



MEETING NOTICE AND AGENDA

MANSFIELD OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION COMMITTEE
PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, APRIL 17, 2018 ■ 7:00 PM ■ CONFERENCE ROOM B ■ MANSFIELD TOWN HALL

REGULAR MEETING

1. CALL TO ORDER

2. ROLL CALL

3. MINUTES

- 3/19/18 SPECIAL MEETING NOTES
- 3/20/18 REGULAR MEETING

4. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

5. NEW BUSINESS

- OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION COMMITTEE/PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE CHARGE
- PUBLIC PROTECTED OPEN SPACE MAP

6. CONTINUING BUSINESS

7. EXECUTIVE SESSION IN ACCORDANCE WITH CGS SECTION 1-200(6)(D)

- SALE OR PURCHASE OF REAL PROPERTY
- DISCUSSION OF POSSIBLE SITE SELECTION

8. COMMUNICATIONS

- BICENTENNIAL POND UNIVERSAL ACCESS TRAIL HIKE AND DEDICATION SAT., 4/21 2-4 PM (RAIN DATE 4/28)
- UCONN CENTER FOR LAND USE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH, LAND USE ACADEMY BASIC TRAINING, APRIL 30, 2018 AND MAY 31, 2018
- MANSFIELD DRAFT ZONING REGULATIONS WWW.MANSFIELDCT.GOV/DRAFTZONINGREGULATIONS
- [UCONN METANOIA- Whetten Woods Wander 4/22](#)
- MINUTES-PZC (approved 3/19/18, draft 4/2/2018) CONSERVATION COMMISSION (draft 3/21/2018)

9. OTHER

10. FUTURE AGENDAS

11. ADJOURNMENT

MINUTES



MEETING NOTICE AND AGENDA

MANSFIELD

OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION COMMITTEE AND PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE SPECIAL MEETING

MEETING NOTES

MONDAY, MARCH 19, 2018

5:00 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER

MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 5:01 PM

2. ROLL CALL

VICKY WETHERELL, JIM MORROW, MICHAEL HVEEM (JOSHUA'S TRUST), AND JENNIFER KAUFMAN WERE MET ON SITE BY THE PROPERTY OWNER

3. EXECUTIVE SESSION IN ACCORDANCE WITH CGS SECTION 1-200(6)(D)

- SALE OR PURCHASE OF REAL PROPERTY
- DISCUSSION OF POSSIBLE SITE SELECTION

MORROW MOVED AND WETHERELL SECONDED TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 5:05PM.
MEMBERS CAME OUT OF EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 5:35 PM.

4. ADJOURNMENT-MEETING ADJOURNED AT 5:40 PM

Open Space Preservation Committee
Parks Advisory Committee
Tuesday, March 20, 2018 7:00 PM
Mansfield Town Hall Conference Room B

Minutes DRAFT

1. Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 7:04

2. Roll Call

OSPC members: Jim Morrow (Chair), Vicky Wetherell, Ken Feathers, Michael Soares, Quentin Kessel

Parks Advisory Committee members: Sue Harrington, Tom Harrington

Town Staff Present: Jennifer Kaufman

3. Review of Minutes

The Minutes of February 20, 2018 were approved. (moved Soares, seconded Morrow)

4. Opportunity for Public comment

No members of the public were present

5. New Business

- *Connecticut Bird Atlas*

The group discussed how the upcoming Connecticut Bird atlas may provide potential to acquire data pertinent to the town and town preserved land parcels for use in supporting additional open space initiatives and developing management plans for existing preserved lands. It was unclear if the data would be sufficiently detailed to provide useful information about individual parcels.

- *Bicentennial Pond Management*

Town staff reminded the group that last year there was some public concern about the use of herbicides for aquatic vegetation management at Bicentennial Pond. To address this concern and increase public outreach the Town is working with Northeast Aquatic Research to develop a more comprehensive management approach for the pond. The group discussed the pond management proposal and made recommendations to town staff. It is anticipated that this proposal would lead to developing a more informed strategy for sustainably managing the pond.

