

LITCHFIELD CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

June 23, 2026

Members Present: Barbara Putnam, chair, Diane Stoner, vice chair, Chester Reed, Jordan Richards.

Members Absent: Mark Austin, Clerk, Marcia Fowler, Cleve Fuessenich.

Call to Order

Barbara Putnam called the meeting to order at 7:04 PM

Approval of Minutes

Approval of the May minutes was passed by a motion made by Diane and seconded by Chester. The April minutes are tabled until July.

Open Space Plan: Members reviewed both the current draft of the open space plan and the CLCC's outline for creating an open space plan. Diane offered to use AI to combine the two documents.

The Commission has agreed that we do not want to prioritize specific properties for the Town to acquire because (1) the Town does not have the funding, and (2) the process for land acquisition is so unwieldy. We are lucky to have the White Memorial Foundation, which maintains a large area of open space, and the Litchfield Land Trust, that has the capacity to purchase open space and conservation easements. At this time, over 20% of the land in Town is already preserved open space.

Our open space plan can offer information on what areas have unique qualities that are valuable as open space:

- Scenic Roads, including roadside stone walls. The Commission did a study several years ago, and this information has been mapped.

- Water bodies that are valuable for recreation

- Drinking water resources, both reservoirs and groundwater aquifers

- Hiking trail systems maintained by White Memorial, The Litchfield Community Greenway, and the Litchfield Land Trust

- Woodland areas and core forests

- Prime and Important Farmland soils

- Steep slopes and viewsheds

Wetlands and riparian buffers regulated by the Inland Wetland Commission
This information could be mapped and included in the POCAD.

Barbara has discussed our desire to include our open space plan in the upcoming 2027 POCAD with Carol Bramley, P&Z Chair, and Denise Raap, First Selectwoman.

Event planning on Riparian Zones:

A presentation on Riparian Streamside Buffers is scheduled for September 30 at 7:00 PM at the Litchfield Community Center. Marcia has agreed to contact Alicia Charamut of the Housatonic Valley Association about her availability.

There was discussion about doing a mailing to landowners who own frontage on the important streams and rivers.

Enforcement: Barbara spoke with the Land Use administrator about enforcement of conservations easements owned by the town. It was unclear how much he would be able to do, given his other responsibilities.

Members: Barbara Putnam will investigate having a member of Sustainable Litchfield serve on this Commission.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 8:16 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Putnam, Clerk Pro Tem