



# MEETING NOTICE AND AGENDA

MANSFIELD OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION COMMITTEE  
PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2018 ■ 7:00 PM ■ CONFERENCE ROOM B ■ MANSFIELD TOWN HALL

## REGULAR MEETING

### 1. CALL TO ORDER

### 2. ROLL CALL

### 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- 1/16/18 REGULAR MEETING
- 1/20/18 FIELD TRIP NOTES

### 4. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

### 5. NEW BUSINESS

- APPOINTMENT OF A SECRETARY
- BICENTENNIAL POND SIGN REVIEW
- ENABLING A LOCAL OPTION FOR LAND CONSERVATION AND STEWARDSHIP FUNDING

### 6. CONTINUING BUSINESS

- JOSHUA'S TRUST COLLABORATIVE MEETING NEXT STEPS
- NORTH FRONTAGE ROAD COMMENTS

### 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

- PUBLIC HEARING 2/26/2018 7:00 PM SIMPSON PROPERTY ACQUISITION
- 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](http://WWW.MANSFIELDCT.GOV/DRAFTZONINGREGULATIONS)
- [SUSTAINABLE CT INITIATIVE](#)
- [UCONN METANOIA](#)
- [2018 CT LAND CONSERVATION CONFERENCE, SAT., 3/17/2018](#)
- MINUTES-PZC (approved 1/16/2018, draft 2/5/2018) CONSERVATION COMMISSION (draft 1/17/2018)

### 9. OTHER

### 10. FUTURE AGENDAS

### 11. ADJOURNMENT

**MINUTES**

**Open Space Preservation Committee**  
(Conservation Commission and Parks Advisory Committee invited)  
**Tuesday, January 16, 2018**  
**Minutes DRAFT**  
**Mansfield Community Center, Community Room**  
**7:00p.m.**

**1. Call to order**

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 pm.

**2. Roll Call**

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

Parks Advisory Committee members: Sue Harrington, Julia Barrett, Eric Apgar.

Town Staff present: Jennifer Kaufman.

**3. Review of Minutes**

The minutes of December 19, 2017 were approved as written.

**4. Opportunity for public comment**

No members of the public were present.

**5. New Business**

• Southworth Preserve Trail Layout/Uses

Members of OPSC, PAC, and the local biking community (Bike Mansfield, NEMBA) went on a field trip on December 9 to review the proposed trail. Most of the trail will be located on DEEP-managed land just east of Chapins Pond. Its trailhead on Dodd Rd and spurs to connect to trails in Mansfield Hollow SP will be constructed in Southworth Preserve (town open space). In addition to being a foot path, the trail will allow bike use on designated sections on Southworth Preserve to connect to multi-use trails in MHSP. NEMBA has experience training volunteers and building/maintaining such trails, and their active support of the project is appreciated.

OSPC and PAC supported recommended that:

- the trail's start after leaving Dodd Rd be reconsidered in order to reduce its somewhat steep descent (or ascent).
- signs are posted to identify the multi-use and footpath-only trails, and to explain trail safety and etiquette for all users.

Additionally, we support the idea of constructing, and some point the future, a universal-access trail along the field's west edge to a viewing area for Chapins Pond.

• Simpson Grant Award

Jennifer Kaufman informed us that the town's application was approved for funds to aid the acquisition of the 114-acre Simpson property (parcel# 19.70.12-1). The funding is through the OSWA Grant Program managed by DEEP and provides 60% of the appraised value (remaining costs are covered by the town's Open Space Acquisition Fund). OSPC is sincerely grateful to Jen, the Simpson family, and the many people who assisted with the grant and project planning to preserve this property as open space.

OSPC will submit comments from its Executive Session of October 18, 2017, which will include an update from town staff on efforts by Joshua's Trust in this part of Mansfield. As

required, the Town Council has scheduled a public hearing for February 26 to hear comments on the property's acquisition as open space.

## 6. Communications

- PAC is holding a guided walk on winter animal tracking for all ages. It will take place at the Mansfield Community Center on January 28, 1-3pm.
- North Frontage Rd field trip – A field trip was scheduled for January 20 at 10am.
- Minutes (*in packet*)

## 7. Collaborative meeting with Joshua's Trust

At 7:30, representatives from JT joined the meeting (Karen Zimmerman, Paul Pribula, Michael Hveem, Nancy Silander, Ann Dunnack, Julia Rogers, Dan Donahue).

Agenda: 1. Introductions

2. JT's Strategic Plan – Adopted in 2017, the new plan shares a number of priorities and goals with Mansfield's *Plan of Conservation & Development*, including: permanently preserve designated open space, partner with other organizations and communities, create/support opportunities for our communities to enjoy and connect with open space, incorporate the challenges of climate change in planning and program development, maintain and increase resource capacities (volunteers/interns, funding, programs).

3. Mansfield Open Space Program challenges and needs – An ongoing challenge is stewardship of its open space (JT shares this but has developed a successful program and trains and coordinates volunteers to care for properties owned by JT, as well as to annually visit those still privately owned with easements held by JT.). For town open space, the stewardship activities currently underway have been coordinated by Jennifer Kaufman with volunteers and public works. JT's new volunteer coordinator has increased the capacity and expectation of its stewardship program. In this way, site projects are done primarily by hand. To address these respective needs, the idea to "barter" stewardship resources (JT's volunteers, town public work's equipment) was proposed and well received. On a somewhat related topic, JT's internship program was mentioned throughout the meeting. MOSP would benefit from offering internships similar to what JT has begun and recently expanded. Interns for the town have already been essential to creating and updating GIS maps, and it is possible that JT can assist us in developing an internship program.

4. Opportunities for collaboration

a. Land protection projects – OSPC/PAC and JT agreed that potential priority areas are: northeast Mansfield, where the town is working to acquire the 114 acres (see *Simpson Grant Award* above); Mansfield Center, from roughly Schoolhouse Brook Park to Lions Memorial Park which includes and large number of open spaces managed by the town, JT, and DEEP (and with future connections to the library and Southeast Elementary School). There is also interest in reviewing and improving the overall connectivity of open space throughout Mansfield.

b. Outreach/education – Guided walks and similar programs are already organized by the town (PAC) and JT, and it seems that innumerable opportunities exist for the all interested to provide our communities with more educational materials (online and handouts), events, guided programs and presentations, volunteer opportunities, etc.

- c. Reaching out to other partners – Other partners to consider: Friends of Mansfield Hollow State Park, organizations/agencies currently promoting forest conservation and management (The Last Green Valley, NRCS, US Forest Service), neighboring towns and conservation commissions.
  - d. Other – A recurring theme was communication. From a capacity-building standpoint, many comments were made that both JT and the town staff/committees would benefit from regular communication. This would be valuable for general updates on all topics, as well as sharing specific or time-sensitive information (such as grant announcements, new invasive species found). JT is actively reaching out to staff and committees in the towns it has protected open space to learn more about their conservation activities and priorities. Communication was also discussed in regards to the community, so that messaging and information to the community are consistent and strengthen each other's outreach efforts. Jennifer Kaufman raised the point that many of the properties protected by the town and JT have good stories to tell, about the property as well as the people involved: owners who donated or protected their land, volunteers who have given years of service to open space programs, and volunteers and owners who continue have and continue to take care of these properties.
5. Next steps – Michael Hveem, JT Executive Director, and Jennifer Kaufman agreed to be the respective points-of-contact moving forward.

