



Town of Sherman
Conservation Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, June 10, 2026

Members Present: William (Bill) McCann (Chair), Michele MacKinnon (Vice Chair), Michael Conforti, Jill Humphreys

Members Absent: Jen Freed, Breezy Grenier, Colette Shulman, Lauren Weber

Other Attendees: none

Call to Order: Chairman B. McCann called the meeting to order at 7:18 p.m.

Approval of Minutes:

J. Humphreys made a motion to approve the May 13, 2026 minutes.

Seconded by: M. MacKinnon

Vote For: All in favor

Correspondence:

Per B. McCann he received correspondence from First Selectman (Don Lowe) regarding the forest walk with Dave Beers, service forester for the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP). In the email, D. Lowe thanked the commission for inviting him on the walk and expressed his wish that the commission explore available opportunities provided by DEEP. D. Lowe had forwarded in his note an email he received from Danica Doroski (DEEP urban forester) in which she provided additional information on two, potential opportunities for the town.

One opportunity entails a grant award for urban community forest resilience to facilitate long-term forest health in low canopy communities. The second, involves providing input for a survey the agency is distributing to obtain information for the possible procurement of a statewide tree inventory software program.

The commission discussed both opportunities. As Sherman is not a low canopy community, the commission felt it did not qualify for the grant. The commission did decide to participate in the survey. J. Humphreys will complete the survey on behalf of the commission.

New Business:

a) Forest Evaluation Reports

B. McCann recapped for the commission that J. Humphreys was successful in arranging for D. Beers to come and inspect two forests within Sherman – the one at Colonial Park and the one at Volunteer Park. He shared that the resultant report was not substantive at this stage but that D. Beers was particularly impressed with the forest at Volunteer Park. J. Humphreys added that D. Beers noted the forest has little black birch but is heavily populated with sugar maple and tulip poplar and has regenerated nicely after the timber harvest.

B. McCann said there was also discussion about adding a new trail system at Volunteer Park, although that falls outside of the forest grant program. He advised that he spoke with Fran Frattini (Chair, Parks & Recreation Commission), who shared that Parks & Rec has been exploring the idea of adding a trail system to Volunteer Park. They agreed that the commissions should collaborate moving forward, per their respective areas, to realize this goal. B. McCann will send the forest evaluation reports to F. Frattini per M. MacKinnon's suggestion. M. MacKinnon also pointed out that the report highlighted the presence of mature white oak trees in parts of Sherman's forests, which are a keystone species.

b) Hiking Trails Program Review

Per B. McCann, the hiking trails program took place last Thursday. There were 36 attendees in addition to the presenters from the Appalachian Mountain Club CT (AMC-CT), Deer Pond Farm, Great Hollow, and the Northwest Connecticut Land Conservancy (NCLC). B. McCann served as the town's trail representative, opening the event with a presentation on the trails at Colonial Park. He also provided 50 print copies of the commission's hiking guide, which were well received as was the whole program overall.

c) Garden Update

M. Conforti and M. MacKinnon worked to remove the perimeter fencing around the pollinator garden. They also put fencing around the shrubs (e.g., dogwoods), deciding not to put fencing in other woody areas. M. Conforti will also purchase deer repellent and is building a bench for the garden.

M. MacKinnon added that milkweed seeds blew around and actually rooted in places. She also advised that there are weeds in the garden, particularly stiltgrass, which is growing on the edges on the garden and there is a lot growing under the large red maple near the bank. There are also several invasives (e.g., Japanese knotweed, bittersweet vines) growing on the bank. South of the garden is a large patch of non-native burdock, which must be addressed before it spreads seeds in the garden.

Lastly, per M. MacKinnon, Sue Moga has volunteered to help with the garden this summer. Discussion then turned to possible expansion of the garden and what could be added to the garden to call more attention to it as an inviting space to visit, now that it has matured sufficiently.

d) Weed Warrior Dates

Commissioners discussed possible dates to conduct a Weed Warrior session in June, deciding on Saturday, June 27th.

Old Business:

a) Wildlife Corridor Mapping Update

B. McCann will remove this item from next month's agenda.

J. Humphreys **made a motion** to adjourn the meeting.

Seconded by: M. Conforti

Vote: All in favor.

B. McCann adjourned the meeting at 8:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Christine Aruza
Next monthly meeting: Wednesday, July 8, 2026 @ 7:00 p.m., Mallory Town Hall