



TOWN OF OLD SAYBROOK  
**Board of Selectmen**  
**The Preserve Ad Hoc Committee**

Susan Esty  
Chris Cryder  
Kathleen Connolly

308 Main Street • Old Saybrook, Connecticut 06475-1741  
Telephone (860) 395-3152 • FAX (860) 395-3154

Judy Preston  
Liz Swenson  
Tom ODell  
Kacey Constable

**DISCUSSION NOTES**  
**SPECIAL MEETING**  
Thursday, October 26, 2017  
6:00 – 7:30 P.M.  
PARKS & RECREATION CENTER  
308 Main Street, Old Saybrook, CT 06475

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chris Cryder called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

**II. ROLL CALL**

**Members Present**

Chris Cryder  
Judy Preston (arrived at 6:35 p.m.)  
Kacey Constable  
Susan Esty  
Liz Swenson (arrived at 7:00 p.m.)

**Members Absent**

Tom ODell  
Kathy Connolly

**Town Hall Staff Present**

Kathleen King, Recording Clerk

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**MOTION** to approve the minutes from the Board of Selectmen's Preserve Ad-Hoc Committee Special Meeting of September 28, 2017 as presented. **MADE** by S. Esty, **SECONDED** by J. Preston; **VOTED IN FAVOR:** J. Preston, K. Constable, C. Cryder, S. Esty, L. Swenson; **OPPOSED:** None; **ABSTAINED:** None; **APPROVED:** 5-0-0.

**IV. RECOGNITION OF GUESTS**

Robert Nussbaum from the Essex Land Trust was in attendance as was Todd Samuelson from Pedal Power.

K. Connolly was unable to attend tonight's meeting, so she sent the following report of her activities since the last Preserve Ad Hoc Committee meeting of 9/28/2017

-Engaged Fredi Castro Landscaping to cut down invasive Japanese stiltgrass infestations on the blue and red trails near the OS parking lot and around Pequot Bog in late September. No herbicides were used. The point of the cutting was to stop the process of setting and spreading seed. Stiltgrass is an annual plant that won't survive the winter, but it is helpful to avoid the addition of seeds to the seed bank. This was funded from the existing weed management funds (no new grants taken) and approved by Ray Allen.

-Have been working with Will Hochholzer and Alex Sokolow on landscaping for the new Rt. 153 parking lot. Two American elms, one hornbeam, six fragrant sumacs, and about 200 sedges and grasses are being delivered to Alex Sokolow this morning. Planting will proceed as soon as the rain lets up. **Note: It would be great to have a helper for the sedge and grass planting! I don't have a date yet, but it will be next week.**

-Met with Roger Wolfe from DEEP, who manages weed removal and tree maintenance for a lot of the parks and forests. Unfortunately, he could not complete Phragmites removal this fall—we arrived too late for an effective treatment. He has the Pequot Bog at the top of the list for treatment next July.

-I continue to manage the Facebook page, which has about 2000 followers. **Anyone who wants to receive Facebook updates should "follow" <https://www.facebook.com/preserve1000acres/> .**

-I will do another newsletter in the next week or so. It will announce Chris' upcoming hike, the archaeology walk sponsored by Essex Land Trust on Dec. 2, and a work party that I will lead in December (date TBD).

-Does anyone want to take over any of these communications tasks? (Facebook or newsletter or both)?

-The work party will focus on the weed management area around the Pequot Bog, as it did last year. I plan to do a "dormant" seeding of the area around the Pequot Bog with the work party, based on the mix approved by DEEP. We will also remove newly fallen branches and attack the few remaining crown vetch and Japanese barberry plants.

-Attended management committee meeting with Will Hochholzer and Carl in September, at which they and David Gumbart and Honor Lawlor worked out changes to the RFP. Will Hochholzer updated me this morning that Honor has completed the TPL changes. He says he is confident the new RFP will go out for bid in the near future and we will be set to begin the work in early 2018.



-I have attached a newly photo shopped map of The Preserve (lo-res), which I hope the OS Land Trust and the Town website will use until we get the new map from TPL.