## **8. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05pm.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
*Michael Soares*  
*Secretary*



**MANSFIELD**  
OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION COMMITTEE  
PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
SPECIAL MEETING JOINT MEETING-FIELD TRIP  
FIELD TRIP NOTES

SATURDAY, JANUARY 20, 2018

10:00 AM

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 am

**2. ROLL CALL**

Neil Facchinetti and Erin King (Conservation Commission); Ken Feathers (Open Space Preservation Committee); Eric Apgar and Juliana Barrett (Parks Advisory Committee); Jennifer Kaufman (Staff); and Michael Yenke and Bob Magee (Applicants)

**3. North frontage road Assessor's parcel ID (38 101 22-1)**

Committee members, staff, and applicants walked the site and observed site conditions.

**4. ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at 11:05 am.

# **NEW BUSINESS**

# BICENTENNIAL POND RECREATION AREA

AT SCHOOLHOUSE BROOK PARK

**Bicentennial Pond** was constructed in the mid-1970's and dedicated in 1976 for the Nation's Bicentennial. It is the Town's first and only outdoor swimming area, used by over 1,000 swimmers each summer.

 **Swimming** - Permitted in roped areas during the Summer months when a lifeguard is on duty.

 **Fishing** - The CT Department of Energy and Environmental stocks the pond annually. All CT laws and regulations must be followed.

 **Accessibility** - Byron's Trail is a .07 mile universally accessible loop constructed in 2017 with funds from the CT DEEP Recreational Trails Program Grant. The trail was built in accordance with the National Parks Service accessibility guidelines. Please note that sections of trail may be steeper and longer than typical ADA ramps.

 **Scenic Overlook** - Experience views of The Pond from atop the wooded hillside.

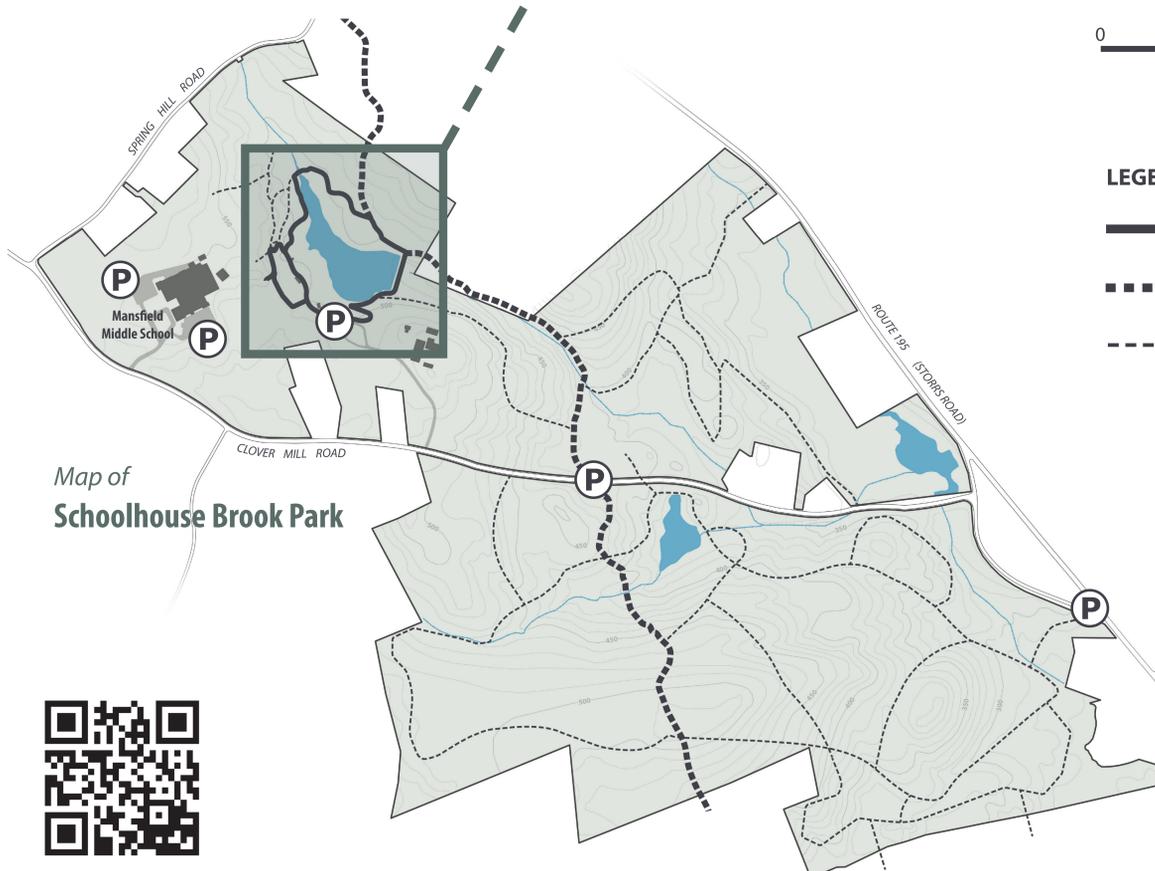
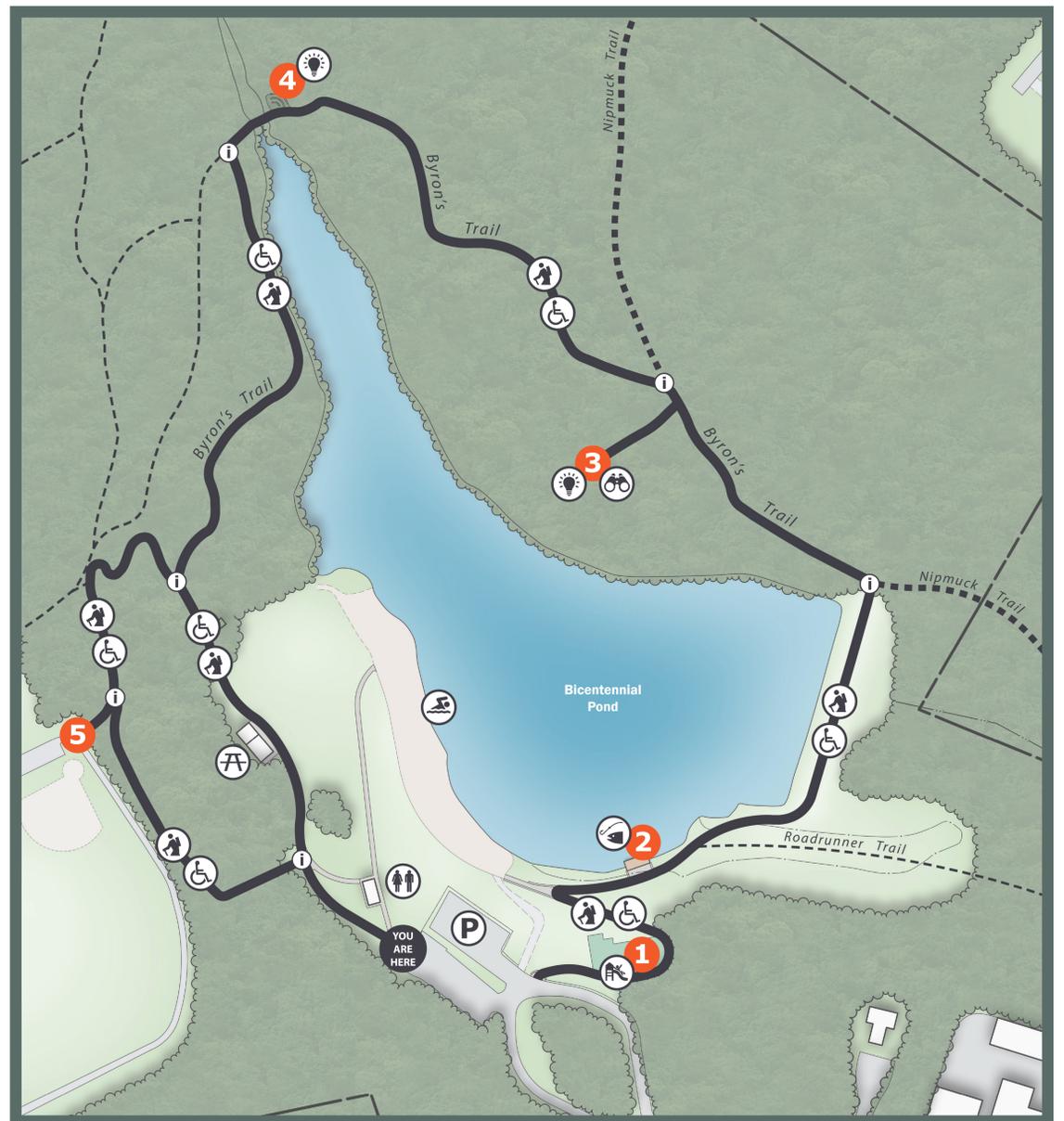
 **Hiking** - Hike over 8.5 miles of trails in Schoolhouse Brook Park, including the CT blue-blazed Nipmuck Trail, which continues on to the Massachusetts border.

