

MCC

Milford Conservation Commission Regular Meeting

Tuesday Oct. 15, 2013. 6:00 PM

Parsons Government Complex, Conference Room A, 70 West River Street, Milford, Ct. 06460

Call to Order/Roll Call/Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Poutray called the meeting to order at 6:10.

Members attending: William Poutray (ch) Steve Johnson (v-ch), Claire Casey, Dan Drago, Oden Seaholm

Absent: William Blotney, Keith Dunn, Jerry Loiselle, Maureen Mauro-Desantie,

Staff attending: Meg Greene (sec)

Public comment

None.

Previous meeting minutes

Review of the September minutes was tabled until the November meeting.

Open Space (OS) Inventory Status/Commission OS Monitoring

Mr. Johnson reported that he had inventoried 580 parcels with each parcel identified by its watershed. There is an estimated 3,091 acres listed. He referred to a pie chart he had created to illustrate the distribution of these parcels. Viewed by acreage, the Housatonic River has over ½ of the OS within its watershed, followed by Wepawaug with about ¼.

He went on to categorize and group the OS parcels by size, from the smallest at 1/100 acre to the 543-acre Charles E Wheeler wildlife refuge area. He noted that the group of smallest parcels (under an acre) number 321 and that 55% of all parcels are under an acre. He further noted that more than half of the parcels in that group are less than a ¼ acre in size. He said that many were created in early 20th century; some were tax defaults, while some were too small or wet to build on and were given to city. He noted that many areas of OS are in close proximity to where commissioners live. He also noted areas of privately owned but “perceived” OS as they are not developed yet. He said that prior to the inventory, 44 properties had been identified as deed-restricted, but that the inventory added about another 100 to that total. He said that because there is so much diversity in the size of the OS parcels, there will probably be about a dozen that will be enjoyable by public, making these the most important ones to monitor. He said that doing a thorough monitoring of big properties might be difficult, but noted that such areas can be “chunked down” to expedite oversight.

Mr. Johnson said he would like to arrange 2 site visits to higher-profile properties:

1. Mondo Ponds, which is now maintained mostly by neighbors.
2. Solomon property near West River Street, consisting of 100 acres and ringed by abutting landowners. He noted that this property has invasives, but the interior is as close to native pristine area as can be found in Milford.

He added that many OS properties won't be walkable due to overgrowth and that some are also very tidal—they properties provide important habitat for wildlife, but are not accessible. An example is the marshy Wheeler property.

Mr. Johnson said the inventory included undeveloped and recreational parcels. He noted that the City's latest Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) included things like Wasson Field. He said his inventory nets out structures on POCD-identified open spaces for more accuracy and that cemeteries and golf courses were also incl.

Mr. Poutray suggested that to start the commissioner oversight project, an email be circulated where commissioners can chose the sites they want to monitor and learn about what information to capture when they visit the sites. He

suggested that all-terrain-vehicle (ATV) use be tracked as a threat to OS properties. He noted that police are working with Avalon Bay to reduce ATV use and that deadman blocks have been installed near Wolf Harbor and Wheelers Farm Road, which have promoted natural recovery there.

86 Pond Point 30-g housing Application Letter

Mr. Johnson noted that this letter was not written due to a PC crash. He said he would circulate the letter to the rest of group for review. He said the parcel is behind the old Pop's Restaurant, consisted of 2.73 acres, would be clear-cut, and that structures would be built there. He said he would suggest some plantings and advise that invasives had been identified that, if not managed now, would come back. Mr. Drago suggested developing a checklist for similar reviews in future.

CACIWC Meeting

Mr. Poutray circulated a list of scheduled sessions and urged members to attend. He said tuition for the sessions would be reimbursed by MCC.

Adjournment was at 6:45.

Respectfully submitted,