

**Minutes of New Hartford Open Space Preservation Commission Regular Meeting
Monday, July 22, 2019m 6:30 p.m., Sessions Conference Room, Town Hall**

Members present: Jean Cronauer (chairperson), Caren Ross, Rusty Warner, Bill Michaud, Madeline McClave, Jean Darlington (secretary). Guest: Corinne Rebillard

Approval of minutes: Rusty moved to approve the minutes of Monday, 6/24/2019. Caren R. seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Goula-Phillips Trail Linkage: Rusty reported that he has been making plans with Paul Mahoney and Doug Roth to walk the trail, plan specific tasks, and organize a work party for sometime after Labor Day. We discussed revitalizing the Stewardship Committee and improving communications among the commissions and with the public.

Tax Abatement Application: We reviewed the work we have done so far and the questions we need to ask First Selectman Dan Jerram. Caren R. volunteered to make a few edits to the third draft of a one-page summary of the program for the public. Bill and Madeline volunteered to put together a packet of information and a list of questions for Dan to consider. Bill and Jean C. volunteered to deliver it to Dan, review it with him, and invite him to our next meeting (August 26th).

Executive Session: none

Farmington River: The Farmington River Coordinating Committee (FRCC) is celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Wild and Scenic Designation with a concert at the New Hartford Pavilion on Bridge Street on Sunday, July 28, 2019, from 3 – 5 p.m. They will also be hosting another concert there on Sunday, August 25, 2019, from 3 – 5 p.m. More information about FRCC: <http://www.farmingtonriver.org/>

Summer Progress Report: We discussed efforts to deal with invasive plants at the 8.1-acre town-owned Butler preserve, in particular the need to keep the trail open for hikers. Jean D. reported on discussions she had with biologist and ecological consultant Betsy Corrigan. For the health of the river and the sensitive wildlife habitats located there, it is important that the people directing the work be knowledgeable about river habitat protection and appropriate methods of control of the specific invasive plants present there. The NHLT is planning another work party there later this week.

Preservation of Brodie Park South (BPS): The 2015 Plan of Conservation and Development directs the BOS to lead the effort to protect BPS with a conservation easement, with the Conservation Commission (CC), OSPC, and New Hartford Land Trust (NHLT) as partners. New Hartford has a goal of protecting 30% of the land in town as open space, so the protection of BPS would help toward achieving that goal. On July 3, Jean D. and Caren R. met with First Selectman Dan Jerram to discuss steps, timing, and coordination among the commissions. Dan said he could support a conservation easement on part of BPS and recommended that we delineate the key areas for protection and make a proposal. Jean D. reported on a walk she had taken there with Betsy Corrigan, who pointed out specific important places to protect, such as the deep woods, the vernal pools and the areas surrounding them, and the meadow habitat in the lower half of the field that should be kept un-mowed until the fall. Betsy also pointed out a small number of invasive plants that are starting to establish themselves in the woods, as well as the more obvious larger infestations of invasive plants at the forest's edge with the field. Jean C. volunteered to contact Harry White of the Northwest Conservation District, who wrote the 2010 BPS Baseline Study, to try to coordinate a site walk with him. We also discussed the idea of organizing some informational walks there to inform the public of the features of BPS that make it important to protect as open space, and the importance of coordinating our efforts with other commissions.

Butler Conservation Easement: The conservation easement is the final step needed to complete the preservation of the 8.1-acre linear town-owned parcel along the West Branch of the Farmington River as open space in perpetuity. This topic will be covered under Item #3 at the Board of Selectmen's meeting on Tuesday, July 23, 2019. After the final edits have been addressed, the next step will be for the voters to vote on the conservation easement at a Town Meeting, likely in August.

Next meeting: Monday, August 26, 2019

Respectfully submitted,
Jean Darlington, Secretary