

**Minutes of New Hartford Open Space Preservation Commission Special Meeting
Monday, 12/4/2017, 6:30 p.m., New Hartford Town Hall, Sessions Conference Room**

Members present: Jean Cronauer (Chairperson), Caren Ross, Bill Michaud, Karen Griswold-Nelson, Madeline McClave, Rusty Warner, Jean Darlington (Secretary).

Guest: Denton Butler

Note: Before the meeting, Christine Hayward informed us that we could discuss issues, but that because of the timing of the posting of the agenda, we could not make motions or vote.

Jean C. called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

1. Opportunity for Public Comment: Denton asked questions about the Connecticut Farmland Trust. He reported on the renewed possibility for a trail and the family's deadline of May, 2018 for the Butler Farm Project. We discussed the need for full, open, and regular communication among the Selectmen, the OSPC, the landowners, the State of CT, and the New Hartford Land Trust because it is important for all parties to remain informed throughout the process.
2. Approval of Meeting Minutes: Postponed until the next meeting.
3. Meeting schedule for 2018: Jean D. will put together a list of potential meeting dates for next year. Members generally agreed that they were usually able to attend meetings at 6:30 p.m. on the fourth Monday of the month.
4. Report from DEEP tour of Cedar Lane Wildlife Management Area: Jean D. reported that she and Jean C. had met with Pete Picone and Judy Wilson of the CT DEEP on Tuesday, October 31, 2017 on Marsh Road. Pete and Judy had called the meeting after we had requested permission for the Town to post blazes marking an existing informal trail connecting the Franklin P. Kearney Memorial Nature Trail at Brodie Park South with Marsh Road, Shady Brook Road, and Barella Road. The Town's long-term objective has been to create a linear trail from Brodie to Bakerville. Posting such blazes would make the trail more formal. As a result, the installation of some type of stream crossing, such as a small bridge, would be needed. Because the Cedar Swamp Wildlife Management Area is a wildlife refuge, Pete and Judy explained that marking the trail and formally inviting the public to use it has the potential to undermine the wildlife protection mission of the area, especially given the DEEP's limited staffing available to monitor all the land under their purview. They explained that the public is already permitted to walk on the land, but that publicizing a through trail could create the public expectation that the trail is maintained, that events could take place there, etc. They suggested that, instead, we mark the Town-owned sections only and perhaps post informational plaques along Marsh Road. They pointed out that the walk along abandoned or discontinued roads is a very pleasant nature walk on its own because of the excellent opportunities to observe nature and get some exercise.
5. Report from CACIWC conference: Karen G-N reported that she had attended sessions dealing with regulatory issues. The presenters discussed towns' planning for climate change and sustainability of wetlands preservation. She described the importance of the Farmington River's federal Wild and Scenic Designation for the economic development of New Hartford and other river towns.
6. Conservation Commission maps for POCAD: Madeline is planning to meet with Alison Murdock (Chairperson of the Conservation Commission) to discuss improvements to the maps.
7. Open Space Tax Abatement Ordinance-Subcommittee report: Postponed until the next meeting. Madeline and Bill plan to meet soon. We plan to discuss their ideas and recommendations at the next meeting.
8. Possible Executive Session to Discuss Real Estate: Postponed until the next meeting.

Next Meeting: Monday, December, 18, 2017, 6:30 p.m., Town Hall.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean Darlington, Secretary