

**Beacon Falls Conservation Commission
10 Maple Avenue
Beacon Falls, CT 06403**



**BEACON FALLS CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Monthly Meeting
December 8, 2020
MINUTES
(Subject to Revision)**

1. Call to Order /Pledge of Allegiance/Roll Call

Vice Chair called the meeting to order at 6:37 P.M.

Members Present: Kristen Jabanoski (KJ), Andrew Keane (AK), Lori Paradis Brant (LPB), Ellie McAdam (EM)

Members Absent: Ruth Burritt (RB), Lou Santora (LS), Ivana Potje (IP)

Others Present: None

2. Read and Approve Minutes from Previous Meetings

Motion made to approve the minute from the November 18, 2020 meeting with the following.

AK/LPB, all ayes

3. Announcements

None

4. Comments from the Public

None

5. Review of Town Boards & Commissions Minutes

KJ – Andrew and I listened in to the P&Z meeting last month, but it was not what we expected. They will have a public hearing for Hopp Brook probably early next year. There was a lot of people on the call but no opportunity to speak. I hope to join the public hearing. I also reviewed the Board of Selectmen meeting minutes and spoke with the Park Ranger. There were some discussions about Lantern Ridge. They also discussed a parking permit system for Matthies and Toby's. LPB – is this because of issues? KJ – I do not think so, but there has been more graffiti. LPB – there has been many discussions regarding if Matthies should be just residents only and if the family intended it for residents only. AK – IWWC does not seem to be meeting. November meeting was cancelled.

6. Correspondence

KJ – I did speak with the Park Ranger regarding Lantern Ridge and I was trying to determine how to clarify if it is open. We scheduled a walk thru for Thursday, 12/17 at noon. I spoke with the First Selectman and he suggested the walk thru. If any other members want to attend, please do. After that, we should have a more concrete idea about when we can reopen the park. We also discussed the message board. I know Ruth got estimates from Modern Plastics and Home Depot and there was a conversation about obtaining bullet proof type plexiglass, but it is very expensive. The Park Ranger suggested using standard plexiglass instead. EM – makes more sense to go with the

less expensive one and then you have room to replace it if needed. KJ – the Park Ranger also sent me the link for the message centers they have purchased if we want to do something like that in the future. He also recommended us mapping Lantern Ridge. He can assist us with that, and it would be helpful to hikers. LPB – I would be happy to help and my son and I can walk and mark the trails with the flagging tape. KJ – I think Park Ranger will give me the tape when we meet on the 17th. LPB – great, we can do this over Christmas break. KJ – excellent, having maps would make it more accessible to people. LPB – if we are going to have a hiking trail, it could be rugged, but it should be marked and defined. EM – how many acres is it? KJ – it is quite large and connects to undeveloped private land. AK – its about 100 acres. KJ – yes, 97-acre parcel. It is beautiful. LPB – so we probably must flag the boundaries, right? AK – I believe they are flagged with orange property markers, but many people do not know what they are. LPB – I do not have equipment to know the boundaries if they are not marked. KJ – I will email the Park Ranger to see what information he needs to complete the map. LPB – it is our duty as a Commission to make sure those boundaries are marked.

7. Old Business

- a. **Update on tree work at Lantern Ridge Park** – see correspondence above; AK – last month I noted that there was a barricade put up, however it is not. There is a well-made gate there that is chained (not locked) and it is a nice addition to the parking lot. KJ – I never figured out who it was. The Park Ranger did not know either.
- b. **Diversity in conservation efforts going on and how to get involved** – KJ – no updates on this right now. EM – I think starting in the schools would be a good place to start but it is hard to meet with the pandemic. KJ – I will try to reach out to the schools to see if there is anything, we can do to support virtual learning with conservation.
- c. **CTP Project** – KJ – Nicole from the State emailed Ezekiel & Matt from the CPT Project have been invited to present a virtual poster at the Symposium in the Spring. LPB – did they finish the project? KJ – yes, they do have all the data. LPB – do they need anything further from us? KJ – I am not sure but will try to get a hold of them.
- d. **Current Development Projects in Town** – AK – I do have something to share on the screen. AK – reviewed BOS meeting minutes from November. Under new business, there was discussion regarding Kolga's inquiry to purchase open space from the town on Pent Road. There was discussion among the BOS, and it is unclear Kolga's interest is in the land. It is a big ridge and at the top is where the Naugatuck State Forest starts. The BOS encouraged Kolga to provide more information on their plans for the property. AK shared GIS mapping (attached) of parcel in question. EM – did they say what they wanted to do with the land? AK – not yet. LPB – we need to pay close attention to this. If this was given to the town as open space, and the town owns it as open space then it will go against the trust residents have with the town if we sell and develop this land. This would go against the intend as preserving open space. If this abuts the Naugatuck State Forest, the Audubon society may need to be involved. KJ – this is wedged between the forest and the recreational complex. AK – this is 147 Pent Road. LPB – we need to determine if we own it or if there is a conservation easement. We have some research to do. AK – we would have to pull out the records to see what the history is. KJ – who would have the knowledge of this property? EM – is Sue Cable still in town? Is it possible that someone who was building the industrial park gave that land to the town? AK – that could be a possibility. LPB – does it say on the property card? AK – the town is the current owner. KJ – this is something we should watch closely. LPB – we should be more proactive, and I am happy to work with another member to determine the history of

the land. AK – I will work with you on that. EM – I will reach out to Susan to see if she has any background. Selectman Krenesky may know history on the land also. KJ – I drafted a brief letter about our Ordinances for the new P&Z Chair. I can share that document with you all. I will email that out. LPB – well done, I would recommend copying the First Selectman when you send it out. KJ – thank you, great idea.

8. New Business - none

9. Land Conservation Criteria – AK shared and reviewed document that LPB and him have worked on (attached). AK – Lori and I met to build some momentum on this project. One of our responsibilities for this Commission is to maintain a list of open space areas. We attended a land conservation conference and someone from Windsor shared how they kept a list of open space and acquisitions. They shared a spreadsheet where they look at each town parcel and the criteria related to them. We thought that this type of sheet would be a good starting point to provide a comprehensive look at our towns open space. LPB – this would also include other areas of land that may not be currently owned by the town but have strong conservation value to the town. AK – so this could be town owned, private, industrial etc. LPB – I think what we want from the Commission members today, is to comment on the criteria of the spreadsheet. I felt strongly that there needed to be more in the wildlife section. We can tailor this spreadsheet for what works best for the Commission. Critical habitats and areas that have GCN species are items that we could add as well. EM – where did you obtain this information? LPB – we had several State and Government websites, the town GIS mapping, the Housatonic Association site, and UConn CLEAR. EM – does someone in the town have a list of open space? AK – we have a list of Conservation and ultimately this would be a resource to P&Z, BOS, and other town Commissions. P&Z is responsible for the Plan of Conservation which could be our guiding manual in addition to some of the resources Lori mentioned. LPB – I highly recommend looking through the towns Plan of Conservation. KJ – this is great, it is very organized, and I will have to think about if there is anything missing. AK – I will send this to the members.

10. Petition from Commissioners – none

11. Payment of Bills - none

12. Executive Session (if needed) - none

13. Adjournment

Motion made to adjourn meeting at 7:37 PM. **AK/KJ, all ayes**

Respectfully submitted,

Kerry McAndrew
Clerk, Conservation Commission