advice regarding measures to protect the subdivided Coolidge property on Beebe Hill. Kelsey will share any advice received at the next meeting.
- 7. Beaver Discussion:** Burz provided information on several devices proven effective in beaver management ("Beaver Deceiver" and "The Clemson Beaver Pond Leveler"). Kelsey reported that a wildlife camera had been installed for several days by the culvert crossing Route 126 between Amy Road and Johnson Road where flooding had recently occurred. Subsequently, the State had cleaned out the culvert.

New Business:

- 1. Application, Marylou Miller, 64 Music Mountain Road:** An application and a check for \$135 was received from Miller to repair a culvert, washed-out bridge and to stabilize the streambank upstream from the culvert in an area of significant erosion and siltation. Kelsey made a motion to accept the application for review; seconded by Sinclair; passed unanimously. The existing culvert has failed, resulting in siltation at the culvert's inlet. Erosion and sediment measures would be followed. Burdick had made a site visit and expressed concern over the need for proper sizing of the culvert proposed to be replaced. Members agreed that proper sizing from an engineer in addition to more details regarding the supposed silt removal and stream bank stabilization are necessary prior to taking action on the application. Burdick will notify the applicant.

2. Town of Canaan Sustainability Discussion: Sinclair shared that it is apparently the feeling among members of the Board of Finance that the current projected financial situation of the Town is not sustainable. He wondered if the IW/CC should provide input to their concerns from a conservation perspective. Members were encouraged to consider this assertion for discussion at a future meeting.

Routing Sheets: None.

Communications:

1. Hunt Hill: Farm Preserve Proposal: A request from Northwest Connecticut Land Conservancy was received asking for proposals to manage their 8 acre Hunt Hill Farm Preserve. In New Milford.

2. Natural Bridge: An email was received from Max Savino inquiring if the Town was aware of a natural 35-foot limestone bridge to the east of Route 7N at the base of Canaan Mountain. Said bridge is possibly the longest natural bridge in the State. He also mentioned the possible existence of sink holes/caves on Canaan Mountain. Kelsey has seen the natural bridge.

3. DEEP Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Program Grant: DEEP is awarding grants to projects offering high conservation and recreational value. The grants require a significant portion of outside funding in order to be approved for funding.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Kelsey, secretary