 **Picnic** - Picnic pavilion may be rented for group events.

 **Outdoor Classroom** - Educational areas have been created along the trail to foster natural learning opportunities.

 **Playground** - Fully accessible with poured-in-place resilient rubber surface.

- Open from dawn to dusk
- Consumption of alcohol, fires outside of designated areas, smoking, motorized vehicles & removal of plants prohibited.
- Pets on leash only.
- A full listing of permitted and prohibited activities is available from the parks and recreation department



**LEGEND:**

-  Byron's Trail
-  Nipmuck Trail
-  Hiking Trails
-  1 Playground
-  2 Fishing Pier
-  3 Scenic Overlook
-  4 Stream Classroom
-  5 Middle School Access
-  Public Restrooms
-  Parking
-  Trail Sign



<http://www.mansfieldct.gov/trailguides>



# MANSFIELD'S PARKS & RECREATION SYSTEM

Mansfield's Parks and Recreation Department manages town-owned parks, preserves, and recreation areas. Three Town Council Advisory Committees assist with this responsibility.

The Parks Advisory Committee evaluates the park management needs of the town and ensures their ongoing operation. This committee develops and assists with implementing management plans for parks and conducts numerous community educational programs offering, hiking, nature study, fishing, and boating access.

The Open Space Preservation Committee advises the Town Council and the Planning and Zoning Commission on open space properties for preservation based on the Open Space Evaluation Criteria in the Town's Plan of Conservation and Development. This committee also develops and implements management plans for some town-owned parks and preserves and conducts educational workshops and activities.

The Recreation Advisory Committee is charged with identifying and evaluating recreation needs in the Town. This committee develops and assists with implementing management plans for recreation areas that provide facilities for organized sports and more intensive recreation activities.

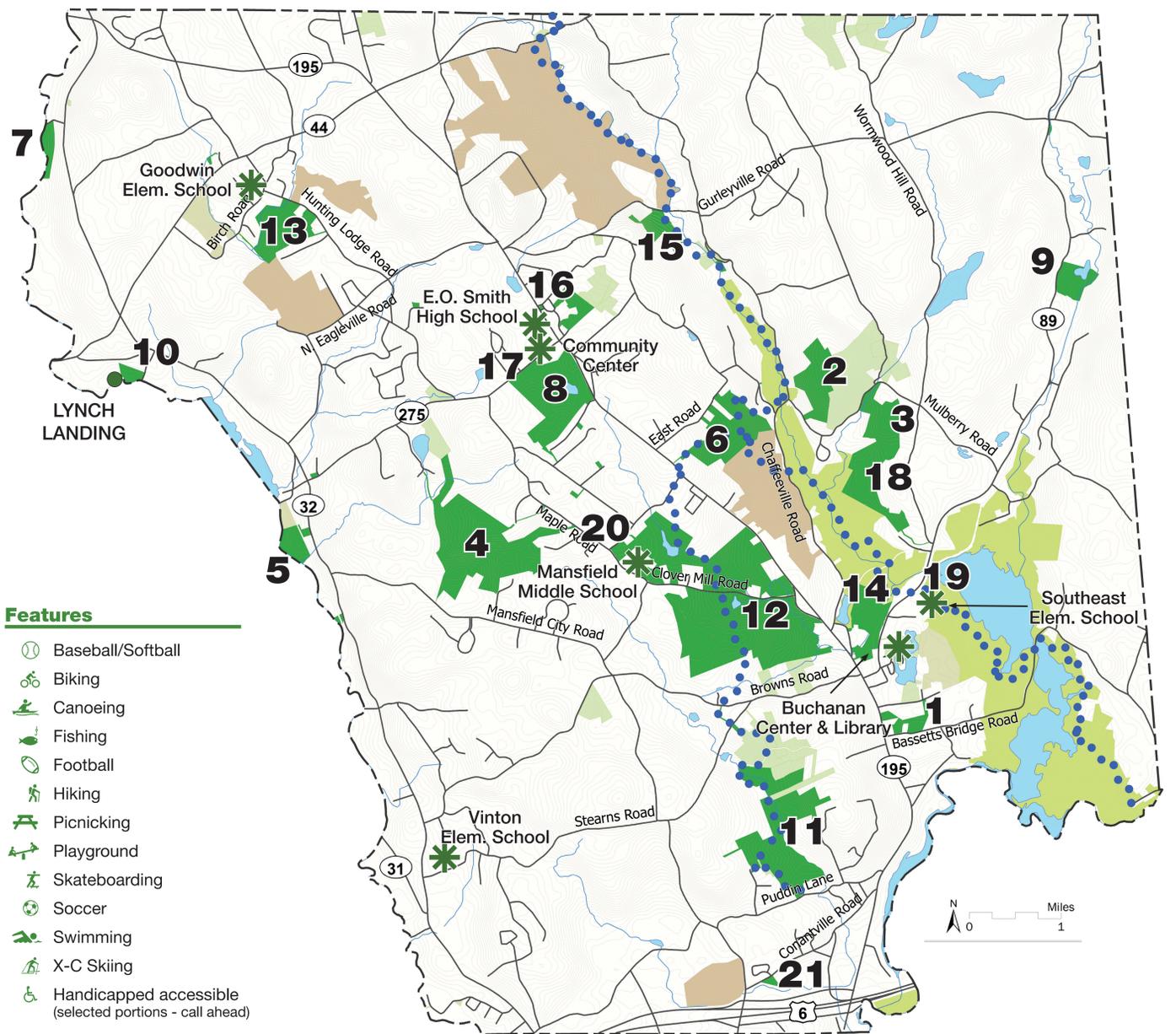
Lands of unique natural and/or cultural value are high priorities for open space preservation. Other important criteria are public access and linkage opportunities. Donations of either land or easements may be made to the town or Joshua's Trust as part of a development proposal.

