

**CHESHIRE ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION
WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2011
TOWN HALL ROOM 115 AT 7:00 P.M.**

Members present: Randy Yale (Chairman), Robert DeVylder, Daniel Grasso, Bill Sherman, and John Pepper. New member Jodie Heritage was also present.

Ms. Heritage will replace Ms. Mayer on the commission.

Staff Liaison: Suzanne Simone.

I. Call to Order

Mr. Yale called the meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Mr. Sherman called the roll. Members in attendance at tonight's meeting were Randy Yale (Chairman), Robert DeVylder, Daniel Grasso, Bill Sherman, John Pepper and Jodie Heritage.

The Commission welcomed new member Jodie Heritage to the commission.

III. Determination of Quorum

There were enough members present for a quorum.

IV. Pledge of Allegiance

All present receipt the pledge of allegiance.

V. Acceptance of Minutes – Regular Meeting – June 8, 2011

Motion: To accept the minutes from the June 8, 2011 regular meeting.

Moved by Daniel Grasso. Seconded by Mr. Pepper. No corrections were noted.

Motion approved 5-0-1 with Ms. Heritage not voting due to the fact she was not on the commission in June 2011.

VI. Communications

- 1. Shipman & Goodwin, LLP, Basic Overview of the Freedom of Information Act (To be handed out at meeting)**

Commission members received a copy of the Shipman & Goodwin correspondence.

Ms. Simone informed members that the correspondence was an overview of the freedom of information act which was handed out for their review.

Ms. Simone informed the Commission that the procedures for meetings are very important whether its regulatory commission or an advisory commission – the law doesn't make any distinction and the Commission still needs to have the meetings open to the public, you need to have a quorum to have a meeting and to have discussion.

Ms. Simone stated that most of the items in the correspondence are addressed through the ordinance as well as through the by-laws of the Commission. She reported that there is nothing new in the information handed out that has changed.

2. The Habitat, Summer 2011 (To be handed out at meeting)

Commission members received a copy of The Habitat Summer 2011 edition.

3. New Maps

Commission members received copies of new maps.

Ms. Simone stated that the maps show open-space properties that have not been shown previously on other maps they received.

VII. Calendar – Events

1. National Public Lands Day, September 24, 2011

Mr. Yale said the National Public Lands Day is September 24, 2011 and that is less than two weeks away. He said last year the Commission sponsored a hike at Roaring Brook.

Mr. Yale asked Commission members if they were interested in sponsoring a hike again this year.

There was discussion about the Commission sponsoring a hike and the timing of notification announcing the hike to the newspapers. It was mentioned that people could bring their dogs (on leashes) on the hike.

Mr. Sherman said he would be happy to set up the canopy and a table at the hike site just for information for anyone who might attend the event.

The Commission agreed to sponsor the guided hike on Saturday, September 24, 2011 from 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. at Roaring Brook.

Mr. Sherman and Ms. Simone agreed to work together to get a notification of the event into the newspaper. Mr. Sherman would also help facilitate the hike.

Ms. Simone said the notification needed to be ready for Monday, September 19, 2011 so she could submit it to the newspaper.

VIII. Unfinished Business

1. Mixville Hills Property Access-Voluntary Easement

Ms. Simone said she did speak with the town manager about this issue. She reported that he is fine with staff reaching out to the property owner – she said she needs to get in touch with the town council person since they Commission had referred it to the council liaison and council members were aware of it; that discussion has not taken place as of yet.

Ms. Simone said from the information she has the new town council liaison is Dave Schrumm – she agreed to verify that Mr. Schrumm is in fact the Commission’s liaison and report back to the Commission.

2. Tip of the Month

Mr. Yale said that he is still working on the ‘tip of the month’ that is about the proposal before the town council about having people make sure their sump pumps are not connected to the sewer system but connected to an outside drain.

Mr. Yale said that there was some previous communication from the town council level regarding funding for the connections.

Mr. Yale said he needed to contact Mr. Schrumm to get the correct information regarding funding and time frames for connecting to outside drains. He said he thought the law out go into effect January 1, 2012 if in fact the town council still plans on requiring homeowners to do this.

Mr. Yale encouraged Commission members to come up with additional 'tip of the month' topics.

The tips get published in *The Cheshire Herald* on a space available basis.

3. Trailhead Kiosk

Mr. Yale opened up discussion regarding where the kiosk should go – he said in the past the Commission talked about placing it in the Ten Mile Low Lands.

Mr. Yale said that the Boy Scout Patrick Hedden and the boy scouts that helped clear the Casertano property were interested in interested in putting up a kiosk at this location.

There was discussion that the Commission only has funding for materials to build one kiosk so the Commission needed to decide where the kiosk should be placed. They discussed placing the kiosk in the Ten Mile Lowland location.

Mr. DeVyllder said he did have someone lined up to construct the kiosk but was open to having someone else construct it.

Mr. Yale said Mr. Hedden could be contacted and let him know a kiosk for the Casertano property would be put in for next year's budget and if is he is still interested a kiosk could be constructed in Spring 2012.

Ms. Simone said Mr. Hedden may have access to materials for a second kiosk. She agreed to follow up and report back to the Commission.

Mr. Yale stated that the Commission should move forward with constructing and installing the kiosk at the Ten Mile Lowland location.