6. Continuing business

- *Simpson Property*

Town staff reported that the next steps are to complete the survey, which will include boundary marking, and lose on the property.

The group discussed the public hearing and determined that it would be useful for future acquisitions to include in a discussion and recommendations, in addition to how a parcel meets the enumerated criteria for conservation land, a more specific evaluation of how the acquisition relates overall to the town plan and goals for conservation land.

The discussion evolved when it was called to the group's attention that at a recent school building project outreach meeting one presentation mentioned using town open space for a new school.

The group discussed this in relation to the terms in the Town Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) and concluded that the use was technically correct, in referring to undeveloped land, but could be misleading because much open space in town ownership is protected from development.

The term "conservation land" is used in the POCD for parcels with development restrictions and the group agreed that further discussion about the best terminology to use in communication is needed.

- *Potential consolidation of Committees*

The group agreed that the practice of holding joint meetings of the Open Space Preservation Committee and the Parks Advisory Committee seemed to be working well and it would be appropriate to put on a future agenda the topic of potential formal consolidation of these committees and how such a committee would be best able to continue to meet all the needs of the town.

7. Executive session in accordance with CGS section 1200(6)(D)

- *Sale or purchase of Real Property*
- *Discussion of possible site selection*

Entered executive session 8:21 PM (moved Feathers seconded S. Harrington)

Exited executive session at 8:54

Voted with one abstention to ask town staff to draft a memo summarizing recommendations, to be communicated to the Town Manger in executive session (moved T. Harrington seconded Wetherell)

8. Communications

Communications were noted.

9. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:57 (moved Kessel, seconded Feathers)

NEW BUSINESS

Mansfield Parks Advisory Committee

Charge

CHARGE/DUTIES: The Parks Advisory Committee shall be an advisory board to the Town Council and other Town officials with the following charges and duties:

GENERAL

- a. To act as advisors to the Town Council about needs within Town parks, preserves, and natural areas.
- b. In conjunction with other Town Committees, assist in the planning, acquisition, and management of parks, preserves, and natural areas in the Town of Mansfield.
- c. Assist in the development of management plans of town parks, preserves, and natural areas.
- d. Review and update management plans for Town parks, preserves, and natural areas as needed
- e. Assist in the implementation of management plans by:
 - Monitoring structural improvements such as parking areas, signs, bridges, and benches.
 - Defining, constructing, and blazing hiking trails to enhance to the recreational use of town parks.
 - Assisting in the ecological management of the properties, such natural resource inventories, invasive species management, and habitat improvements.
- f. Monitor Town parks, preserves, and natural areas and report problems to appropriate staff.
- g. Provide input to staff regarding potential budget needs concerning Town parks, preserves and natural areas.
- h. Provide input to PZC regarding open space dedications related to subdivision applications.

EDUCATION AND RESEARCH

- a. To promote community interest and understanding of parks, preserves, and natural areas in the Town of Mansfield. through community educational events, special training.
- b. To expand and support the Natural Areas Volunteers and Stewardship program.

MEMBERSHIP: The Parks Advisory Committee will consist of 5 regular voting members and 3 alternates appointed by the Town Council in accordance with A§192 of the Mansfield Code. Insofar as practical, members appointed shall offer expertise in local history, environmental education, trails construction and management, land use planning or the environmental/natural resource fields, such as forestry, botany, mapping, or Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

LENGTH OF TERM: The appointments will be for three year terms.

Mansfield Open Space Preservation Committee Charge

CHARGE/DUTIES: The Open Space Preservation Committee shall be an advisory board to the Town Council and other Town officials with the following charges and duties:

General

a. To advise Town officials concerning open space preservation actions, as outlined in the “Planning, Acquisition, and Management Guidelines, Mansfield Open Space, Park, Recreation, Agricultural Properties and Conservation Easements,” which was approved by the Town Council in 2009. These actions include:

- Review properties offered for Town acquisition
- Review proposed subdivisions and submit comments to PZC about proposed open space dedications
- Participate in the development of management plans for Town properties.

b. To act as a sounding board and provide review to town departments, boards and commissions concerning the impact of proposed town policies on preservation of open space.

c. To contribute to updates of the Plan of Conservation and Development.