## GET INVOLVED WITH YOUR parks and preserves

### A COMMUNITY RESOURCE

#### Get involved with Mansfield's Parks and Preserves

Do you like to build things? Like to be outside? Parks and Recreation is looking for people of all ages who are independent workers interested in building bridges, wildlife observation decks and more in Town-owned parks and preserves! The town will work with you on a design and obtaining the necessary permits. We also have a small fund available for supplies directly related to the project. If you have a project in mind or would like a suggestion, please contact [ParksandPreserves@MansfieldCT.org](mailto:ParksandPreserves@MansfieldCT.org).



## parks & preserves

- 1. Commonfields** Access from Bassetts Bridge Road. Features include trails, interpretive information and a bird blind.
- 2. Coney Rock Preserve** Access from Chaffeeville Road (Town land) or Woodland Road (Joshua's Trust land). Trails climb through old pastures reverting to forest. Cliff on top offers views of Mansfield Hollow State Park.
- 3. Dorwart Preserve** Access from Mulberry Road or from Lions Memorial Park off Route 89. Forested trails with diverse wildlife and woodland plants adjacent to Lions Memorial Park soccer fields and pavilion.
- 4. Dunhamtown Forest** Access from White Oak Road. Loop trails and connecting trails to Dunham Pond Road and Max Felix Drive wind through mature forest. Managed as a demonstration forest.
- 5. Eagleville Preserve** Access from Route 275 across from the Eagleville Dam through State land. Loop trail along scenic bend of Willimantic River and through old pasture reverting to forest.
- 6. Fifty-foot Cliff Preserve** Access from behind Mansfield Historical Society on Route 195. Forested trails lead to cliff views across the Fenton River Valley and Mansfield Hollow State Park. Nipmuck Trail connects to UConn land.
- 7. Merrow Meadow Park** Access from Merrow Road. Fully accessible loop trail through meadows, wetlands and forest. Part of trail paved for handicapped access. Canoe/kayak launch along the Willimantic River.
- 8. Moss Sanctuary** Access from South Eagleville Road (behind the Mansfield Apartments) or from Birchwood Heights Road. Parking is available at the Mansfield Community Center. Two loop trails through a variety of forest setting and around a pond.

- 9. Mt. Hope Park** Access from Route 89. Loop trail through meadows and woodlands leading to a pond and the Mt. Hope River.
- 10. River Park** Access from Plains Road. Willimantic River Greenway trail leads to Lynch Landing and Mansfield Depot. Features include a handicapped accessible canoe/kayak launch, multi-use recreation field, and interpretive information.
- 11. Sawmill Brook Preserve/Wolf Rock** Access from Puddin Lane through the Guarnaccia Tract or from Joshua's Trust's Wolf Rock Preserve on Crane Hill Road. Follow the Nipmuck Trail along Sawmill Brook's wooded valley.
- 12. Schoolhouse Brook Park** Access from Clover Mill Road and Mansfield Middle School. Nineteen trails, including part of the Nipmuck Trail, through mature forests. Views of colonial mill sites. Park includes Bicentennial Pond Recreation Area, fully accessible playground, picnic pavilion, and universal access loop trail around pond.
- 13. Shelter Falls Park** Access from Birch Road. Waterfall and scenic rock formations along Cedar Swamp Brook. Connecting trails to UConn lands and CTDEEP land.
- 14. Southworth Preserve** Access from Dodd Road. Wooded trails with views of Chapins Pond and an agricultural field. Connection to Mansfield Hollow State Park.
- 15. Torrey Preserve** Access from Gurleyville Road. Start on the Nipmuck Trail and connect to two forested loop trails with glacial features and views of an agricultural field.
- 16. Whetten Woods** Access from Downtown Storrs (from Elsie Marsh Way, follow Sherwood Street to the clubhouse. Two-hour free parking available at the parking garage). Or, access from Hanks Hill Road. Trails wind through forest and wetlands.

## recreation areas

- 17. Community Playground and BMX/Skate Park** S. Eagleville Road at Mansfield Community Center. Fully accessible playground.
- 18. Lions Memorial Park** Route 89, Warrenville Road. Picnic pavilion, restroom building, soccer complex.
- 19. Southeast Park** Route 89, Warrenville Road. Baseball/softball complex, restroom building.
- 20. Spring Hill Fields** Spring Hill Road. Softball/football/soccer fields.
- 21. Sunny Acres Park** Meadowbrook Road. Softball field, playground, tennis court, basketball court.

## scenic trails

#### Lynch Landing

Access from Depot Road to Willimantic River.

#### Nipmuck Trail (Blue Dot Trail)

Regional trail with access at several road crossings.



10 South Eagleville Road  
Storrs-Mansfield, CT 06268  
860-429-3015 • fax 860-429-9773  
[www.mansfieldct.org/parks&preserves](http://www.mansfieldct.org/parks&preserves)  
[Parks&Rec@mansfieldct.org](mailto:Parks&Rec@mansfieldct.org)



# TOWN OF MANSFIELD

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Date: February 12, 2018

To: Conservation Commission, Opens Space Preservation Committee, Parks Advisory Committee, Sustainability Committee, and Economic Development Commission

From: Jennifer S. Kaufman, AICP, Environmental Planner/Inland Wetlands Agent

Subject: Enabling a Local Option for Land Conservation and Stewardship Funding

## SUBJECT MATTER/BACKGROUND

The CT Land Conservation Council is seeking support for legislation that would allow but **not require** certain towns and cities to adopt an ordinance to create a fund for acquisition and stewardship of open space (including water resources) and farmland. The fund would be attained through a surcharge (up to 1%) paid by the buyers of real property. This fee would not apply to the first \$150,000 of the sale price. At the discretion of the municipality, this fund could also be used to repay existing or future municipal bonds obtained for funding open space acquisition and stewardship.

Mansfield currently has a robust open space acquisition fund. However, often we are lacking in stewardship funds, for tasks such as management of aquatic invasive species. While we have traditionally bonded for open space acquisition, in the future, the Town may need a sustainable source of funding for local conservation and stewardship efforts that would not impact the municipal mill rate or require additional bonding.

In addition, unlike Mansfield, many municipalities across Connecticut do not have a permanent, reliable source of funding to use in their conservation efforts to preserve the character and to enhance the health, safety and property values of their communities. This legislation would provide those communities, if they are included in the bill, with the option to establish such a fund.

It is important to underscore the fact that towns included in the enabling legislation are not obligated in any way to move forward with a vote to adopt the program; it merely gives the town the authority to consider the program if it so chooses now, or in the future.

## FINANCIAL IMPACT

If the legislation **passes** the General Assembly, individual municipalities would need to adopt a local ordinance to avail itself of this funding source. As stated above, the funds would be attained through a surcharge (up to 1%) paid by the buyers of residential property with sales valued over \$150,000. For

example, with a home selling for \$320,000, the fee would be imposed on \$170,000 of the sale price. If the surcharge were 1% (the maximum that could be authorized under the proposed legislation), the additional fee would be \$1,700.

