

**TOWN OF GRANBY  
CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
MINUTES  
FEBRUARY 11, 2205**

**PRESENT:** David Desiderato, Will Madsen, Kent McCord, Kara Marshall, Zachary Donais, Jim Skipsky

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Carolyn Flint, Peggy Laureau, Lee Shaw, Danielle Johnston, Mike Johnston

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Kara Marshall called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Danielle Johnston noted she was visited by a DEEP investigator who is writing a report on the farmland the town leases to an area farmer. She has two young children and she is concerned about the use of herbicides.

Peggy Lareau lives up the street from the property and she is concerned about the farmland that is being discussed at tonight's meeting.

Carolyn Flint lives on Barndoor Hills Road close to the West Branch of Salmon Brook and she is interested in the conversation regarding the nearby farmland.

**3. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE DECEMBER 10, 2024 MEETING MINUTES**

ON A MOTION by D. Desiderato, seconded by Z. Donais, the minutes of December 10, 2024 were approved as written.

**4. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN**

D. Desiderato nominated Kara Marshall for Chairman and Zach Donais for Vice Chairman.

ON A MOTION BY D. Desiderato, seconded by K. McCord, the appointments of Kara Marshall as Chairman and Zach Donais as Vice Chairman were approved unanimously.

**5. BARNDOOR HILLS FARMLAND**

Z. Donais asked the residents in attendance what they would like to happen and noted the farmer has a five-year lease with the town.

- P. Laureau would like the town to review the lease to determine if it was appropriate to lease the property with so few constraints. If the lease continues, the town should be aware of what the farmer is spraying and when. She noted the investigator informed her there is no requirement for the farmer to notify the public when he is spraying as it is not a commercial business.



- L. Shaw would like the town to inform the farmer he broke the lease and include an addendum to the lease that the farmer notifies the town when and what he will be spraying, as well as post when he will be spraying.
- Z. Donais would like to review the lease and make some suggestions if possible, i.e., pesticides be used minimally if at all. K. Marshall reported she reviewed the lease in December and felt it was broad. She would like to see stronger language in future RFP's regarding pest control and best practices.
- M. Johnston stated the lease should be terminated if the farmer violated the lease.
- J. Skipsky would like to follow up with the Town Manager to inquire if this farmer has broken the lease and if so, which terms.
- There was a brief discussion regarding the farmer widening the road to the property and if he had permission to do so.
- It was noted that as of January 15<sup>th</sup> the DEEP investigator has not completed his report.
- Z. Donais stated the investigator would ensure any pesticide application was done so properly and noted there is not any requirement regarding notification of spraying since it is not always feasible for farmers who have many properties.
- K. McCord pointed out the commission does not have any authority to make decisions but can bring concerns to the Town Manager and the Board of Selectmen.
- K. Marshall pointed out she listened to an Inland and Wetlands Commission Meeting. They reported they reviewed the lease and found vegetation management was consistent with agricultural management.

Next steps:

- Set up meeting with Town Manager.
- D. Desiderato will circulate the link to the lease.
- Invite the Town Manager to next month's meeting.
- Review DEEP report as soon as it is received.
- Review Inlands & Watercourses Commission minutes.

## **6. COMPOSTING**

K. Marshall noted she reviewed what Mindy Gould had done regarding composting and asked if anyone was interested in taking this over. W. Madsen noted his interest. He will do some research, see what resources are available and make some suggestion. D. Desiderato will investigate pick up sites, any grants that may be available with Sustainable CT and keep K. Marshall updated. W. Madsen also expressed interest and he will do some research to see what resources are available. D. Desiderato will investigate possible pick-up sites, any grants that may be available and will keep K. Marshall updated.

## **7. INVASIVES**

Z. Donais presented at the previous Planning and Zoning Meeting regarding invasives and they will add parts of his suggestions to the regulation guidelines. He will push the following: no planting of invasives as well as ensuring the planting of native species and flowers.

D. Desiderato reported the last two invasive actions were cancelled due to the weather. The next will take place on March 8<sup>th</sup> at noon. He noted they are held the second Saturday of the month, and the start time has been changed from 10:00 to noon. They are mainly working at Holcomb Farm but are open to other suggestions.



## **8. PACE**

K. McCord reported he and D. Desiderato met with the Town Manager about three months ago to review their priorities and the Town Manager discussed some initiatives he is interested in, i.e. solar on town buildings, Bridge energy, LED lighting, etc. K. McCord would like to meet with him again and discuss how the town can assist the commission. K. McCord would like to start with an energy master plan and J. Skipsky noted he would like to participate.

## **9. SUSTAINABLE CT/DATABASE**

K. Marshall explained the committee received Bronze Certification in 2023 which is good for three years. Recertification is due in 2026.

## **10. MEETING TOPICS FOR MARCH 11, 2025**

- Barndoor Hills Farmland
- Composting
- Energy Conservation Initiatives
- Invasives
- Sustainable CT – Where are we going?

## **11. FINAL COMMENTS FROM COMMISSIONER**

The committee decided to continue to hold the meeting primarily via Zoom and meet occasionally in person if space is available.

## **12. ADJOURN**

**ON A MOTION BY** D. Desiderato, seconded by K. McCord, the commission voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Kane  
Recording Secretary