Education and Outreach

- a. To increase awareness of the Town’s Open Space Preservation Program
- b. To educate and work with landowners to promote public and private land preservation projects.

MEMBERSHIP: The Open Space Preservation Committee shall consist of 5 regular voting members (one of which shall be an ex officio representative of the Conservation Commission) and 2 alternates appointed by the Town Council in accordance with A§192 of the Mansfield Code. The appointments shall be staggered three year terms. A representative of the Planning and Zoning Commission and a representative of the Parks Advisory Committee may serve as liaison between the Committee and the Commission. Insofar as practical, members appointed shall offer expertise in land use planning or environmental/natural resource fields, such as forestry, soils, wetlands, wildlife, geology, botany. A chairman and a secretary will be elected by the committee and will serve for a term of one year.

COMMUNICATIONS



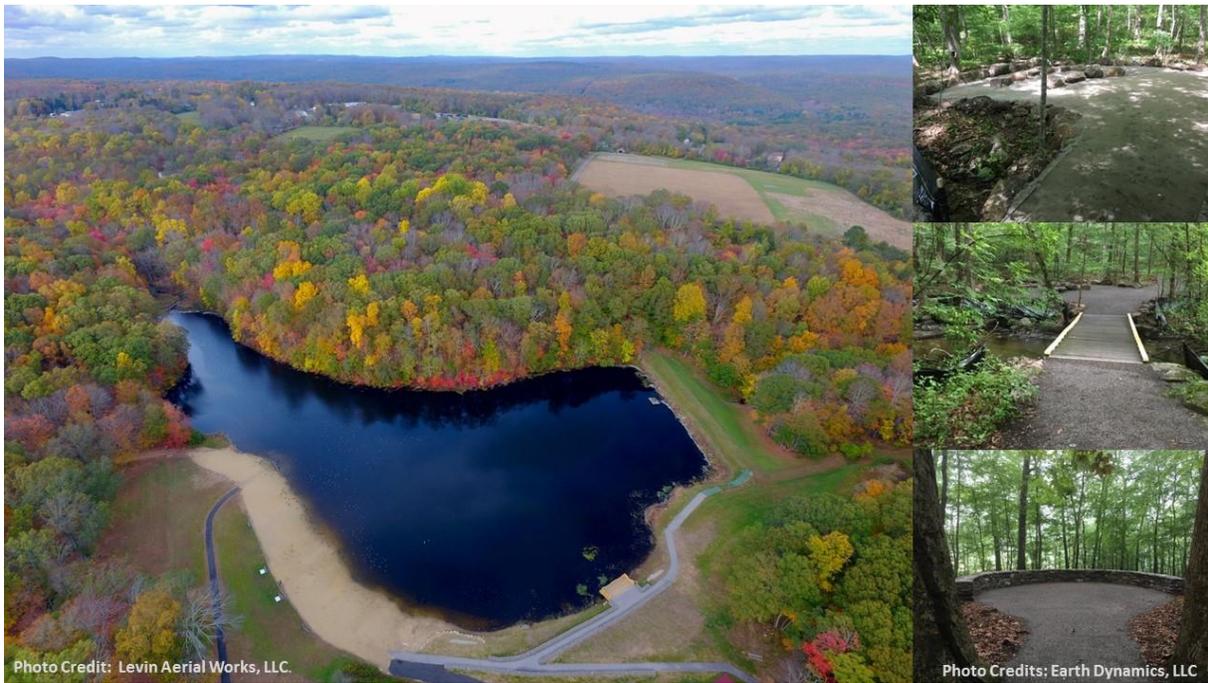
Bicentennial Pond Universal Access Trail Official Opening and Guided Hike