## ACTION NEEDED

The committees/commissions should discuss this *Draft ACT PERMITTING MUNICIPALITIES TO IMPOSE A BUYER'S FEE ON THE CONVEYANCE OF REAL PROPERTY* and determine whether to recommend/not recommend that the Town Council draft a letter in support.

## ATTACHMENTS

- Enabling a Local Option for Land Conservation and Stewardship Funding, Frequently Asked Questions, and Case Studies
- Draft Bill-*AN ACT PERMITTING MUNICIPALITIES TO IMPOSE A BUYER'S FEE ON THE CONVEYANCE OF REAL PROPERTY*
- *Example municipal CEO letter of support*

# CONNECTICUT Land Conservation Council



## Enabling a Local Option for Land Conservation and Stewardship Funding

### Frequently Asked Questions

**What does this bill do?** The proposed legislation would allow (but NOT REQUIRE) certain towns and cities to establish a fund to acquire, preserve, and steward open space and farmland at the municipal level by including a conveyance fee of up to 1% paid by buyers of residential real estate.

**Why is this needed in CT?** Many cities and towns need a sustainable source of funding for local conservation and stewardship efforts that would not impact the municipal mill rate or require additional bonding. This added source of funding would enable communities to fulfill match requirements for state or federal grant programs, cover the costly expenses associated with acquiring land (appraisals, surveys, environmental assessments, etc.), and better maintain the town's open space properties and farmland.

**If enacted, would this legislation require all towns to establish the program?** No. This legislation authorizes certain municipalities to decide, through their local public approval processes, whether or not to take advantage of this funding mechanism.

**Will a conveyance fee deter homebuyers or commercial investors?** Experience in other states shows the opposite. People and businesses are attracted to communities that have cleaner air and water, recreation options, local food sources, and protected natural beauty. If adopted by the municipality, the fund allows buyers to invest in their communities. The fee is an investment in maintaining the community's open spaces and farmland, which in turn helps to sustain the community's natural assets, avoid the hidden community costs of development, and even increases local property values. [Gies, Conservation: An Investment that Pays, 2009.]

**Would this make housing less affordable?** The fee is limited to a maximum of 1% and does not apply to the first \$150,000 of the sale price. Repaid over 20 or 30 years in a mortgage, that extra cost is minimal.

**May a municipality impose less than the 1% fee?** Yes. The proposed legislation indicates that the conveyance can be "up to 1%." Therefore, a municipality may adopt a lower percentage fee.

**Can the money be raided for other purposes?** If enacted, the legislation would require that funds raised through this program by the local community must be dedicated to land conservation and stewardship.

**Would land purchased with these funds need to remain as town land?** This would be up to the town, but purchases can be made in cooperation with land trusts. A local partnership like this could help the town to further stretch this funding source.

**Why allow funding to be used for land stewardship?** Most communities and land trusts understand that there are two critical funding needs associated with open space and farmland protection: 1) funds for acquisition, and 2) ongoing resources for maintenance or stewardship. This legislation would allow municipalities to dedicate funding to both of these pressing needs as necessary.

**If adopted, would the conveyance fee be required in perpetuity at the local level?** That would be up to the community adopting the fee.

**Have other states enabled similar legislation?** Nearby states (MA, NY, RI, PA, WV) have allowed some municipalities to enact a buyer's conveyance fee, with the income dedicated to conserving and caring for local natural areas. These programs have proven remarkably successful, resulting in the protection of thousands of acres of open space, forests, meadows and farms. (See case studies, attached.)

For more information, please contact Connecticut Land Conservation Council Executive Director, Amy Blaymore Paterson at [abpaterson@ctconservation.org](mailto:abpaterson@ctconservation.org) or at 860-614-8537.

# Municipal Open Space Funding Option

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## Case Study: New Shoreham (Block Island), RI

At a Special Town Meeting in 1986, voters of the Town of New Shoreham, RI (Population ca. 1000, median household income \$44,000) adopted a resolution establishing the quasi-municipal Block Island Land Trust (BILT). The resolution, enabled by an act of the Rhode Island Legislature, authorized the collection of a transfer fee on sales of real property on Block Island, which is currently set at 3% for funding conservation by the BILT.

The BILT has been authorized by the Town to issue up to \$6,000,000 in bonds, paid for with the fee income. Five unpaid Trustees, elected by the town for staggered four-year terms, administer the Land Trust.

The BILT's mission is to acquire and preserve open space on Block Island for conservation, recreation, aquifer protection and agricultural uses, acting on behalf of the Town, based on the Town's Comprehensive Plan. Protection can be by acquiring the land outright or acquiring the development rights or easements on the land (a land use agreement that restricts certain and uses).

The Block Island Land Trust works in close cooperation with The Nature Conservancy and the Block Island Conservancy, both with offices on the island. After 40 years, BILT is nearing the Town's Comprehensive Plan goal of protecting 50% of its land. This includes land held by Block Island Land Trust, Block Island Conservancy, The Nature Conservancy, Town of New Shoreham, Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, Audubon Society, United States Government, and United States Fish & Wildlife Service.

As an indication of popular support, the most recent town-wide survey (on New Shoreham website) indicated over 80% of respondents support the BILT program. Moreover, despite a conveyance fee that is higher than in other towns surveyed, the real estate market in New Shoreham appears strong, resulting in increased income over the from the 3% transfer fee (about \$1.5 million last year). Tourism continues to be a major draw, due to the beauty of the natural landscape and farmland being protected by conservation.

Kate Butcher, a realtor and owner of Block Island Realty, said that **the 3% transfer fee has been "really good" for Block Island** and has not interfered with the real estate market since there is an exemption for affordable housing and first time homebuyers.

# Municipal Open Space Funding Option

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## Case Study: Warwick, NY

Warwick NY is a rural town of 32,000 people in southeastern NY State. It includes several villages and hamlets nestled in a landscape of rich flat farmland framed by forested mountains reflected in its scattered lakes and ponds.

In 1999, facing the rapid development of subdivisions, the town adopted a Comprehensive Town Plan that included a commitment to protect open space and agricultural farmland “in perpetuity.” A citizen survey had indicated that “maintaining the rural character” of Warwick was the goal of the Plan which got the most support. The Plan’s strategy for meeting this goal included the purchase of land and/or development rights within the town, guided by a citizen’s committee set up to prioritize open space and farmland protection.

In 2000, the town approved a \$9.5 million bond issue to pay for this proposed land conservation. An additional \$5.5 million was pledged from county, state and federal partners, as well as from private foundations and donations. In 2005, to help pay off the bond and to expand the program, the town was granted enabling legislation by NY State that allowed the town to impose a real estate buyer’s transfer fee of 0.75%, with receipts from the fee dedicated to land conservation.

Since inception of the plan, and augmented by income from the transfer fee, Warwick has now protected over 3,200 acres and holds the development rights (conservation agreements that prohibit development) on 32 farms. **Warwick is meeting its goal of maintaining its rural character and its land value**, while surrounding towns have lost many farms and forests to development, according to an Orange County Land Trust land agent who works in partnership with the town.

Supervisor (Mayor/Selectman) Michael Sweeton of Warwick sums up the transfer fee program after 10 years: **“By all measures the program has been a huge success in preserving our working farms and protecting our quality of life. While the local realtors saw doom and gloom when it was proposed they now all seem to acknowledge it has enhanced rather than diminished values in our town. During the crash of 2007-2008 property values in Warwick fell less than in other towns in Orange County.”**

The fee brings Warwick about \$50,000/month, funding land conservation, monitoring and oversight (provided by the Orange County Land Trust).

