

LITCHFIELD CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

July 28, 2026

Members Present: Barbara Putnam, chair, Marcia Fowler, Cleve Fuessenich, Diane Stoner, vice chair, Chester Reed, Jordan Richards.

Members Absent: Mark Austin, Clerk.

Call to Order: Barbara Putnam called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

Approval of Minutes: Approval of the June minutes was passed by a motion made by Cleve and seconded by Marcia. The April minutes are tabled until August.

Old Business:

Open Space Plan: Members reviewed the updated draft of the open space plan dated June 24, 2026, and will continue reviewing it next month.

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. She will attempt to connect with the new Land Use Official, Steve Macary this month.

Conveyance Tax: Cleve's discussion with Lisa Losee did not turn up any information about using the conveyance tax for open space acquisition. He will check with our state senator and assemblywoman to see whether we are correct in our understanding that Towns can pass ordinances to up the tax and direct the extra funds to Affordable Housing, Historic Preservation and/or Open Space Acquisition.

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 lined up Alicia Charamut of the Housatonic Valley Association, and several other participants from the Watershed Coalition.

There is money in our budget, up to \$500, for a mailing to landowners who own frontage on the important streams and rivers. Marcia and Cleve will work together to create a spreadsheet from which labels can be printed. Barbara will design a postcard.

Marcia will have information about the presentation and the presenters sent to Barbara.

Enforcement: No new activity.

New Business:

Correspondence: A landowner on the Torrington Road has made inquiries into having a conservation easement removed. After some discussion, we agreed that we need to consult with one of the Town's attorneys.

Members: Barbara will investigate having members of Sustainable Litchfield and Planning and Zoning serve on this Commission.

Other Business: Cleve brought up the idea of creating a market for exchanging development rights between land conservation groups and affordable housing groups in different towns. As a statewide plan, it would be something that to discuss with our state representative and senator.

Review of action items:

Barbara will email the updated open space plan to all the members.

Barbara will ask about which lawyer to discuss vacating conservation easements with.

Barbara will investigate having members of Sustainable Litchfield and Planning and Zoning serve on this Commission.

Marcia will have information about the Riparian presentation and the presenters sent to Barbara.

Marcia and Cleve will work together to create a mailing list for the Riparian event.

Cleve will consult with Karen Reddington Hughes and Steve Harding about two matters:

- Whether and how towns can collect additional conveyance tax for open space
- An exchange of development rights program for land preservation and affordable housing groups

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 8:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Putnam, Clerk Pro Tem