Saturday, April 21, 2018

Rain Date--Saturday, April 28th

2-4 pm

Bicentennial Pond Recreation Area
230 Clover Mill Road



Join us as we celebrate the official opening of Mansfield's Universal Access Trail around Bicentennial Pond. A brief ribbon cutting ceremony will be followed by a guided hike led by naturalists Sue and Tom Harrington. Funded by a CT DEEP Recreational Trails Program Grant, this new 0.7 trail allows people of all abilities to access the natural areas and fitness opportunities in Schoolhouse Brook Park. The Bicentennial Pond Recreation Area is situated in Mansfield's 455-acre Schoolhouse Brook Park and is the site of numerous recreational and educational activities including swimming, hiking, nature study, and Camp Mansfield. In addition to the trail, there are two outdoor classroom areas, a fishing pier, and an accessible playground.

For more information, contact the Mansfield Parks and Recreation Department at 860-429-3015x0.



Land Use Academy Basic Training

This Program is sponsored by the Town of Mansfield, Planning Department

Dates: Monday, April 30, 2018-- Legal Requirements and Procedures
Thursday, May 31, 2018-- Fundamentals of Reading Plans
Location: 4 S. Eagleville Road, Mansfield, CT (Council Chamber)
Instructor: Bruce Hyde, AICP, UConn CLEAR'S Land Use Academy Director
Time: 6:30-8:00 pm
Cost: Free

Register now by calling: [860-429-3330](tel:860-429-3330) or Email : woodmanseejb@mansfieldct.org Please mention Land Use Workshop in subject Line
Please RSVP by April 15, 2018 for both trainings

UConn CLEAR's Land Use Academy Director will provide practical education for local land use decision makers in Mansfield. Learn the fundamental knowledge and skills needed to serve effectively on a local land use commission. Join us to learn the essentials or to refresh your skills. Learn more about UConn's Center for Land Use Education and Research (CLEAR) at www.clear.uconn.edu.

Topics Covered:

Legal Requirements & Procedures, Roles & Responsibilities

Provides a basic understanding of legal principals and procedures that must be adhered to so that legal challenges to decisions or other actions are minimized. Gives land use commissioners an overview of the source of their authority, their role in relation to other land use commissions, current land use issues they should consider, and their responsibility to be fair and unbiased in their decision making. This sessions is interactive using “clickers” and case studies.

Fundamentals of Reading Plans

Assists commissioners with developing plan reading skills including understanding scale, topography, hydrology and stormwater. It goes beyond the basics in a way that is understandable and relevant. This session is hands on using plans from real projects. Participants learn to translate what is on the plans to what it will look like on the ground.



APPROVED MINUTES

MANSFIELD PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

AUDREY P. BECK MUNICIPAL BUILDING ■ 4 SOUTH EAGLEVILLE ROAD ■ COUNCIL CHAMBER

MONDAY, MARCH 19, 2018 ■ REGULAR MEETING

MEMBERS PRESENT: J. Goodwin, P. Aho, R. Hall, B. Ryan, V. Ward
ALTERNATES PRESENT: S. Accorsi
MEMBERS ABSENT: B. Chandy, K. Rawn
ALTERNATES ABSENT: K. Fratoni, C. Cotton
STAFF PRESENT: L. Painter, Director of Planning and Development
J. Woodmansee, Planning and Development Assistant

J. Goodwin called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m. Members present were J. Goodwin, P. Aho, R. Hall, B. Ryan and V. Ward and Alternate S. Accorsi who was seated for absent members.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

MARCH 5, 2018, REGULAR MEETING

B. Ryan MOVED, R. Hall seconded, to approve the March 5, 2018, minutes as presented. P. Aho reviewed the recording. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

MARCH 10, 2018, SPECIAL MEETING

B. Ryan MOVED, V. Ward seconded, to approve the March 10, 2018, minutes as presented. MOTION PASSED (4-0-1, P. Aho is disqualified).