The proposed enabling legislation aims to achieve similar land conservation and stewardship success in select towns throughout Connecticut.

# The Warwick Advertiser

**A decade of success for Warwick's farmland and open space has been a success**

The Warwick Advertiser, February 9, 2017

By Roger Gavan

Thousands of acres have been preserved while also bolstering the area's agri-tourism economy.



File photo by Roger Gavan Bellvale Dairy Farms: Today almost every resident is within a short drive or even a walk to a picturesque view of a farm, a mountain, a lake, a park or a forest.

**WARWICK** — In the late 1990s many residents and farmers were lukewarm about the idea and the expense of farmland preservation and quite a few were dead against it.

Although purchasing development rights had been successful in Long Island, local farmers were hard to convince.

In those days, development rights, which for the past 10 years have been funded by county, town and home sales, were purchased through an approved bond referendum. And in 1998, the Sweetman Farm became the first of many to sign on.

“Go up by the creamery on Mount Peter and lookout on a thousand acres of undeveloped property in the Warwick Valley,” said Al Buckbee, owner of Bellvale Farms and the second farmer to join the Property Development Rights (PDR) program. “That’s a magnificent view and a terrific benefit for all the people who live here. And I’m always amazed by the number of people who choose to run or walk along the picturesque roads adjacent to my farm instead of a track.”

Buckbee explained that PDR gave farmers an opportunity to do what they love and still benefit from the appreciation of their land.

## **The legacy of Seymour Gordon**

Much of Orange County's beauty has been preserved thanks to the work of the late Seymour Gordon, who was involved in the promotion of agriculture and open space preservation since the 1940s.

Gordon spearheaded the Warwick Purchase of Development Rights Alliance, which subsequently labored to achieve the authorizing of a bond issue that not only permanently preserved more than 2,500 acres of Warwick farmland and saved 17 farms at that time, but also resulted in other local improvements including the development of a Town beach at Greenwood Lake. There are now 21 farms preserved by the bond referendum. .

Gordon, who passed away in 2010, was also involved with Warwick Conservancy and he became a founding member of Sustainable Warwick.

Ten years ago this coming April, homebuyers in the Town of Warwick began paying a real estate transfer tax.

In November 2006, voters had approved the measure that called for 0.75 percent of the purchase price on new real estate sales be used by a Community Preservation Fund (CPF), which would preserve open space by buying the development rights to farms.

"I always believed the Community Preservation Transfer Tax would benefit Warwick and only increase the value of our community, making it an even more desirable place to live," said Warwick Supervisor Michael Sweeton. "Since it's passage by our residents the fund has allowed us to preserve more than 2,000 acres of farmland that to this day remain in farming.

"Many of these farms have diversified thereby bolstering our agri-tourism economy, adding millions to our local economy with very little added tax burden," the supervisor added. "Newcomers recognized the special place Warwick is and gladly contributed to continue the efforts of those who came before them."

Sweeton cited examples of agri-tourism including the popular Bellvale Farms Creamery, Pennings Orchard and Farm Market and other farms attracting numerous tourists during the apple and pumpkin-picking season.

### **Defining community**

Home sellers and real estate agents, however, were not pleased with the tax at that time. But although not everyone is on board, some now see the value of preserving open space as a unique quality of life consideration for buyers in this area compared to neighboring communities.

"I must admit that I was initially against the Warwick Preservation Fund Transfer Tax, not because I didn't believe in its merits, but because I am against most taxes in general," said Geoff Green, owner of the Green Team Home Selling System. "With that said, I did what I could to keep a lid on my opinion because I knew smart people were at the helm. Sure enough those smart people were right and it has turned out to be a huge success for Warwick. We all really owe a debt of gratitude for those who pushed it through."

Farsighted individuals, community organizations and public and private agencies played key roles in this success. And today almost every resident is within a short drive or even a walk to a picturesque view of a farm, a mountain, a lake, a park or a forest.

There are currently nine farms, totaling approximately 770 acres, in various stages of land preservation.

"Warwick's bold and far reaching efforts to preserve open space have been a win-win proposition," said Town of Warwick Historian Professor Richard Hull. "Through extraordinary foresight, we have saved critical aquifers, lakes and streams, productive farmlands, natural forestlands and wetlands and scenic landscapes for ours and future generations. These visionary and synergistic efforts have strengthened our sense of common identity and are helping to make our community a safer, healthier, happier and more beautiful place in which to live and to raise our families."

# DRAFT

*As of 1/19/18*

## ***AN ACT PERMITTING MUNICIPALITIES TO IMPOSE A BUYER'S FEE ON THE CONVEYANCE OF REAL PROPERTY.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

(a) That the general statutes be amended to permit the municipalities of [insert name of individual towns] to (1) impose a buyer's fee on the conveyance of real property occurring on or after July 1, 2018, at the rate of not more than one per cent of the consideration paid by the buyer in excess of one hundred fifty thousand dollars, and (2) retain and keep such fee in a separate account for the purpose of the purchase, preservation and stewardship of open space, including water resources, farmland, and, at the discretion of the governing body, for repayment of existing or future municipal bonds obtained for funding the purposes enumerated in this section.

(b) Conveyances resulting in the preservation in perpetuity of open space land, forest or farm land shall be exempt from any fee imposed pursuant to the provisions of subsection (a) of this section.

(c) The fee imposed by subsection (a) of this section shall not apply to any deeds, transfers or conveyances enumerated in subsection (a) of section 12-498 of the general statutes.

### ***Statement of Purpose:***

To permit the municipalities of [insert name of towns] to impose a conveyance fee on certain real property sales in order to generate funds for the purchase, preservation and stewardship of open space, including water resources, farmland, and the repayment of municipal bonds obtained for this purpose.

Representative XYZ  
Senator XYZ  
Senator XYZ

Dear Representative XYZ and Senators XYZ and XYZ,

As (insert your title here) of (insert your town here), I'm writing to express my support for legislation to enable a local option for land conservation and stewardship funding. If enacted, this legislation would allow (but not require) certain towns and cities to establish a fund to acquire, preserve, and steward open space and farmland at the municipal level by including a conveyance fee of up to 1% paid by buyers of residential real estate. The town of [insert] would like to be included in the bill to enable our residents to decide whether to adopt this funding mechanism.

The town of [insert], like most Connecticut towns, is feeling constrained by state budget cuts and is looking for more creative options to fund land use projects that enhance our local economy and the quality of life for our residents. If approved by [insert name of town] residents, this program would provide our community with a sustainable source of funding for local conservation and stewardship efforts that would not impact the municipal mill rate or require additional bonding. It would also enable our town to fulfill match requirements for state or federal grant programs, cover the costly expenses associated with acquiring land (appraisals, surveys, environmental assessments, etc.), and better maintain the town's open space properties and farmland.

[Describe why open space conservation and/or farmland preservation and/or community gardening, etc. is/are important to your town. Cite an example of how this source of local funding would help the town in conserving or stewarding a particular piece of land in your town]

Connecticut's natural resources are what make this state such a wonderful place to live, work, and recreate. Providing communities with the tools to take a more active role in their conservation and stewardship will help keep it that way for generations to come.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Name, Title

**COMMUNICATIONS**



# 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](mailto: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](http://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.



