



TOWN OF OLD SAYBROOK
SELECTMEN'S OFFICE

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MEETING OF THE CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

March 15, 2019

9:00 A.M.

**Town Hall – First Floor Conference Room
MINUTES**

- I. CALL TO ORDER-** All members present (Will Hochholzer and Carl P. Fortuna, Jr.): Staff: Ray Allen, P & R Director, Susan Esty from the Preserve ad hoc committee, Christine Nelson, Town Planner and David Guthbart, TNC.
- II. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC-** None
- III. COMMENTS FROM THE COMMITTEE-**None
- IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES-**12/14/18; Moved and approved.
- V. BUSINESS BEFORE THE BOARD**
 - A.** Update on the Preserve Parking Lot.

The Preserve parking lot on Ingham Hill Road is nearly fully designed and Nathan Jacobson & Associates has submitted to DEEP's Natural Diversity Data Base (NDDDB). This project will go out to bid and hopefully be paid for by the Trust for Public (TPL). The Ad hoc committee is exploring different trail options from the parking lot. Inland Wetlands will hear the cul-de-sac plan on March 21, 2019. After Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission (IWWC), this design will go to the Planning Commission.
 - B.** MOU between State, Old Saybrook and Westbrook.

Westbrook will not sign an MOU but their Director of Public Works has indicated they will mow, trim and perhaps handle garbage issues when they arise.
 - C.** The Preserve Forest Stewardship Plan.

The plan should be completed in March. An update from GEI was provided. There will then be an internal review period, possibly a public hearing in June and perhaps adoption in July.
 - D.** Update on Eversource work in Right of Way (ROW).

Watch list plants have been identified and many are in the Eversource hazard tree area. There is concern over Eversource trimming methods. They have started work. Investigation will be done into where the cut wood is being sent. Will Hochholzer would like to make sure that any revenue comes back to the Preserve. The State saw mill contractor is up and running if there is a need for any wood to build bridges, kiosks or the like. A simple request is all that is required.

- VI. OTHER BUSINESS** – Some concern was expressed about who should respond to what in the Preserve with the latest sick dogs being reported. Will Hochholzer simply thought that there perhaps could be a better use of everyone's time if responses were coordinated in the future. A meeting between the Old Saybrook Police Department and Eric Lunden, Captain of the Eastern District, was recommended.
- There was a brief discussion on possible hunting and how education of this potential component if recreation, which is allowed as per the Conservation Easement from The Nature Conservancy (TNC), would be helpful. TNC may have a volunteer group to assist with invasives.

Next meeting June 14, 2019, 9am, Old Saybrook Town Hall First Floor Conference Room.

- VII. ADJOURNMENT**
FORTUNA/HOCHHOLZER
Motion to adjourn at 10:05 a.m.
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Submitted by:

Carl P. Fortuna, Jr.
First Selectman, Town of Old Saybrook



Consulting
Engineers and
Scientists

March 14, 2019
Project #1802904

Preserve Management Committee Update
Via Email: William.Hochholzer@ct.gov

Re: March 2019 Project Update, The Preserve Forest Stewardship Plan

Task 1: FOREST STEWARDSHIP PLAN

The draft document is scheduled for March. Eric is finishing it up this week. Anticipating about 3 weeks for DEEP and others to review. A comment response matrix will be provided for each document review (if reviewers prefer to use it).

Task 2: NATURAL RESOURCE ASSESSMENT

Draft document issued with FSP. This is a data review and compilation of previous surveys. Document also includes updated groundtruthing of vernal pools and GPS photo-points at specific locations are established for long-term monitoring efforts. Would still like to acquire Bill Moorehead's most recent findings or have him review maps, which he has agreed to do. NDDDB request pending, but we are proceeding using 2016 CT DEEP verified species list with a placeholder in the document.

Task 3: PUBLIC RECREATIONAL USE ASSESSMENT

Draft document to be issued with FSP. Recommends closure of almost 35,000 linear feet of trails that meet an established criterion (for example, trails that are either eroding, traverse wetlands or vernal pools, or do not contribute to the overall trail system). Proposes a permanent trail system of about 31,580 linear feet of trails to view/access specific unique features, including outlook spots over the Pequot Swamp Pond (however, this may be revised as the outlooks are located in rocky outcrop habitat, which may be considered sensitive habitat). The proposed permanent trail system consists of multi-use trails.

Additional Note: We request confirmation that the CMC is in agreement that a handicap-accessible trail should be included in the proposed trail system. Based on existing access to The Preserve, only a segment of a handicap trail could be designated single-use.

Task 4: INTERIM EXISTING TRAIL SYSTEM REVIEW

Field effort completed – data in Task 3.

Task 5: ONLINE RECREATIONAL USE SURVEY

Survey closed with 1,477 people participating in the surveyed. The entire survey is included in the Public Recreational Use Assessment. Highlights from the survey are below:

- 60.9% surveyed were men, 39.7% were between the ages of 31 and 50.

- 62.5% of users hike the site, 33% would like to see guided nature walks implemented.
- 52% of users believe that all trails should be multi-use for all activities.
- 23.2% were strongly against a primitive camping area, while 22% were strongly for and 25.9% of users were indifferent to the idea.
- 44.1% of users were strongly against hunting, 34.2% were strongly for hunting.
- 35.5% were in strong agreement for handicap-accessible trail at the Preserve.
- 36.5% of users were indifferent to there being a dedicated position established to provide stewardship and public outreach.