The Commission agreed that they should get moving on the kiosk construction and installation.

Ms. Simone said the funds are ready and they are ready to purchase the materials. She said the town would deliver the material to the town property where the kiosk is being put together.

Ms. Simone and Mr. DeVyllder would coordinate and set a date and time for the delivery of materials for the construction of the kiosk – probably in October.

Mr. Sherman offered to help Mr. DeVyllder if needed.

Mr. Yale thanked Mr. DeVlyder for agreeing to move forward on this project.

4. Open Space Property Signage/Logo design

Mr. Yale said now that the kiosk project is underway it may be a good time to get the logo project moving so a sign could be placed on the new kiosk.

The Commission talked about the logo design signage. Mr. Pepper said he has an electronic version of the logo.

Ms. Simone said that the Commission had previously discussed having either individual signs per property or having a standard sign for each kiosk and signage for each property would be separate on each kiosk.

Ms. Simone said when she checked with the sign maker she found out that that would be cheaper to have all the signs the same than having individual signs more specific to each property.

The Commission discussed the logo project, marking the individual open space locations with signage.

Mr. DeVlyder said he wanted to see the properties clearly marked so people would not dump debris at these sites.

Ms. Simone said that open space property boundaries are marked with conservation easement markers so it would be clear that when you are entering town property and when you are leaving town property that way there really can be no mistake in the field and you can monitor in case there are encroachments from neighboring property owners.

There was review and general discussion regarding the town owned open space properties and their boundary lines. The maps handed out to Commission members are for general reference only and are not meant for public view.

Mr. Sherman said he liked the idea of having one standard sign made to use all around and if they find somewhere down the line that they want to rebrand it or add something to it they can do that. He said he wanted to get something up at the sites that are uniform throughout the town.

Mr. Yale said there was also previous discussion about the renaming of some of the open space town properties so having a standard sign

would be best for now so people know they can hike there and it's public land.

Ms. Simone said with the grant the town had from the state the town purchased wooded signs that were engraved for three of the properties, DeDominicis, Roaring Brook and Boulder Knoll. She said the town does have the ability to make signage so it will not be an additional cost – only maybe for materials but not for labor.

Ms. Simone asked about what size sign the Commission was looking for; she thought they were looking for a 12" sign.

Mr. Pepper said the logo signs can be scaled to a standard size – he could accommodate whatever is industry standard.

Mr. Yale said at this point, the Commission should make a decision about the amount of funds, size and quality of signs should be made and move forward with this project.

Ms. Simone said she would look into the line item amount budgeted – it should be about \$250-\$300. She said vendor information and a purchase order request needed to be submitted before work could proceed.

Mr. Pepper agreed to work with staff to get the signs made.

Motion: That the Commission proceed with purchasing and installing the signage that identifies the various open spaces as being town/public lands.

Moved by Mr. Sherman. Seconded by Mr. DeVylder.

Mr. Pepper asked how many signs were needed.

There was discussion about the number of signs needed for each open space properties. A minimum of five signs were needed; the signs would be attached to the kiosks. Staff agreed to check into having the signs installed on posts if needed; she also agreed to check on the line item budget for the signs.

Motion approved unanimously by Commission members present.

5. Staff Updates

Ms. Simone said she has been out to the Casertano property with public works and survey staff to look at the proposed parking spaces.

She said she they will be out there in the next couple of weeks and will have a survey of the area.

Ms. Simone said it seems as though an area that would make sense as far as addressing concerns that council members had raised with crossing the street would be the access way that immediately borders the Carmody property; staff is going to take a look at this area and see how many cars would be able to fit there, where the turnaround would be and where the property lines are – so all of that would be squared away.

Ms. Simone said her goal is if this can be taken care of in the next ten days or so she could work on the report that ultimately would be going to the town council; she would bring the report to the Commission as the next meeting for their review, edits and vote and then to the town council (planning committee) for their review. She said Commission members would have the opportunity to attend that meeting and provide their input.

Ms. Simone would hopefully have a report on this project ready by the next meeting.

Ms. Simone said when they were at the Casertano property cleanup event - it was discussed there was an opportunity for a volunteer clean up event - she said due to the storm there are a lot of down branches that are right in the trail pathway of walking – this might be a good project for cub scouts to remove the braches off of the main trail. She noted there is also a cleanup effort that could be done at the other end of the DeDominicis property off of Corliss Lane.

Ms. Simone said anyone interested in helping with a cleanup effort should make contact with her and she would provide them with the details.

IX. New Business

- 1. National Public Lands Day**
This item was discussed under calendar events.
- 2. Town Website**

Mr. Pepper asked about the new town website and the fact that the Commission does not seem to have much presence on the new website. He said he would like to see the Commission's logo on their portion of the town website.

Ms. Simone informed Mr. Pepper that the new website is still in the works – she said a lot of the Commissions don't have a real presence right now but will in the future. If there is anything specific that the Commission wants to see on the site to let staff know; staff is working on putting information on the site about open space areas.

Ms. Simone said the town is working on getting the new site information on the web and that someone in each town office is working to get specific department information on the site.

X. Adjournment

Mr. Yale called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:37 p.m.

Moved by Mr. Sherman. Seconded by Mr. Grasso. Motion approved unanimously by Commission members present.

Respectfully submitted by:

**Carla Mills
Environment Commission
Recording Secretary**