

MINUTES

Members Present: E. King, M. Harper, C. Rittenhouse, J. Silander, and M. Soares,

Members Absent: M. Davis and W. Ouimet

Alternates Present:

Alternates Absent: J. Knighton

Staff Present: J. Kaufman

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Soares called the meeting to order at 5:04 p.m. Members present are E. King, M. Harper, C. Rittenhouse, J. Silander M. Soares.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Rittenhouse MOVED, King seconded approval of the 10 January 2023 minutes as presented.

Motion PASSED 4-0-1 with Silander abstaining.

3. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC COMMENT

A. Elizabeth Sparks expressed concern about multiple proposed and underway multi-unit housing developments and their potential impacts on water, specifically Cedar Swamp and underlying groundwater. 1750 development proposes sinking 2 deep wells into the aquifer, which may impact and deplete the water source quickly. What is the conservation commission doing to help preserve the body of water and the aquifer?

Rittenhouse: CC advisory to IWA. Minutes of meetings, including motions, recommendations, and concerns, are publicly available.

Kaufman: 1750 property is within area that had zoning change. PZC approved those changes in July 2022. Those regulations now apply to the property. To "land" that zone, the applicant needs to apply to PZC and prove access to ground water, including community well, approved by DPH. After those steps, there will be additional opportunities to review the proposed activity for that property.

Soares: spoke to our role and how we interact with applicants, including stormwater, adjacent waterways, and upland review areas.

- B. Anna Knuttel – told by developers that 1750 Storrs Rd had access to UConn water and wouldn't need to drill wells. She's very concerned about Cedar Swamp and the aquifer.

Kaufman: Tuesday night PZC will decide on landing the zone (rezoning to mixed-used transition center) on that property, the next step would be to apply. This zone is a form-based zone – it's very prescribed what they can do within the zone. They will have to conduct yield analysis (overseen by DPH), and go through several other steps and agencies (e.g., DEEP) for a community well.

Process: re-zoning, then site plan with scheduled public hearing that will appear on Town website under legal notices and in the Willimantic Chronicle, as well as all abutters will be notified. At that public hearing the public will have an opportunity to weigh in. See 8-2 of the CT General Statutes for the legal process that we have to follow.

Soares: Where can a resident from Mansfield see a schedule of these public hearings?

Kaufman: They are posted on Town website under legal notices.

- C. Desirae Sin from UConn is listening in.

4. OLD BUSINESS (Skipped to Item 5, then Returned)

A. Conservation Easement Monitoring

5. NEW BUSINESS

A. W1630 Application of the Town of Mansfield for Replacement of the Culvert Conveying Eagleville Brook at Hunting Lodge Road and a 10-foot wide multi-use trail along Hunting Lodge Road from N. Eagleville Rd to Separatist Roads located (Assessor's Parcel Ids #15.32.5, 15.32.4 and the Town Right of Way)

Derek Dilaj, Town Engineer, introduced the application. The culvert had a sinkhole that previously was repaired approximately annually. The issue accelerated and resulted in the road being closed for safety reasons.

Combining what would be 2 separate permits into 1 since the activity is in the same project area.

Existing culvert is circa 1960.

Replacement consists of a) a concrete pipe handling ; b) an 8' wide by 4' tall box culvert with the bottom 6-8 inches of the culvert buried to be more invertebrate friendly; and c) a walkway.

Proposing 2 steps, first being a coffer dam to divert water through the existing pipe, then second step is to divert water through the new concrete pipe (a), while (b) is constructed, and then (a) and (b) will then be opened.

Soares: impacts? Dilaj: 648 removed, 407 added, for net reduction of fill in the waterway. Removal of existing and placement of the pipe and box culvert will have direct impacts on waterway but is temporary.

Silander: Why the delay? Dilaj: the walkway project had to catch up to the culvert project.

Soares: what is Army Corp of Engineers recommendations for the new structure that results in widening the culvert? Dilaj: calls for considering flood events, increasing the amount of light in the culvert, and not increasing or accelerating flows. This project widened the culvert more than the amount recommended by the ACoE.

Rittenhouse: trail schematic from N. Eagleville to Separatist? Dilaj: narrowing the roadway to accommodate the trail. Showed Google Streetview and clarified that there will be no additional fill to accommodate the trail.

The South Eagleville path will be a separate project that appears before us in a forthcoming meeting. That project is funded by a Community Challenge Grant.

Rittenhouse MOVED and Soares seconded that based on the Applicant's plan and materials presented, replacement of the culvert and trail construction along Hunting Lodge Rd will not have a significant, negative impact on Eagleville Brook, wetlands, or upland review area provided appropriate erosion and sedimentation controls are installed prior to construction, maintained during construction, and removed when the site is completely stabilized.

The Conservation Commission recommends the following for consideration by the Inland Wetland Agency:

- To encourage the use of native species and discourage the use of hybrids, varieties, and non-native species, in any plantings.
- To request updated documents that include the full extent of the multi-use trail along Hunting Lodge Rd from North Eagleville Road to Separatist Road

Motion PASSED 5-0-0 (unanimously)

Planting recommendations can be emailed to Jennifer Kaufman and she will pass on to Derek Dilaj.

Silander recommends not planting any woody plants as this is a grassland/open wetland.

Kaufman could reach out to Davison Environmental for planting recommendations.

6. REPORTS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS

- A. Silander: Who is our representative to Water System Advisory Council? Soares offered to attend (per 1/10/23 meeting minutes) following Kessil's retirement, so we have always had representation. Silander raises this given the proposed development particularly in the Cedar Swamp area. Kaufman clarified that the Water System Advisory Council assesses proposals for connection. Is it in WAC charge to talk about overall development? It may not be. They do look to director of planning, who on water issues goes back to the 2006 PoCD (Plan of Conservation and Development) that was current in 2013 – so although we have a newer POCD (effective 2016) it is not applicable. The only development that has gone to WSAC is The Standard that is under construction now at Four Corners.

7. STAFF UPDATE

Kaufman reports that 2/27/23, Michael Stankov will begin as Environmental Planner for the Town. He was in IWA in Winchester, CT.

8. COMMUNICATIONS

- A. G. McEvily Development along Timber Drive 1-20-23.
- B. Kaufman, the Town Manager, and other Town staff attended a meeting with residents of Timber Drive.

Check out the [Mansfield Planning Department webpage](#) for information on development activity in Mansfield.

Also check out [MansfieldTomorrow.org](#) for the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and information to participate.

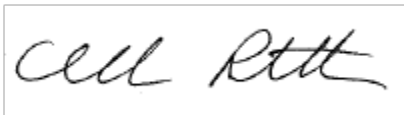
9. FUTURE MEETINGS

The meeting adjourned at 6:53 pm.

The next meeting of the Conservation Commission is scheduled for March 15, 2023.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Respectfully Submitted:



Chadwick Rittenhouse

Secretary