## **V. OLD BUSINESS**

### **A. Update on Interim Trails**

Tom Nosal from the CT DEEP hiked the trails with a GPS device, and a new trail map was created from that data. He captured many of the new trails that have been created in the last year and a half by mountain bikers. These trails change constantly. C. Cryder has put some of the trails "to rest", and so the new trails have morphed. He said he tried to remove some of the trails in the blue loop by covering them over, but the trails were then recreated.

Eagle Scout Matt Alsante completed his wayfind sign project for the east side of The Preserve. C. Cryder would like to find another Eagle Scout candidate to do the west side of The Preserve. C. Cryder blazed the yellow trail from the Route 153 parking lot in Essex to the existing yellow trail.

The sign for the parking lot and the kiosk in the parking lot have been delayed because of miscommunication between the CT DEEP and the private contractor who built the parking lot.

A new map is being made now from T. Nosal's data and it will be available in the kiosk in the Route 153 parking lot. He suggested the title on the map be, "The Preserve State Forest." The map is in process. S. Esty suggested this be a temporary sign until The Preserve has been officially named. Another issue in creating a map is how to identify ownership of the parcels. The state is concerned about distressed hikers not being able to identify their location in The Preserve. C. Cryder said identification signs/markers are being worked on.

There are piles of rotten wood and nails, and C. Cryder would like to remove them for safety reasons.

S. Esty offered to draft a memo on behalf of this committee to Carl Fortuna with the list of safety concerns that the CMC should address including pipes that haven't been capped, silt fence that has not been removed, and the wood removal. Also, they would like to know the results of the hunting assessment.

### **B. Update on Winter Weed Treatment**

The update on winter weed treatment is discussed in K. Connolly's notes above.

### **C. Request for Proposal Update**

The Trust for Public Land will now be writing and issuing the RFP. This committee would like to request to have the opportunity to review the RFP before it is publicized. C. Cryder will contact Honor Lawler to ask her about that.

---

### **D. Committee Updates**

There are no updates on signage, communication or trails. J. Preston said

Botanist Bill Moorhead will have an interim report prepared at the end of January. There have been many new things found with this very thorough four season inventory.

C. Cryder asked J. Preston if Bill Moorhead would be willing to give a public presentation of his findings. She said she will ask him.

**E. Any Other Old Business**

B. Nussbaum said they are working with trail builder Ben Collins to work out a new trail system on a new parcel on the Essex side. This new parcel will allow better access into The Preserve. K. Connolly previously recommended B. Collins to work on trails here on the Old Saybrook side.

**VI. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. Preserve Memorandum of Understanding with Westbrook**

R. Allen was not in attendance at the meeting, but he left copies of the Memorandum of Agreement, which is a maintenance agreement, between the Town of Old Saybrook and the State of CT through the CT DEEP, for property located on Essex Road aka Route 153 in the Town of Westbrook known as 1278 Essex Road, Assessors' Map 153/ Lot 14 for the Committee to review. Westbrook will be doing the ongoing general maintenance.

**B. Todd Samuelson, Pedal Power**

T. Samuelson said he hikes in The Preserve multiple times a week, he's a mountain biker, and he's a steward of The Preserve on the Essex side. He'd like to be the spokesman representative for the cycling group as a liaison between this Committee and the cycling community.

C. Cryder said that input from the mountain biking community will be valuable when the Public Use Assessment and the Forest Management Plan are created. He's concerned about the trails that the cyclists have created especially in the grassy knoll section of the red trail because it is a sensitive area. He noticed one trail in particular that had been created by cyclists which he covered over, and then the cyclists created it again.

T. Samuelson said the bikers really want to help. They have cleared trails after storms, and they want to continue to work collaboratively with this Committee. He said he talks with a lot of bikers about The Preserve when they come into Pedal Power. He said the cyclists can be stewards of safety. They can get in the trails very quickly if someone is in distress.

He said there are trails in other forests with signs about who has right of way; the pedestrians come first, then the horses, then the cyclists. S. Esty explained that those signs are an important part of public education and outreach.

S. Esty suggested drafting a letter to the public to let them know what's going on with the trails, assessments, etc.

**C. Any Other New Business**

On December 2, 2017, there will be a hiking tour about the history and archeology of The Preserve leaving from Ingham Hill on the Western side.

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathleen King, Recording Clerk