

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



**BEACON FALLS CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Monthly Meeting
January 12, 2021
MINUTES
(Subject to Revision)**

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

Chair called the meeting to order at 6:38 P.M.

Members Present: Kristen Jabanoski (KJ), Andrew Keane (AK), Lori Paradis Brant (LPB), Ruth Burritt (RB), Ivana Potje (IP)

Members Absent: Lou Santora (LS), Ellie McAdam (EM)

Others Present: None

2. Read and Approve Minutes from Previous Meetings

Motion made to approve the minute from the December 8, 2020 meeting with the following. **KJ/AK, all ayes**

3. Announcements

None

4. Comments from the Public

None

5. Review of Town Boards & Commissions Minutes

KJ – Andrew and I attended the virtual BOS meeting and I have not read any other meeting minutes. AK – I do not think too many commissions have met this year. Last month I looked into Park & Rec., Inland Wetlands and BOS. I did not see too many points related to our commission. RB – I have looked into Seymour and Oxford and they do not have much for Conservation. KJ – BOS did mention at their meeting about the park sticker, in particular a resident sticker for Matthies. They did mention having one for Toby's and other areas as well but have not ironed out all the details. They discussed forming a subgroup to discuss it further. One issue they brought up was if the Town received State or Federal Funds for Toby's, then it would not be able to resident only park. Just to be aware this is something they are working on. I do not think it will be imminent, but it is in the works. They are also working on the 150th celebration. RB – Bricks are also available for sale. AK – I believe they are looking to raise \$40,000 for a drone show. AK – I did submit personal correspondence to the BOS regarding 147 Pent Road. My correspondence was read into the meeting minutes. RB – I was surprised to hear about that. I think that it is great, but I worry about litter. There is so much more litter in the area, more than there ever was. LPB – AK can you clarify which issues you are talking about because I think that you and Ruth are discussing two different areas. AK - this is the 147 Pent Road open space adjacent to recreation complex. This is in between industrial complex and State

forest. Kolga has expressed interest in purchasing the land and my letter was in response to discussions and news article. The Town acquired it as open space and originally when it was acquired there was a trail that was laid out that connected it to the trail system and State forest. Starting in November, in the BOS meeting minutes it was presented as a potential land purchase request and an inquiry was made to acquire the land from the town. IP – how big is the piece of land? AK – 39 acres. LPB – we must be clear that the land was acquired by the Town as open space. Did you get any feedback? KJ – it was read into the record at the BOS meeting. KJ – I think they stated that they have not received a proposal from the developer, so they did not discuss it further at that time. AK – the Citizen's News article stated that they were surveying the land and would have a proposal by the end of the month. LPB – if that is happening, then we should appraise the open space for the natural resources on that property, if we have not done so already. If we need to defend the open space from being developed, then we must have the Town look into that legally. We should also discuss the potential request of hiring a natural resource scientist to determine types of habitats living in there if the Town plans to move forward. There is a legal issue if we convert open space to a developer. KJ – we can discuss this further under new business.

6. Correspondence

RB – I received a call from Gerry but have not spoken with him yet. I will try again tomorrow. KJ – Kerry let me know that the Girl Scouts reached out for Silver Award Projects. I have left a voicemail for the Scout leader to discuss project options with them. We have done some collaborative work with the Library so depending on what they are looking to do, we could provide an opportunity for them. RB – I thought I also saw something about them wanting to clean up the river. KJ – yes, they did mention a potential clean up.

7. Old Business

- a. **Update on tree work at Lantern Ridge Park** – RB – we have the Kiosk, what do we want to do with rebuilding? I think we must get plexiglass that I think Ivana looked into with at Home Depot. IP – we would still have to have it cut. RB – I contacted a local contractor multiple times and he did not return my call. Does anyone else know a carpenter that could complete this project? LPB – was it just cutting the plexiglass or is there damage to the kiosk. RB – the frame must be removed, the new glass inserted and then reframed. LPB – I will see if my husband can look at it before our next meeting and if he cannot my suggestion would be to reach out to one of our tech schools to have them complete it. AK – Lexan would be the material of choice, recommended by Rich Minnick. KJ – for the tree work I was going to meet with the Park Ranger, but the day we were supposed to meet we had snow. I will work to reschedule that meeting this week. AK – I think we will meet with him and the result is likely to be any potential hazard that we may see we might mark to give it caution and then open the park.
- b. **Diversity in conservation efforts going on and how to get involved** – KJ – nothing new to report other than getting some students involved in trail maintenance projects in the spring.
- c. **CTP Project** – KJ – we received an email from Nicole inviting us to the virtual symposium in March, but I have not heard back about that.
- d. **Current Development Projects in Town** – AK – this is where we can discuss 147 Pent Road. We have had great discussions earlier. LPB – I think a small group of us can meet to look at the layers of the maps to get an idea of the habitats there and then look at how we want to create an inventory of what may be there regarding critical habits and how they would be impacted by a development. I would like to see us be proactive and give the Town specific requests of what we are looking for if they are truly looking to develop open space. AK – I think part of the inventory you discussed is actually going into the open space and

documenting and taking pictures. We can invite other Commission to walk through the open space so the public can be made aware of what is contained within the space. AK – should we make a motion to create an inventory of that open space? LPB – I do not think we have the time to do that, I think we should ask the Town to hire a specific Scientist to complete that work. I think we can walk through but we should also have some formal inventory work completed. AK – there are some high school students looking for community service and this may be a good project to go in and take some pictures, etc. LPB – if we are up against a developer than we should get a scientific report. KJ – what if we take a vote, to request that the town conducts a natural resource study. IP – what did Planning & Zoning have to do regarding that other big development. AK – there is one on Blackberry Hill and Tiverton. KJ – Blackberry Hill will have a public hearing in about a month, early February. IP – has the Town used any resources before for other lands? LPB – there used to be a CT Environmental Review Team. AK – it is a group of volunteers and they have conducted several surveys in other towns. I can give them a call. **KJ – make a motion to recommend that the town conducts an environmental review before any development, seconded by AK, all ayes. AK – make a motion for the Conservation Commission in addition to other town Commissions to complete ground trooping walk through, seconded by RB, all ayes.**

8. **New Business** - none

9. **Land Conservation Criteria** – AK – LPB and I should get together now that we have the template. I was looking at Fairfield Place's inventory and that will give us some ideas on what to narrow the scope to. LPB – it would be helpful if our fellow Commissioners could review that and provide feedback. IP – can you resend it? AK – yes.

10. **Petition from Commissioners** – KJ – CLCC conference typically in March – I will get more information and this could count as a training.

11. **Payment of Bills** - none

12. **Executive Session (if needed)** - none

13. **Adjournment**

Motion made to adjourn meeting at 7:22 PM. **KJ/AK, all ayes**

Respectfully submitted,

Kerry McAndrew
Clerk, Conservation Commission