

2014-06-02 Conservation Commission Minutes

Brooklyn Conservation Commission

Meeting Minutes

Brooklyn Town Hall

June 2, 2014

Present: Diane Wimmer, Chair; Michael Oatley; Bev Thornton; Jeannine Noel; and Dana Heilemann. Harry Adams was absent with notification.

Guests: Jana Butts Roberson, Land Use Administrator; Olivia Richmond, WINY

The meeting was called to order by D. Wimmer at 7: 35 pm.

A Motion to approve the May 5, 2014 meeting minutes was made by M. Oatley. Seconded by B. Thornton. No discussion. Unanimously approved.

Subdivision Reviews: Jana Butts Roberson presented plans for an eight lot conservation subdivision on Tatnic Road. The property abuts a large unfragmented forest block, making the preservation of additional open space more desirable. In addition, there is currently no open space in the southwest quadrant of town.

D. Wimmer inquired as to the minimum open space requirement. J. Butts Roberson stated that it is 15% for regular subdivisions and 40% for conservation subdivisions.

J. Butts Roberson stated that the purpose of her presentation is to solicit comments from the commission before the application is heard by Planning and Zoning on June 4.

D. Wimmer noted that the project as proposed leaves the stone walls intact.

J. Butts Roberson stated that the applicant, Jeff Weaver, intends to give a 1.2 acre portion of the property to an abutting farmer and that the proposed subdivision conserves 50% of the property. She noted that there are two options available: an easement or a deed restriction. With an easement, the land is transferred to the town, which becomes responsible for monitoring it. With a deed restriction, there is no property transfer; however, the owner may not develop the property. The owner may sell the property; however, the deed restriction goes with the land in perpetuity.

J. Butts Roberson reviewed a draft Declaration of Permanent Restrictions and

Covenants.

D. Wimmer stated that she did not agree with the third restriction, *No timber harvesting or harvesting of any flora or fauna*. In her opinion, a regulated timber harvest promotes forest health. She also questioned whether the application of pesticides and herbicides should be prohibited. J. Butts Roberson suggested that the timber harvesting restriction could be reworded as follows: *No timber harvesting except a managed timber harvest as part of a management plan conducted by a professional forester*.

D. Wimmer noted that with an easement, the town becomes responsible for monitoring the open space. She inquired whether monitoring the property would entail disturbing the wetlands. J. Butts Roberson stated that these are walkable upland wetlands. D. Wimmer inquired whether emergency vehicles would be permitted to cross the wetlands to reach the interior parcels. J. Butts Roberson stated that because there is no road, in the event of a wildfire, firefighters would have to walk in.

J. Noel returned to the question of herbicide and pesticide use. J. Butts Roberson stated that this restriction could be added to the list. D. Wimmer expressed concern about controlling invasive species.

J. Butts Roberson noted that were public access over this parcel needed in the future, it would necessitate opening up the stone wall. M. Oatley expressed concern for the privacy of homeowners whose property abuts the proposed open space.

A Motion to accept the draft as revised of the Declaration of Permanent Restrictions and Covenants for the Weaver conservation subdivision, application number SD14-001, was made by J. Noel. Seconded by B. Thornton. No discussion. Unanimously approved.

New Business, Signs Report: B. Thornton reported that Putnam Welding & Equipment in Eastford made the signs that Putnam has. They cost \$490 each. This includes fabrication, painting, and installation. She will look into the possibility of a USDA grant that would cover the cost of signs for Riverside. D. Wimmer suggested that the commission look beyond covering just the cost of signs and compile individual wish lists for the the next meeting. The town has a grant writer who could assist with the grant application.

Budget 2014: D. Wimmer stated that the proposed budget of \$2700 reflects funding for a recording secretary. The budget is slated to go to a vote on June 5. She noted that the commission has until June 30 to expend any remaining monies in this year's budget.

Family Fun Day Recap: D. Wimmer reported that the event went well; however, next

year it would be advisable to use smaller four inch pots. Big Y was very helpful and Hart's took back the unused soil. D. Heilemann will make inquiries regarding the possibility of doing something similar at the Brooklyn Fair. B. Thornton suggested that there may be a way to involve the Recreation Department's summer camp.

Spooky Nights: It is not clear where last year's towers may be located.

June Trail Days: Due to a personal matter, J. Noel is unable to lead the walk as planned. D. Wimmer and D. Heilemann will conduct the walk from 10 to 11 am.

Timber Harvest Update: D. Wimmer stated that she has spoken with First Selectman Ives; the area is scheduled to be cleaned up and the bridge repaired. M. Oatley said that there are still trees down and in the way. He will e-mail the First Selectman to report what he found.

Disc golf: no update. M. Oatley noted that under the terms and conditions of the grant, the work was to have been completed by March 2014. J. Noel inquired whether the tree stand is still there. The answer is yes.

D. Wimmer announced that the dedication of Riverside Park will be held on Sunday, June 29 at 1 pm.

No correspondence.

No public comment.

A Motion to Adjourn was made by D. Heilemann. Seconded by M. Oatley. Unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 8:47 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Shelley Hopkins
Recording Secretary