OLD BUSINESS:

None

NEW BUSINESS:

A. AMENDMENT TO THE ZONING REGULATIONS, ARTICLE SEVEN, SECTION L.2, ARTISAN DEVELOPMENT, LLC (PZC FILE #1352)

B. Ryan MOVED, R. Hall seconded, to receive the March 15, 2018, petition of Artisan Development, LLC (PZC File 1352) to amend Article 7, Section L.2 of the Zoning Regulations to authorize multifamily housing with special permit approval in the Planned Business 1 Zone (Route 195/Route 6 area), to set a Public Hearing for May 7, 2018, and to refer the application to the Town Attorney, Town Council, CROG, SECOG and the Town of Windham for review and comment. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

ZONING REGULATIONS AND DESIGN GUIDELINES:

A. CHAPTER 3, USES

L. Painter provided members with follow up information regarding Crematories and Co-housing. Specifically, she noted that recent amendments to State Statute prohibits crematories from being within 500 ft. of a residential structure or residentially zoned property that is not owned by the owner of the crematory. With regard to co-housing, L. Painter provided members with an excerpt from the Plan of Conservation and Development and websites for cohousing developments.

L. Painter provided members an updated Use Table based on the discussions during the March 10, 2018, Special Meeting. V. Ward questioned the difference between the PVRA and PVCA zones. L. Painter explained that the PVRA zone is located along Mansfield City Road to the brook and allows for multi-unit dwellings while the PVCA zone extends from the brook to Mansfield Avenue and allows for office or research and development uses.

Members agreed to table the remaining discussions on Chapter 3 until the April 2, 2018, regular meeting.

REPORTS FROM OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES:

No field trip is necessary.

L. Painter noted the upcoming trainings by UConn CLEAR trainings on April 30th and May 31st and the Eastern Gateways Study Presentation coming up on Thursday, April 26th.

COMMUNICATIONS AND BILLS:

Noted.

ADJOURNMENT:

J. Goodwin declared the meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Vera S. Ward, Secretary



DRAFT MINUTES

MANSFIELD PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

AUDREY P. BECK MUNICIPAL BUILDING ■ 4 SOUTH EAGLEVILLE ROAD ■ COUNCIL CHAMBER

MONDAY, APRIL 2, 2018 ■ REGULAR MEETING

MEMBERS PRESENT: J. Goodwin, P. Aho, R. Hall, B. Ryan, V. Ward, B. Chandy, K. Rawn
ALTERNATES PRESENT: S. Accorsi, C. Cotton
ALTERNATES ABSENT: K. Fratoni
STAFF PRESENT: L. Painter, Director of Planning and Development
J. Woodmansee, Planning and Development Assistant

J. Goodwin called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m. Members present were J. Goodwin, P. Aho, R. Hall, B. Ryan, V. Ward, B. Chandy, K. Rawn and Alternates S. Accorsi and C. Cotton who were seated for absent members.

B. Ryan MOVED, V. Ward seconded, to add to the Agenda under New Business consideration of a new member. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

MARCH 19, 2018, REGULAR MEETING

P. Aho MOVED, R. Hall seconded, to approve the March 19, 2018, minutes as presented. B. Chandy, P. Aho and C. Cotton reviewed the recording. MOTION PASSED (8-0-1, K. Rawn was disqualified).

ZONING AGENT REPORT:

Noted.

OLD BUSINESS:

A. AMENDMENT TO THE ZONING REGULATIONS, ARTICLE SEVEN, SECTION L.2, ARTISAN DEVELOPMENT, LLC (PZC FILE #1352)

Tabled pending May 7, 2018, Public Hearing.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. CONSIDERATION OF NEW MEMBER.

