

Town of Canaan  
Inland Wetlands/Conservation Commission  
Minutes of Regular Meeting  
May 15, 2023

Members Present: Mark Burdick, Felicia Jones, Susan Kelsey, Ellery Sinclair.,  
Matthew Gallagher (alternate)

Meeting was called to order at 7:07 P.M. by Chairman Burdick. Jones made a motion to approve the minutes with the correction that the last sentence under '1. Railroad Spraying' be changed to read "Sinclair emphasized that HWG does not want to be adversarial."; seconded by Sinclair; passed unanimously. Kelsey will post amended April minutes.

**Public Input:** None.

**Old Business:**

**1. Railroad Herbicide Spraying:** Sinclair reported that our state senator and representative will be meeting in early June with the Selectmen from the area river towns along with two representatives from the Housatonic Working Group. Included in the wish list of the HWG is that Connecticut follow Massachusetts regulations for railroad ROW spraying which includes the prohibition of spraying in areas of wetlands and watercourses. Sinclair intends to write to the CEQ to solicit their support.

**2. Sustainable CT:** The May meeting of the Community Resilience Building Workshop was canceled and has been rescheduled for June 15<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m. Dan Carr and Janna Shiller will be heading up the Community Resilience Building Plan. Glen Chalder, the consultant contracted to write the town Plan of Conservation and Development is hoping to incorporate into the Plan the interests of the varied sectors of the town.

**3. Earth Day:** Jones reported approximately ten people participated in the Earth Day town roadside cleanup. Carr collected the trash bags and delivered them to the transfer station. Sinclair requested that the minutes officially thank Marlene and Felicia for facilitating this event. Jones suggested that going forward, VanGulick be given assistance in this event as April coincides with VanGulick's demanding lambing season.

**4. Litchfield Hill Partners, Aspen Hill Drive:** Kelsey reported that both she and Burz had visited the site; the house site being prepared is upslope to a significant wetland. Kelsey suggested that she write a letter to the contractor requesting that either hay bales or a silt fence be installed to ensure no sediment associated with site preparation enters the adjacent wetlands; by consensus, the commission agreed. Kelsey will send letter to members for review and comments.

**New Business:**

**1. Town Plan of Conservation and Development:** A discussion occurred regarding items that the Commission would like to have considered for inclusion in the Town Plan. Kelsey will forward suggestions to Chalder. Said items are as follows:

- a. Review and clarification of routing sheet and driveway “sign-off” process.
- b. Enhanced communication between the Inland Wetlands/Conservation Commission and the Planning and Zoning commission (e.g. during the process of siting future potential alternative energy facilities; open space regulations).
- c. Increased oversight on herbicide spraying along town roads near watercourses and wetlands and education to reduce landowner use of chemicals.
- d. Encouragement of invasive species management through mechanical removal.
- e. Encourage use of native plants in any town project requiring planting.
- f. Implementation of a community firewood program that would benefit low income town residents while also addressing removal of dead and hazard trees.
- g. Consider permeable and other environmentally friendly paving products for town roads.
- h. Encourage agricultural businesses and forestry.
- i. Utilize expertise of local groups and organizations within town (e.g. Great Mountain Forest, Isabella Freedman Retreat Center, HVRHS Agricultural Program).
- j. Public education to encourage reduction of roadside trash.

## **2. Forestry Advisory Committee:**

**A. Hollenbeck Logging Job:** Kelsey reported that she had received a message back from Ian Branson, Hollenbeck’s forester, informing the commission that he had installed hay bales between the skid road and wetlands in the area requested by the commission.

**B. Street Tree Replacement Funding:** Jones suggested that the surplus of this fiscal year’s monies from our budget be allocated to the fund created to replace street trees in town. Kelsey will ask the treasurer if this is feasible.

## **3. Routing Sheet Sign-offs:**

**A. Sievert McCabe: Music Mountain Road:** Prefab timberframe house.

**B. Daly Reville: 12 Battle Hill Road:** Carport.

## **3. Communications:**

**A. Northwest Connecticut Conservation District:** Request for donation was received. Kelsey will check with treasurer to see the amount the town gave last year.

**B. Elm Tree Treatment:** Sinclair reminded the Commission that the elm tree on Brewster Street is likely scheduled for treatment provided it appears relatively healthy. Kelsey will check with treasurer for payment date of last treatment.

Kelsey made a motion to adjourn at 9:25 p.m.; seconded by Sinclair; passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Kelsey, secretary