**TOWN OF MANSFIELD**  
**Certified Resolution**

I, Sara-Ann Chaine of the Town of Mansfield, a Connecticut municipality, do hereby certify that the following is a true and correct copy of a resolution duly adopted at a meeting of the Town Council of the Town of Mansfield duly held and convened on January 22, 2018, at which meeting a duly constituted quorum of the Town Council was present and acting throughout and that such resolution has not been modified, rescinded or revoked and is at present in full force and effect:

WHEREAS, Sustainable CT is a comprehensive, statewide, action-oriented voluntary certification program, built by and for municipalities, with the vision that: Sustainable CT communities strive to be thriving, resilient, collaborative, and forward-looking. They build community and local economy. They equitably promote the health and well-being of current and future residents. And they respect the finite capacity of the natural environment.

WHEREAS, Sustainable CT is designed to boost local economies, help municipal operations become more efficient, reduce operating costs, and provide grants and additional support to municipalities.

WHEREAS, Mansfield embraces an ongoing process of working toward greater sustainability, selecting which actions it chooses to pursue from the voluntary menu of actions provided by Sustainable CT.

RESOLVED, by the Town Council of Mansfield that we do hereby authorize Virginia Walton, Recycling Coordinator, to serve as Mansfield's Sustainable CT contact person for the Sustainable CT Municipal Certification process and authorize her to complete Municipal Registration on behalf of Mansfield.

RESOLVED, that to focus attention and effort within Mansfield on matters of sustainability, and in order to promote local initiatives and actions toward Sustainable CT Municipal Certification, Mansfield designates its Sustainability Committee to serve as a Sustainability Team.

RESOLVED, that the first meeting of the Sustainability Team must be held within 90 days of passing resolution and that the Sustainability Team shall meet as frequently as needed, but no less than quarterly.

RESOLVED, that the Sustainability Team shall report annually to the Mansfield Town Council on the progress of its activities toward Sustainable CT certification, with reports and presentations made publicly available.

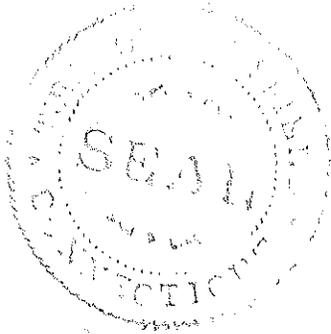
*Sara-Ann Chainé*

Sara-Ann Chainé  
Town Clerk

*2/6/2018*

Date

SEAL





# APPROVED MINUTES

## MANSFIELD PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

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

TUESDAY, JANUARY 16, 2018 ■ REGULAR MEETING

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

Chairman Goodwin called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. and appointed C. Cotton to be seated for absent members, R. Hall, V. Ward and S. Westa.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

B. Chandy MOVED, P. Aho seconded, to approve the December 18, 2017, minutes as presented.  
MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

### ZONING AGENT REPORT:

J. Mullen noted that in addition to her report, the trailer which had been located at 706 Mansfield City Road has been removed.

### PUBLIC HEARING:

A. SPECIAL PERMIT APPLICATION OF MANSFIELD DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION, FOR A SCHOOL LOCATED AT 898 STAFFORD ROAD (PZC FILE #1351)

Chair Goodwin opened the Public Hearing at 6:35 p.m. Members present were P. Aho, B. Chandy, K. Rawn, B. Ryan and J. Goodwin. Alternate member C. Cotton is seated. L. Painter read the Notice of Public Hearing which was published in The Chronicle on January 2, 2018 and January 10, 2018 and noted her Memo dated January 16, 2018. J. Goodwin reported that the Commission has not been presented with final plans to date. There was no comment from the public or questions from the Commission. K. Rawn MOVED, B. Chandy seconded, to continue the public hearing on the Special Permit for the Community School of the Arts located at 898 Stafford Road (PZC File #1351) to February 5, 2018.  
MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

- A. SPECIAL PERMIT APPLICATION OF MANSFIELD DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION, FOR A SCHOOL LOCATED AT 898 STAFFORD ROAD (PZC FILE #1351)

Tabled until continued Public Hearing on February 5, 2018.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

None

**ZONING REGULATIONS AND DESIGN GUIDELINES:**

- A. DRAFT CHAPTER 3, USES

L. Painter encouraged members to review the chapter regarding principle uses for the next meeting.

**REPORTS FROM OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES:**

No field trips are necessary. Regulatory Review Committee Minutes of December 14, 2017 are noted. L. Painter reported that the comments of this Commission regarding the UConn scoping projects were submitted.

**COMMUNICATIONS AND BILLS:**

J. Goodwin noted the communications.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Chair Goodwin declared the meeting adjourned at 6:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bonnie Ryan, Acting Secretary



# DRAFT MINUTES

## MANSFIELD PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION

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

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 2018 ■ REGULAR MEETING

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** J. Goodwin, K. Rawn, B. Chandy, S. Westa, B. Ryan, V. Ward, P. Aho  
**ALTERNATES PRESENT:** S. Accorsi (in at 6:33p.m.)  
**MEMBERS ABSENT:** R. Hall  
**ALTERNATES ABSENT:** C. Cotton, K. Fratoni  
**STAFF PRESENT:** L. Painter, Director of Planning and Development  
J. Mullen, Zoning Enforcement Agent/Assistant Planner  
J. Woodmansee, Planning and Development Assistant

Chair Goodwin called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

### APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

K. Rawn MOVED, B. Chandy seconded, to approve the January 16, 2018, minutes as corrected. V. Ward noted that she listened to the recording. S. Westa is disqualified. MOTION PASSED (7-0-1).

### ZONING AGENT REPORT:

J. Mullen noted, in addition to her report, the rooster issue on Mansfield City Road will be brought to the Town Council at its next meeting.

### PUBLIC HEARING:

A. SPECIAL PERMIT APPLICATION OF MANSFIELD DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION, FOR A SCHOOL LOCATED AT 898 STAFFORD ROAD (PZC FILE #1351)

J. Goodwin noted that the applicant has requested an extension of the public hearing.

B. Ryan MOVED, V. Ward seconded, to continue the public hearing on the Special Permit for the Community School of the Arts located at 898 Stafford Road (PZC #1351) to Tuesday, February 20, 2018. MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.

### OLD BUSINESS:

A. SPECIAL PERMIT APPLICATION OF MANSFIELD DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION, FOR A SCHOOL LOCATED AT 898 STAFFORD ROAD (PZC FILE #1351)

Tabled until continued Public Hearing on Tuesday, February 20, 2018.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

None

**ZONING REGULATIONS AND DESIGN GUIDELINES:**

A. DRAFT CHAPTER 3, PRINCIPAL USE TABLE

L. Painter stated that she would like to see special meetings scheduled to work on the Regulations. The goal is to have a Public Hearing draft ready for May/June.

Members reviewed the draft of Chapter 3, Principal Use Tables. The general changes to this chapter include revisions to the list of prohibited uses, a new process established for changes in use and a means of determining whether unlisted uses are permitted or prohibited. Changes to the Principal Uses Section include definitions of all principal uses, use specific conditions identified for various use types, a new Table which identifies permitted uses for each district and updated review procedures for each use based on district. Changes to the Accessory and Temporary Uses Section include a revised list and definitions of accessory and temporary uses, permitted accessory and temporary uses established by district instead of town-wide and a review process for accessory and temporary uses established by district.