V. Ward noted that the Republican Town Committee endorsed Doryann Plante to fill the vacant seat of Charles Ausburger.

V. Ward MOVED, B. Ryan seconded, to approve the appointment of Doryann Plante. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

ZONING REGULATIONS AND DESIGN GUIDELINES:

A CHAPTER 5, OPEN SPACE DISTRICTS

L. Painter noted that while the Commission has previously reviewed Chapter 5, it was reconsidered by the Regulatory Review Committee as a result of Conservation Commission's correspondence regarding additional protections of rivers and streams. As a result of these concerns, the Regulatory Review Committee is proposing changing the name of the Flood Hazard District to the Riparian Corridor Overlay District. This change includes reorganization and clarification of regulations and procedures, expands the purpose to address both flood hazard and water resource protection and, establishes a riparian buffer requirement of at least 100 feet on each side of a watercourse located within this overlay district. Members discussed that parking may only be allowed in the farthest 20% of the buffer. L. Painter will provide a graphic to further explain the riparian buffer and how it is measured.

B. CHAPTER 3, USES

L. Painter noted that this Chapter has been updated based on the Commission's last discussion. Staff continues to work on language regarding permitted by right versus zoning permit. L. Painter provided locations for each district included in the Use Tables. Some additional changes to this Chapter include an updated list of prohibited uses and a new process for establishing changes in use and determinations of whether unlisted uses are permitted or prohibited. L. Painter provided a summary of the Principal Use and Accessory and Temporary Use Tables. Some of the items discussed by members included: potential elimination of zones; where medical marijuana dispensaries may be located; changes to where Adult Establishments may be located; removal of personal business purpose in the Accessory Commercial Uses Table; further allowance of food trucks; and the potential for a change in the number of unrelated individuals that can live together in the SC-SDD. The Regulatory Review Committee will review the Tables and update as necessary.

REPORTS FROM OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES:

No field trip is necessary.

L. Painter noted the upcoming Eastern Gateways Study Presentation coming up on Thursday, April 26th at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers.

COMMUNICATIONS AND BILLS:

Noted.

ADJOURNMENT:

J. Goodwin declared the meeting adjourned at 8:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Vera S. Ward, Secretary

Town of Mansfield
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Meeting of 28 March 2018
Conference B, Audrey P. Beck Building
(draft) MINUTES

Members present: Mary Harper, Quentin Kessel, Erin King (Alt.), Scott Lehmann, John Silander, Michael Soares. *Members absent:* Neil Facchinetti, Julia Rogers (Alt.). *Others present:* Dan Duque (UConn PIRG), Jennifer Kaufman (Wetlands Agent), Charles Vidich.

1. The meeting was **called to order** at 7:01p by Chair Michael Soares. In the absence of one member, Alternate Erin King was entitled to participate fully in the business of the meeting. The agenda was reordered to accommodate Dan Duque.

2. The **draft minutes** of the 21 February 2018 meeting were approved as written.

3. **Bee City campaign.** According to Dan Duque, UConn has been designated a Bee Campus by Bee City USA, which aims to promote awareness of the importance of pollinators and to protect them by preserving and enhancing habitat and encouraging best practices in pesticide use. He would like Mansfield to join with UConn in this effort by achieving Bee City status.

According to the *Bee City USA Resolution Template*, this would require a Council resolution (1) endorsing the aims of Bee City USA and (2) establishing a Committee responsible for:

- a. Celebrating National Pollinator Week.
- b. Installing and maintaining an “authorized Bee City USA street sign in a prominent location.”
- c. Maintaining a web page at the Town’s website.
- d. Developing and implementing a “program to create or expand pollinator-friendly habitat” in Mansfield.
- e. Including a commitment to the Bee City USA designation in Mansfield’s “Comprehensive Plan” {= Plan of Conservation and Development?}.
- f. Reviewing the “Comprehensive Plan” for ways to enhance protection of pollinators.
- g. Applying annually for renewal of Bee City designation and “paying the renewal fee based on population.” Mr. Duque did not know what this fee would be.

In the ensuing discussion, Commission members indicated support for the general aims of this program, but not much enthusiasm for the Commission’s functioning as the Committee required for Bee City designation. There are various things that could be done in Mansfield on behalf of pollinators through garden clubs, school education projects, and the Farmer’s Market. It was suggested that people at UConn take the lead here in reaching out to the community to supplement whatever UConn is doing to make the campus pollinator-friendly. Campus resources include Rich Miller (Director of UConn’s Office of Environmental Policy), Dave Wagner (EEB), and Donna Ellis (Cooperative Extension, Integrated Pest Management).

