

Town of Stonington Conservation Commission
Minutes of a Regular Meeting held on February 26, 2024
Police Station Department Meeting Room, 173 South Broad Street, Pawcatuck, CT

1. Call to order - Chairman Stuart Cole called the meeting to order at 7:50 pm. Members present were Frances Hoffman, Ben Baldwin and Jennifer Herbst. Members Stephanie Hayes-Houlihan, Michael Schefers and Jim Friedlander were not present. A member of the public was present.

Most present also attended the 7pm Special Town Meeting on acquisition of the Circus Lot for park use and the establishment of a Cemetery Commission.

2. Review of Town Developments and Proposals

a. PZ2329ZC Maple Lawn Farm, LLC (Paul & Sharyne Cerullo) – *Zoning Map Amendment application for an Agricultural Heritage District (AHD) Zone. Proposal consists of a Master Plan to create a campus for food, education, and events. Properties are located at 343 Wheeler Road and another unaddressed parcel on Wheeler Road, Stonington; M/B/L: 94-1-4; 86-1-4. Properties are located in the RR-80 Zone and GBR-130 Zone.* It was noted that the zoning map amendment was approved by the PZC with stipulations. A Site Plan Application will be required. Discussion on the AHD regulation noted how vague it is, that it seemed appropriate for Stone Acres, AHD-1 (381 N Main St), with few near neighbors, but residential use appears to have replaced agriculture as a primary use years ago at Maple Lawn Farm and the Deans Mill Farm, AHD-2 (1189 Pequot Trail). The AHD is one way to prevent the further fragmentation of these farms, but allows great latitude based on how it is written and allows the creation of commercial operations in residential and agricultural neighborhoods. Concern was expressed about this and other floating districts in town, likening them to spot zoning.

b. PZ2235SD Old Stoneridge, LLC - *Residential Subdivision application for the creation of two lots. Property located at 111-113 Montauk Ave., Stonington. Assessor's Map 131 Block 3 Lot 6. Zone RR-80.* Ben Baldwin said that the subdivision had both liens for a fee in lieu of open space and a 5-acre conservation easement on the big lot in favor of the town adjacent to Avalonia's Knox Family Farm Preserve. The smaller lot was sold but the lien was not noted as being paid on the land records. Ben will follow up.

c. Perkins Farm Open Space. Ben Baldwin said while the status of the open space remains unsettled and the zone's definition allows construction of roads and detention basins in the open space, a building is being erected at 153 Jerry Brown Road, an open space parcel.


3. Old Business

f. Discussion of process for preparing and adopting new Open Space Plan. Next steps for the Open Space Plan were discussed. Groton's Open Space Plan was cited as a template while Fran Hoffman said its writing was led by an individual who had offered to help us. It was noted that help could come from a planner on staff or a hired consultant. MOTION: Ask Planning Department staff for assistance with Open Space Plan (Fran Hoffman, Jennifer Herbst). Passed unanimously.

6. Review of draft minutes – 9/25/23 & 12/11/23. MOTION: Minutes of accepted (Fran Hoffman, Jennifer Herbst). Passed unanimously.

7. Adjournment - MOTION: To adjourn the meeting (Jennifer Herbst, Fran Hoffman). Passed unanimously at 8:58 pm.

Minutes submitted by



Ben Baldwin

Secretary, Town of Stonington Conservation Commission

Approved at a Regular Meeting on 4/22/2024