Members discussed several additional issues as they reviewed this chapter including, but not limited to, allowance of adult establishments in certain zones, the appropriateness of the term “elderly,” hours of operations of adult day care establishments, prohibiting crematories, accessory dwelling units, outdoor storage of construction materials, elimination of 3.1.1D, changes to Retail Uses classification, definition of single family semidetached dwelling, accessory dwelling units and the definition of group dwelling.

The Commission concluded with the intention of finding an available date to schedule a Special Meeting for further discussion.

**REPORTS FROM OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES:**

No field trips are necessary. Regulatory Review Committee Minutes of January 11, 2018, January 18, 2018, January 25, 2018 and February 1, 2018 are noted.

S. Westa reported that she attended a CROG meeting and that it continues to work on the Complete Streets project.

L. Painter spoke of the recent passing of former Inland Wetlands Agent Grant Meitzler and his service to the Town for over 40 years.

**COMMUNICATIONS AND BILLS:**

Noted.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Chair Goodwin declared the meeting adjourned at 8:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Vera Ward, Secretary

Town of Mansfield  
**CONSERVATION COMMISSION**  
Meeting of 17 January 2018  
Conference B, Audrey P. Beck Building  
**(draft) MINUTES**

*Members present:* Quentin Kessel, Scott Lehmann, Julia Rogers (Alt.), John Silander, Michael Soares. *Members absent:* Mary Harper, Neil Facchinetti, Erin King (Alt.), Grant Meitzler. *Others present:* Jennifer Kaufman (Wetlands Agent).

**1.** The meeting was **called to order** at 7:04p by Commission Chair Michael Soares. In the absence of three members, Alternate Julia Rogers was entitled to participate fully in the meeting.

**2.** The **draft minutes** of the 15 November 2017 meeting were approved as written. {The Commission's 20 December 2017 meeting was cancelled. In its stead, some members attended the 19 December 2017 meeting of the Open Space Preservation Committee.}

**3. Member notebook.** Kaufman has assembled useful information and documents for Commission members in loose-leaf notebooks, which she distributed to those present:

- 2018 meeting dates
- Current membership (name, address, phone, e-mail)
- Legal charge of the Commission (duties & liberties)
- Town policy (08 Jun 09) on communicating with other entities (aka "The Gag Rule")
- Town Ethics Ordinance (29 May 12)
- Freedom of Information (FOI) guidelines (20 Oct 09)
- IWA regulations (as of 15 Nov 17)
- Minimal Impact Guidelines for Agent approval of wetlands permits (04 Dec 17)
- Citation Ordinance {missing: needs a small fix by Town Council}
- Public and Protected Open Space in Mansfield: map & tables (as of 10 Jan 18)
- Chapters 2 & 3 of current Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD)

Kessel once again voiced displeasure with the Town's Council's policy (fourth bullet) of prohibiting direct communication by Boards, Commissions, or Committees with non-Town entities (newspapers, politicians, federal agencies, et al.). Kaufman suggested that the Commission again raise this issue with the Council, if it feels strongly that current policy is bad. Alternatively, the Commission can work around the rule by recording its views in the minutes, which are public documents and may be communicated to anybody by anybody.

**4. Goals for 2018.** The Wetland Agent's newly granted authority to approve routine "minimum impact" wetlands permits should significantly reduce the time the Commission spends reviewing applications for wetlands permits in 2018. After some discussion, the Commission agreed to attend to:

- **Monitoring conservation easements.** The Commission has been charged with monitoring Town-held conservation easements on private property, but so far has just talked about it. For the Commission's February meeting, Kaufman will review FOI rules governing site visits and develop a procedure for monitoring these easements.
- **Following development of multi-unit housing regulations.** This is a moving target. To see where things may be going in time to comment usefully, the Commission will need to consult evolving drafts (go to [www.mansfieldct.gov/draftzoningregulations](http://www.mansfieldct.gov/draftzoningregulations)) and minutes of the Regulatory Review Committee's weekly meetings (from the Town's home page, go to Boards & Committees: All Agendas & Minutes: PZC [category]: Regulatory Review

Committee [subcategory]).

- **Outreach & Education.** Kaufman suggested sponsoring a public discussion of options for managing invasive aquatic vegetation in Bicentennial Pond. A study, now underway, is to be completed in April. The Town needs to get public input on the options and public support for a management plan before proceeding to deal with the problematic vegetation, perhaps in the fall of 2018.

**5. Simpson property.** The Town has been awarded a state grant covering part of the cost of acquiring the 144-acre Simpson property (across Warrenton Rd from Mt. Hope Park). Mansfield must come up with the rest of the money and pay for a survey. A public hearing will be held before the Town Council, probably on 26 February. The Commission agreed unanimously (**motion:** Kessel, Silander) to forward to the Council, for inclusion in the hearing record, the Commission's comments in support of acquiring this property, as recorded in a memo dated 25 January 2017 from Kessel to then Town Manager Matt Hart (attached).

**6. Water System Advisory Committee.** Soares would like to yield his seat on this Committee, which meets quarterly, to some other Commission member. Kessel is willing, but ownership of stock in the Connecticut Water Company could limit his participation.

**7. Streambelt zoning.** Silander suggested that the Commission draft a memo to the PZC, noting approaches to streambelt zoning taken by other towns or states, and asking the PVC to consider which of them might be an appropriate model for Mansfield. The Commission unanimously (**motion:** Kessel, Silander) empowered Soares to draft such a memo, citing material compiled by Charles Vidich {see 20 September 2017 meeting minutes, item 4}, to be reviewed at the Commission's next meeting unless it is crucial that the memo be sent sooner.

**8. Wetlands Agent Report.** Kaufman reported (a) that she had approved a minimum impact permit for construction of an in-ground pool at 24 Silver La and (b) that an application had been filed with DEEP for a permit to apply herbicides to a 0.3 acre pond on the Jones-Bamman property at 6 Forest Rd.

**9. Adjourned** at 9:02p. Next meeting: Wednesday, 21 February 2018, 7:00p.

Scott Lehmann, Secretary, 21 January 2018.

**Attachment:** Simpson property memo



## Town of Mansfield Conservation Commission

**To:** Matt Hart, Town Manager  
**From:** Quentin Kessel, Chair, Conservation Commission  
**CC:** Jennifer Kaufman, Environmental Planner  
**Date:** January 25, 2017  
**Re:** Simpson Family Property

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At its January 18, 2017 meeting, the Conservation Commission reviewed the 114-acre Simpson family property located on Warrentville Road, west of Mt Hope Park in Executive Session. The Commission enthusiastically supported the submission of a CT DEEP Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant. Preservation of this 114-acre parcel could be the beginning of a much larger effort to preserve the highlands that form a north/south corridor of interior forest extending over two miles from Mt. Hope Road to Mulberry Road. Further, acquisition of this property will protect access to multiple valuable resources such as:

- a. A large corridor of interior forestland that will preserve a diversity of mature trees, ensure responsible forest management, and protect important wildlife habitat;
- b. Unique geological features;
- c. Significant Native American ceremonial stone landscapes;
- d. Land within a public drinking supply watershed;
- e. An additional 114 acres to the adjacent 35 acres of permanently preserved park and open space land with public access; and
- f. An area that has been identified on the December 2016 CT DEEP NDDB as having endangered, threatened, or special concern plants or wildlife habitats.