4. **Bicentennial Pond study.** In response to a request from Kaufman, Northeast Aquatic Research has submitted a proposal to develop a management plan for Bicentennial Pond after thorough study of its current condition; its price is \$4,642. Recent efforts to manage vegetation and sediment have not been informed by such a study and in consequence have not been very effective. The Commission agreed that the Town needs a science-based plan for managing this resource and is prepared to assist in educating the public about eutrophication, aquatic invasives, and other management issues.

5. Fenton River Wells. In August 2017 UConn applied for – and was granted – permission from DEEP to pump up to 0.213 million gallons of water per day (mgd), if needed, from Well D in the Fenton River well-field during September and October, regardless of streamflow. This ‘diversion’ could occur even when the upstream Wells A, B, & C must cease pumping because the river is flowing at 3 cfs or less in the vicinity of Well A. The justification offered by UConn (and apparently accepted by DEEP) is that there is a “natural gain” in Fenton River flow – from tributaries, wetlands, and groundwater seepage – of at least 0.213 mgd between Well A and Well D in low-flow periods.

Charles Vidich raised some questions and concerns about this.

- How good is the estimate of “natural gain”? Just what is its basis, and what monitoring will be done to assess its accuracy, should Well D be utilized during low-flow periods?
- Assuming that withdrawing 0.213 mgd maintains a flow downstream of Well D that is no less than the river’s flow at Well A, is that enough for healthy aquatic life? If the flow is 3cfs at Wells A and D, do we know it is no less than that anywhere in between? What if the flow at Well A is only 2 cfs?

Mr. Vidich also wondered why UConn rather than the Connecticut Water Company (CWC) applied for this permission, inasmuch as the agreement with CWC to supply water from the Shenipsit Reservoir was advertised as getting UConn out of the water business.

Rich Miller will attend the Commission’s May meeting. Soares will let him know that he can expect to be asked about the new authorization to pump from Well D.

6. Draft zoning regulations. Kaufman urged Commission members to study Chapters 12 to 14 (Site design & development, Landscaping, Lighting) of the draft zoning regulations in advance of April meeting, which Director of Planning Linda Painter will attend. However, she would appreciate feedback before then, so Commission members are encouraged to communicate questions or comments directly to her as soon as possible.

Kaufman also indicated that material on streambelt zoning (in the form of a Riparian Corridor Overlay District) is being added to Chapter 5; she will send the draft to Commission members. The Commission unanimously agreed (**motion:** Kessel, Silander) to approve Soares’ draft letter to the PZC on streambelt zoning, to be forwarded by Linda Painter. It is attached.

7. Conservation Easement monitoring. Seven conservation easements have now been monitored. Reports need to be completed using Google Forms.

8. Wetland Agent’s report. A broken main at Eastbrook Mall discharged water and sediment into Sawmill Brook on 2/11/18, resulting in a Notice of Violation. The situation has been rectified.

9. Replacement for Grant Meitzler. Alternate Erin King is interested in replacing Grant Meitzler as a full member. Another individual has expressed interest in joining the Commission and could be appointed as an alternate.

10. Adjourned at 8:58p. Next meeting: 7:00p, Wednesday, 18 April 2018.

Scott Lehmann, Secretary, 29 March 2018.

March 19, 2018

To: Planning & Zoning Commission
From: Conservation Commission
Subject: Streambelt zoning in Mansfield
CC: Linda Painter, Jennifer Kaufman

Summary

As new zoning regulations for Mansfield are drafted, the Conservation Commission recommends that a regulation be included to establish an overlay zone protecting streambelts along designated Town waterways.

