



GOSHEN CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Minutes - December 6, 2023, Meeting - Goshen Town Hall Conference Room and Zoom

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman, Iain Kinsella, called the December 6, 2023, meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

ATTENDANCE:

Present at Goshen Town Hall Conference Room: Iain Kinsella-Chair and Paul Gallo-Vice Chair

Present on ZOOM: Cindy Barrett, Laura Saucier, Jason Masi and Sue Rinaldi.

Excused: Annette Lott

Guests at Town Hall Conference Room: Sarah Leonard and Marissa Wright

APPROVAL of MINUTES:

The minutes of the November 1, 2023, meeting were mailed for review. Paul Gallo made a motion to accept the minutes and it was seconded by Sue Rinaldi. The motion carried.

CORRESPONDENCE: Iain reported that an email was received from Todd Carusillo, First Selectman, regarding a new grant program from The Nature Conservancy for northwest Connecticut land protection projects across the Appalachian Trail areas. He will circulate the email and it will be discussed at the next meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

Torrington Water Company fishing by permit at reservoir: Iain reported no new information, the bridge issues still need to be addressed, and he plans on walking the trail with Aquarion Land Management department official in the coming months.

Trail maintenance reports: Iain reported that Joe Welsh, resident, did walk on the Town Hill Trail and it was all clear but soggy. Sue Rinaldi reported that she had been out on the North Goshen trails and on the north part of the loop there were trees down. She is planning on getting them cut up and cleared off the trail. She reported that the ground was frozen. She did not walk the southern loop which can be wet and hopes to get out on that part this coming weekend.

Bantam Lake watershed project status: No report at this meeting. Laura reported that she has not received anything as well.

East Street North trail grant discussion: Iain reported that he did contact Joyce Mowrey and notified her that the Conservation Commission would like to join in on that grant again. He did not know if the Goshen Recreation Department was going in on it again but told Joyce if she needed any updated information for the grant information to please let him know.

Goshen Town Topics future articles: Annette Lott submitted an article for the next issue on the spotted lanternfly. Future articles are welcome. The next submission date is January 29, 2024. Thanks were given to Annette.



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Goshen Town Hall Walkway beds/Pollinator Garden Maintenance: Cindy reported that the Pollinator Garden is well mulched with leaves, plant stalks will be left over the winter for the birds, and will plan on cutting it back in the spring to leave it natural. She noted that a good edge to the garden will have to be done in the spring. The walkway beds are also well mulched naturally with leaves and a spring clean up will be planned as the ground is frozen.

Goshen Open Space Plan 2025: Iain suggested to take a look at the Plan which is on the Goshen Town website, it will be reviewed and will be updated by the Conservation Commission for the Plan of Conservation and Development 2025.

Report on DEEP Public Hike at Mohawk State Forest: Sue and Jason attended the hike on Friday, Nov. 3, 4 pm, at Mohawk State Forest. Jason reported that it was an outreach effort by CT DEEP of their forestry management of Mohawk and their forestry management approaches overall. Representatives from Forestry and Wildlife were present to review their plan to deal with the attack of the spongy moth over the past 2 1/2 spring seasons.

A representative from the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station was there as well who had studied trees that had been attacked by spongy moths over multiple times and compared that to the demographics and species type to predict mortality rates for the trees based upon observed canopy defoliation over those periods. During the spongy moth invasions, canopy surveys of the different trees in the state parks were done to determine how likely it is for those trees to actually die in the next two seasons. They explained that as trees get older they are less resilient to attacks as opposed to young trees that can survive multiple spongy moth attacks provided that approximately 60 percent of the top canopy cover is still intact at the end of a season. He explained that foresters went through 2 or 3 main areas in Mohawk State Park where selective cutting is going to be done. One area is along the main road to the look out.

They explained their forestry goals as well and Jason noted that since 1830 the forests have become single species and single age because of clear cutting, regrowth, and then clear cutting. Those are two bad practices for resiliency. The goal is to get it to traditional old growth forest characteristics of different ages of trees and different species in the same area which are more resilient to future attacks. Sue noted that the Beech trees are at risk too. Wildlife species do better as well with the diversification of the forest. Sue noted as well that the trees along the roads are of importance due to walkers and cars because of the risk of limbs or trees falling on the road. Age of trees was discussed in the surrounding areas.

Overall, Sue and Jason felt that the talk was highly informative, clear cutting is not being done, and to please share that this is a calculated approach being done at Mohawk to take care of the trees scientifically.



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2024 Meeting Schedule dates were reviewed for the first Wednesday of the month at 6:30 pm. In a motion, made by Sue Rinaldi, seconded by Laura Saucier, it was voted to accept the 2024 meeting schedule. Motion carried. The schedule will be submitted to the Town Clerk.

Marissa Wright, Goshen resident, spoke that she wanted to find out about the Commission. Are positions "an appointed position"? Does it have to be partisan? She stated she was "unaffiliated". She would like to be on the Commission and she is currently in an appointed "position" through her work. She stated that she has a lot of professional applicable experience. She was wondering what the process might be and if it was possible to become a member. Iain stated that they are appointed positions by the BOS, it is bipartisan, and would pass her interest on to the BOS. She is going to go back to her employer, let them know what the process is and see if that is agreeable to them. Iain stated that in lieu of an appointment the GCC always takes volunteers. Cindy asked who was speaking for minutes. Barbara Breor, Town Clerk, will know what the quota is.

Another item that she wanted to bring up is her interest in getting the land on Route 4 protected and shared an educational opportunity from Dennis Quinn who is a herpetologist in CT who has volunteered to give a talk about land conservation. He just completed a book which she described, wanted to bring it to the attention of the GCC, and can send the event information when set. Iain said the GCC would mention it at the next meeting if provided the event information.

Sarah Leonard, Goshen resident, spoke that she is interested in talking about conservation, interested in the GCC, and listening to what the GCC has to offer the community. Marissa and she have been talking to some conservation organizations in CT in hopes that they can protect some land that is near where they live and expressed interest in being a volunteer for the GCC. She feels like there are so many great trails, she is on the Recreation Commission with Erin Reilly, would like seniors to get out in the woods, and she is also on Goshen Community Care and Hospice. A lot of collective good could be done. Iain explained about the last joint trail grant application with Goshen Land Trust and asked Sarah to engage Erin at the Recreation Department to be on the next round with GCC and Goshen Land Trust.

Marissa offered to review the Open Space Plan. Iain explained the legalities and purpose of the GCC as it applies to the Plan of Conservation and Development and what we are bound to do. Iain gave Marissa and Sarah his contact information for any future correspondence.

Agenda for next month was reviewed.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion to adjourn was made by Jason Masi, seconded by Sue Rinaldi at 7:10 pm. The motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Cynthia A. Barrett

Cynthia A. Barrett

Received Dec 8, 2023 9:10 AM
Attest *[Signature]*
Ass. Goshen Town Clerk