

HARWINTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Meeting June 15, 2015
Minutes

- Meeting 7:01pm

Present: C. Butcher, Herb Etter, J Goodno, J Kirchner

Guests: Tod Kenney (NEMBA member with proposal for trails)

Brian Kelleher, John Johnson, Margie Bowen, James Pabilenia, Suzanne Stich (Recreation Director), Erik Maher, Lane Maher, Hope Maher.

Town Green: C. Butcher to contact Woman's club concerning Flag removal after Fourth of July.

Conservation area:

Conservation area Sign: S. Barlow bought and planted under the sign. Receipt for payment was submitted to the town. More trimming needed and mulch.

Conservation Area Bench:

Motion: C. Butcher Remaining money from Conservation budget to be combined with donation money to purchase bench. Seconded by J. Kirchner.

J. Goodno to put in order for bench. Recreation department: S Stich has catalogues and will work with J. Goodno to look at options.

Mountain Biking on the Conservation/Recreation Property:

NEMBA: NW CT chapter of the New England Mountain Bike Association Tod Kenney presented the proposed trails to add to the current trail system at the Conservation Area. These were two trails- both starting at the cul-de-sac at the sports complex :

one a beginner trail running parallel to the sports complex area where it is relatively flat. The other using part of the current double red trail and switch backs running down the edge of the property line to Leadmine- crossing the brook to use the property across the brook and eventually join up with the state Roraback property. NEMBA would design, build and maintain these trails. Eventually to build trails on the South road portion of property.

Discussion: There was much discussion with the NEMBA members and town residents as well.

Harwinton Resident J. Pabilenia voiced concerns and was opposed to the proposed bike trails. Concerns that the town was taking on a liability and that mountain bikers would be a danger to hikers. That the mountain bikers would use all the trails, not just the newly designed trails.

other attendant residents of Harwinton present and M Bowen spoke in favor of the trails : that they are mountain bikers and members of NEMBA, voiced that this would be a positive thing for the area.

Commission member H. Etter voiced concerns that the bike trails in other areas of the state have a standard of double wide trail so there would be room for hikers and mountain bikers to both use the trail. Concerns with the mixing of hikers and mountain bikers as a safety issue.

Commission member J. Kirchner voiced concerns that there had been a bird study and what would be the impact on the habitat.

Commission member J. Goodno - In support of promoting the use of town facilities for varied uses. The goal of the Town Open Space Plan is to connect Open Spaces. The conservation Commission is advisory- not regulatory. There is nothing in the Charter that prohibits the use of mountain bikes in the Conservation Area.

Commission member S. Barlow- There would need to be signage to direct the mountain bike access to the Sports Complex entrance to discourage the use in the other two access points to the trails.

Motion: made by C. Butcher and seconded by S. Barlow:

The Conservation Commission supports NEMBA in their current proposed bike trails with the requirement for signage direct mountain bike use to access the trails only via the sports complex trail entrance at the end of the cul-de-sac. Informative map also to encourage the use of mountain bike trails rather than using the current hiking trails.

Vote: 3 in favor/ 2 opposed

Naugatuck Greenway-

Wheels and Heels 5K Road race was a success.

J. Kirchner meeting this month concerning the Naugatuck Greenway. We still need to purchase property to be able to build a greenway.

Membership- Need new members.

Meeting adjourned 08:57

Submitted:

Colleen Butcher

RECEIVED FOR RECORD AT HARWINTON CT
ON 06/18/15 AT 8:30AM
ATTEST NANCY E. ELDRIDGE TOWN CLERK