Background

In 2017, the concept of “streambelt zoning” was brought to our attention by Charles Vidich, a former Mansfield resident (now Ashford) and career land-use planner with experience developing programs and regulations for watershed protection. At our meeting of 9/20/2017, Mr. Vidich discussed streambelt zoning (SBZ) and shared his research on its applications in CT. Accordingly, that evening we passed the following motion:

“Because stream-belt zones have more ‘regulatory teeth’ than case-by-case determinations though an IWA, the Commission recommends that the Town establish a stream-belt zoning regulation using a district overlay zone. Such a zone would:

- Allow for site-specific and non-specific land-use controls in a stream belt/watershed;
- Enable control of impervious surfaces and canopy cover near streams;
- Enable lower density development where it is most appropriate; and
- Reinforce ‘case by case’ protections of the IWA.”

Application of Streambelt Zoning and Overlay Zones

Currently, 34 towns in CT have zoning regulations designed specifically to protect streambelts and the functions and values they possess; towns in MA and NH and the state of VT have adopted similar policies and overlay zones. Generally, streambelt protection is achieved by prohibiting or limiting land uses and modifications within a continuous setback from the edge of wetlands or watercourses. Such a zone in Mansfield would apply to designated areas that meet the Town’s definition of a streambelt, and new regulations can identify streambelts by name or designate them via criteria expressed in the regulation.

Streambelt regulations have not been controversial in CT municipalities where they have been adopted. When properly implemented, the success of SBZ can be attributed partly to efforts taken to assess the impact of SBZ on potentially affected properties.

Purpose of SBZ

Streambelt zoning is needed because it establishes protective measures for areas that are not protected by regulations concerning inland-wetlands & watercourses and flood hazard zones. Riparian areas and river corridors contain valuable ecological systems that are broader than the wetlands, watercourses, and floodplains they contain.

SBZ protects water quality and the natural resources and processes that maintain its quality. Naturally vegetated areas near water reduce the incidence and severity of erosion and sedimentation. They slow stormwater flow and improve infiltration, which recharges groundwater and reduces the delivery of pollutants – including excess nutrients – to surface waters.

Resources

These documents were provided by Mr. Vidich and are available in digital form from Jen Kaufman:

1. *The Case For Stream Belt Zoning: An Analysis of Successful Approaches Adopted by Connecticut Municipalities*, by Charles Vidich. 2017.
2. *Streambelts – A System of Natural Environmental Corridors in Connecticut*. USDA Soil Conservation Service. 1972.

Mr. Vidich has been generous to share his time and knowledge with the Conservation Commission. If your commission members are interested, it is likely that he would be willing to attend an upcoming meeting to discuss the importance of protecting streambelts in Mansfield. He can be reached at cvidich@gmail.com.

Links to some existing SBZ regulations in CT*

Town	Link	Regulatory approach
Barkhamsted	Farmington River Overlay District , pp. 58-62	overlay zone
Canton	Farmington River Overlay District , pp. 133-115	overlay zone
Deep River	Gateway Conservation Zone , pp.165-169	overlay zone
East Haddam	Conservation Zone , pp. 43-46	overlay zone
East Hampton	Salmon River Protection Zone , p.28	overlay zone
Enfield	Conservation Zone , pp. 70-72	overlay zone
Essex	Gateway Conservation District , pp. 106-108	overlay zone
Hebron	Commercial Industrial Zone , pp.22-24	base zone, includes protections for Jeremy River and its wetlands
Kent	Housatonic River District , pp.48-49	overlay zone
Killingly	Five Mile River Overlay District	overlay zone
Lyme	Eight Mile Watershed Overlay District , pp. 85-94	overlay zone
North Branford	Streambelt Protection District , Sec 33, pp. 3.8-3.10	overlay zone
Salem	Riparian Corridor Overlay Zone , pp. 147-154	overlay zone
Stonington	Greenbelt Residential GBR-130 , pp.47-50	base zone, with 100' non-infringement area
Warren	Development on Major Water Bodies , pp. 29-31	setback provision
Washington	Wetlands and Watercourses Setbacks , p.43	setback provision

*A detailed comparison of all SBZ regulations in CT can be found in Table 4 (p.17) of *The Case for Stream Belt Zoning* (C. Vidich).