

ANDOVER CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

Meeting Held by ZOOM on January 3rd, 2024

Members Present: Maryann Gile (Chair), Evan Aguirre, Hank Gruner, Catherine Shea, **Alternates:** Gary Gile

1. **Call to order:** The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by the Chair
2. **Public speak:** None
3. **Additions/deletions to the agenda:** none
4. **Approval of the November meeting minutes:** Cathy Shea motioned to approve; Maryann Gile seconded; All voted in favor
5. **Old business:**
 - a. C.A.R.T update: A check has been deposited and teams will be paid in January
 - b. IWWC/P&Z Update: At the request of the IWWC, Hank Gruner participated in a site visit of the forestry operation on Bunker Hill Road, along with the Town's Wetland Agent and the project forester. During the site visit Hank provided a series of recommendations to protect a vernal pool that is located on the property, as well as a pool that was confirmed during the vernal pool survey on adjacent Town-owned open space. The plan is to complete the harvest prior to March 1st (the typical onset of amphibian breeding season) and the group will reconvene in February to review the status of the harvest and discuss recommendations if the schedule has changed.
 - c. Sustainable CT Update: No new information
 - d. Treasurer's Report: Evan Aguirre reported that nothing has changed with respect to the Commission's budget which remains unspent as follows:

Membership:	\$ 65
Equipment:	\$ 60
Conferences:	\$525
TOTAL:	\$650
 - e. Natural Resource and Open Space Inventory (NROI) Planning/POCD: Cathy Shea gave an update on efforts to identify the protected status of open space parcels listed in the original POCD:

Times Farm: Is currently for sale and appears to be under contract. The two parcels in Andover that originally appeared to be connected to the camp, appear actually under private ownership. Parcels connected to the camp in Coventry are identified in that town's POCD as "functional" open space (not permanently protected).

Camp Hi-Hoti: A review of land records (on-line in Hebron) do not reveal permanent protection by deed or easement and in fact show the property has been used for loan collateral. However, the town of Hebron identifies the camp as permanently protected open space in their POCD so the status is unclear. Hank will follow up with a letter to the landowners (Hartford Neighborhood Centers).

Andover Sportsman's Club: land records have not yet been reviewed. It is unlikely to be permanently protected through deed or easement but has functioned as open space for many years.

CT Estonian Society: land records have not yet been reviewed. It is unlikely to be permanently protected through deed or easement but has functioned as open space for many years.

- f. Proposal for Joshua's trust parcel on Skinner Hill Road: Hank participated in a site walk scheduled by the BOS to walk the route of the proposed trail and look at the proposed parking area. Hank provided an update, noting that while there is a nice wetland present, based on a review of our NRI maps/data, the proposed trail location does not impact it. The trail makes good use of existing old forest roads and provides a nice loop system that meanders between the JT parcel and the adjacent town parcel. In addition, the location of the proposed parking area along Skinner Hill Road would clean up a significant old trash dump. Maryann Gile motioned for the commission to write a letter of support for the project to the BOS; Hank Gruner seconded; All voted in favor. A portion of the meeting was then dedicated to drafting a formal letter of support for the project to the BOS to be received before their January 8th meeting.
 - g. USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Environmental Quality Incentive Program: Evan Agirre provided information on the NRC' EQIP program and offered to provide an information session to encourage the participation of community members owning 25 or more forested acres. An early to mid-February time-frame was discussed (ideally Feb. 6, 7, or 8) with a mailing to the desired landowners done prior to January 26th. Maryann will speak with Kate Morrissey to find out the process for doing a mailing. Hank will create the list of landowners to receive the mailing. Evan will craft the letter.
- 6. **New Business:** none
 - 7. **Next Meeting:** January 30, 2023, via Zoom
 - 8. **Adjournment 8:50 pm** – Cathy Shea made a motion to adjourn; Gary Gile seconded; All voted in favor.

Respectfully submitted by Cathy Shea