

**Conservation Commission**  
**MINUTES**  
**Regular Meeting of September 13, 2007**

**Members Present**

Sheila Stoane  
Jane Brawerman  
Howard Reid  
Len Tunderman  
Kate Miller  
Katchen Coley  
Steven Ladd  
David O'Brien  
Eric Mosher

**Members Absent**

Ellen Lukens  
Michael Ennis  
Jim Fortuna  
Nancy Kiniry

**Others Present**

Matt Dodge, Secretary  
5 members of public

A. Call to Order

Sheila Stoane called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm in Room B-20 in the Municipal Building.

B. Roll Call

The roll was called and a quorum was determined.

C. Public Forum

No members of the public spoke.

E. Old Business

1. Farm Viability Study

Stephen Endes introduced presentation. Terri Hahn presented "Defining and Preserving Agriculture in Middletown for the 21<sup>st</sup>. Century". Phil Resor presented maps and passed out hard copies. Sheila Stoane asked when report would be finished and Mr. Endes said the reports should be finished by the end of October.

A discussion ensued regarding 490 tax status and what happens if/when farming operations cease. Another discussion regarding wine trail and vineyards in Middletown and leasing of land by city to potential farming operations.

Jiff Martin initiates discussion in response with presentation and introduces Working Lands Alliance and The Farm Viability Grant Program. A guide for Municipal Planning for Agriculture will be out later this year. The Farmland Preservation Advisory Board will be meeting for the first time in October. They advise the Department of Agriculture.

- How do we figure out which farms Middletown should consider to be most important;
- Look at Lebanon and Suffield for examples;

- Discussed the Face of Connecticut” which would help to promote small farm funding among other funding.

Farm Enhancement Program – search for funding through grants to help with farm infrastructure improvements.

Sheila Stoane read an email from Kate Miller discussing her questions and recommendations. A discussion ensued regarding active Middletown farms that aren't on the 490 tax program. Len Tundermann questions regarding raising animals or fiber production (he owns an alpaca farm). Katchen Coley discusses topic of land production and Wesleyan conference in April. Sheila Stoane asks David O'Brien if he'd forward his previous small farmland study to Terri and Stephen.

Ms. Hahn reviewed five mapped properties that were displays as subdivision site plans. A discussion ensued. Property owners of those five properties will not be divulged at this time. Jane Brawerman asks if the final draft will be general or specific in its recommendations. Mr. Endes said the report will be general as there are sensitive issues. Ms. Hahn said that they would not identify specific parcels as the City should do this.

A discussion ensued regarding scoring methods and how properties will be prioritized. David O'Brien questioned whether other properties have been mapped as potential subdivision site plans. Mr. Hahn said that these were the only ones chosen.

#### D. Minutes

Motion to continue looking at previous meeting minutes until the next meeting was moved by Katchen Coley and seconded by Stephen Ladd. Approved unanimously.

#### E. Old Business (continued)

2. Public Relations – Conservation Corner  
Article regarding Middletown biodiversity was published.
3. Open Space Status  
Blue Trail connector installed through Wilcox to Atkins Street. Loop trails off of Footit Road to be installed eventually.
4. Open-Space Signs
  - Talked about using guide sign as a template for future signs. Matt Dodge will look into this.
  - Need to come up with ideas for Conservation Commission website. (a discussion ensued regarding design and content. Jane Brawerman & Eric Mosher will help with ideas and design and possibly Kate Miller as well.
  - Jane Brawerman said Middlesex College may be able to provide students to help with web page.
5. Review wetlands applications
  - No wetland applications presented.

#### F. New Business

1. Website

#### G. Correspondence

- Letter from Kate Miller regarding biodiversity database;

- Letter from Midstate Regional Planning Agency regarding Hazardous Waste pickup volunteers.

#### H. Member Forum

- Need formation of subcommittee regarding the Open Space Bond referendum;
- Volunteers needed to pass out information on Election Day
- Get Ed McKeon, John Hall and Ellen Lukens to come up with additional ideas such as brochures and signs.
- Jane Brawerman – Coginchaug outreach next activity – river clean-up at Veterans Park on September 29<sup>th</sup> at 9 -12. Will send out more information on this.
- Len Tundermann – September 29<sup>th</sup> & 30<sup>th</sup> - National Alpaca Farm Days. Len invites all to his farm from 10 to 4.

#### I. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 9:45 PM was moved by Jane Brawerman and seconded by Katchen Coley. Approved unanimously.