

**Preston Conservation and Agricultural Commission
Preston Town Hall
Monday, May 20, 2019
7:30 pm.
Regular Meeting**

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
Susan Mattern, Secretary - excused
Lynwood Crary
Margaret Gibson
Ted Zajac

Alternates

Roberta Charpentier
Sandy Pimental - seated

Chairman Piszczek seated S. Pimental

3. Approval of the April 22, 2019 Regular Meeting minutes.

A motion was made by L. Crary and seconded by M. Snurkowski to approve the minutes of April 22, 2019 as presented.

All in favor. Motion carries

4. Comments from the Public

None

5. Communications

- a) Letter received from Dennis S. Main, President, Avalonia Land Conservancy, Inc. to First Selectman Congdon regarding Open Space funds.
- b) The Connecticut Audubon Society, Migration Madness 2019 Birdathon.
- c) Southeastern Connecticut Cultural Coalition regarding "Make Music Day" and other cultural coalition activities 2019.
- d) The Last Green Valley RSVP form regarding celebrating 25 years of the National Heritage Corridor.
- e) Connecticut Wildlife magazine, March/April 2019 (to be passed around at meeting).

6. Public Hearings

None

7. Old Business

a) Clustered Zoning Regulations

Tabled

b) Farm Dating Program

Chairman Piszczek cut the boards for the next project and showed them to Diane Hanson. The project will take place in October. They would also like pumpkins again to paint.

c) Hniatuk & Grossman properties – future use

Chairman Piszczek noted that Sue Mattern has a good idea for the fall, but he will let her discuss her idea at the next meeting.

M. Snurkowski stated that he and his mom hike the property last week. He noted that there is evidence of a truck four wheeling on the property. M. Snurkoswki suggested indicated on the map that the red trail markers intercept the Blue Trail.

d) State Hospital Development

No comments

e) Management update letter for Mrs. Przyborowski

Once Ted Zajac can get it mowed Chairman Piszczek will send a letter to Mrs. Przyborowski.

f) Roadside Blight

- Over 50 people signed up for a street using Parks & Recreation's Web page.
- Three 3 dump truck loads of garbage were picked up.

g) Schedule Planner, 2014-2024, Conservation Agricultural Commission

L. Crary forwarded the planner to Kathy Warzecha.

Chairman Piszczek read recommendations from Preston's Historical Society;

- Create an Agricultural Commission. (done)
- Prioritize parcels presently under Chapter 490 for potential acquisition or permanent protection. (in process).
- Strengthen public private partnerships to preserve farmland through the purchase of development rights or conservation restrictions (working on this with Avalonia Land Conservancy).
- