

**Preston Conservation and Agricultural Commission
Regular Meeting
Monday, March 22, 2021
Teleconference
7:30 pm.**

1. Call to Order

Chairman Piszczek called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm.

2. Roll Call

Regular Members

Gary Piszczek, Chairman
Matthew Snurkowski, Vice Chairman
Lynwood Crary
Margaret Gibson - absent
Sandy Pimentel
Ted Zajac - absent

Alternates

Roberta Charpentier - seated

Chairman Piszczek seated R. Charpentier

3. Approval of the February 22, 2021 Regular Meeting minutes.

A motion was made by L. Crary and seconded by M. Snurkowski to accept the Regular Meeting Minutes of February 22, 2021 as presented.

All in favor. Motion carries.

4. Comments from the Public

Pat Monahan, President Amos Lake Association (ALA) stated that the ALA would like to build a relationship with the CAC.

P. Monahan noted that the ALA went to the BoS with a budget request and the BoS indicated that they would like the request to come through the CAC and not a non-municipal agency.

5. Communications

a) Letter from Joyce Liez, Director of Development at CT Audubon Society dated March 8, 2021 to Conservation & Agricultural Commission regarding thank you for recent support. Please CAC March go to www.ctaudubon.org/memberportal, password Member2020 for access to content.

b) Subdivision Application #2021-01, Maro Flagg, Jr. and James E. Simpson, Owners for property located at 583 Route 164; Create a 6-lot subdivision.

Chairman Piszczek noted that he wants to make sure they paid the Open Space fee.

L. Crary thought they were giving back a section of one of the lots.

Chairman Piszczek stated that he will talk to Kathy Warzecha about this to discuss at the next CAC meeting.

6. Public Hearings

None

7. Old Business

a) Clustered Zoning Regulations Farm Dating Program/Diane Hansen, Community Based Project

Chairman Piszczek noted that when meetings return to in person the CAC can meet with Planning & Zoning.

b) State Hospital Development.

R. Charpentier stated that there is a PRA meeting tomorrow so she will discuss at the next CAC meeting.

M. Snurkowski asked S. Pimentel if there was a bald eagle survey at the Cove?

S. Pimentel was not aware of the survey.

c) Beaver behavior report.

Waiting for Beavers

d) Roadside Trash

In celebration of Earth Day Preston Parks & Recreation and Preston Conservation & Agricultural Commission are holding Preston Clean Up Weekend on April 17th and 18th

Pickers, vests and garbage bags can be picked up outside at Town Hall on Thursday April 15th.

8. Boots on the Ground – paddles in the water report

Pat Monahan, President Amos Lake Association (ALA)

P. Monahan noted that DEEP and the Last Green Valley coordinate the Bald Eagle Watch every January and she will send contact information to S. Pimentel.

P. Monahan stated that the ALA plans to eradicate the milfoil in the lake by harvesting and using bottom blankets.

The total cost will be \$30,998 which includes a comprehensive plant survey.

Applied for a grant for \$21,509, with a match of \$9,494.

The ALA is requesting \$6,494 from the Town.

100 volunteers hours will also be contributed.

M. Snurkowski asked if the chemical treatment that was done years ago was effective.

P. Monahan answered that the ALA did not have enough funding to do everything.

M. Snurkowski asked if this year's funding request is for suppression not elimination of the milfoil.

P. Monahan ProcettaCOR has had good results.

P. Monahan explained that volunteers can monitor and use the blankets to eradicate new growth.

G. Piszczek asked how big the bottom blankets are.

P. Monahan answered that they purchased 10 x 20 blankets.

A motion was made by Chairman Piszczek and seconded by M. Snurkowski that the CAC send a letter of support to the BoS for the Amos Lake Association's request for \$6494 for the control of aquatic species and a lake management plan, for Amos Lake.

All in favor. Motion carries.

M. Snurkowski noted that he is in support of this and thinks the CAC should be following up on the plans that have already been put in place in the past and continue efforts the best we can to eliminate milfoil and protect all water resources in the Town.

P. Monahan noted that the ALA has a web site with information and past accomplishments at www.amoslake.com

9. New Business

a) Subdivision Application #2021-01, Maro Flagg, Jr. and James E. Simpson, Owners for property located at 583 Route 164; Create a 6-lot subdivision.

Previously discussed under Communications

b) Letter dated March 18, 2021 from Gary Piszczek to the Planning and Zoning Commission regarding the Kendall Property with plan.

Chairman Piszczek noted he will be attending the Planning & Zoning meeting in support of Avalonia's acquisition of the Kendall Property.

L. Crary asked how much is in the Open Space Fund.

Chairman Piszczek answers \$131,000

To: Preston Planning & Zoning Commission

From: Preston Conservation & Agricultural Commission Re: Avalonia Proposal

Avalonia has proposed the acquisition of two parcels of property within the Town of Preston. The property under consideration consists of two parcels, both of which border on Rude Road. The first is referred to as the Kendall property by Avalonia and comprises 130.7 acres and the second is referred to as Thoma East, a 122.9-acre parcel. There is also a third parcel that lies between the other two which contains 208.02 acres at 16 Rude Road, but it is not currently under consideration. This property is noted as it may play a role in the future.

Avalonia has received two grants for the purchase of the two parcels currently under consideration: \$195,750 from the State of CT Open Space Grant Program and \$176,000 from US Fish and Wildlife Agency. While substantial, these grants fall short of the final purchase price that is currently under agreement between the sellers and Avalonia. Preston has the opportunity to collaborate with Avalonia in preserving these two important parcels through its open space account. The Conservation and Agricultural Commission has voted to pursue this partnership with Avalonia based on the following:

- 1. The Commission has listed Broad Brook as one of the Town's priority conservation corridors and these properties lie fully within this corridor.*
- 2. Partnering with Avalonia will help leverage our limited open space funds.*
- 3. Avalonia would assume management and stewardship of the property and the town residents would be granted access where permitted.*
- 4. Avalonia's TriTown Forest Preserve is a clear example of the success and benefits of such a partnership. Their commitment to preservation and stewardship is very apparent to all who hike this property.*

We as a Commission would welcome the Board's input and guidance on moving forward with this request.

Sincerely,

Gary Piszczek

Chairman, Preston Conservation and Agricultural Commission

10. Meanderings

Chairman Piszczek stated that he was told that there is a rock with carving on it on M. Snurkowski's father's farm.

M. Snurkowski stated he would have found it because he has walked every inch of that property, but you're welcome to walk the property.

11. Adjournment

A motion was made by L. Crary and seconded by M. Snurkowski to adjourn the meeting at 8:25 pm.

All in favor. Motion carries.

Respectfully submitted,



Roberta Charpentier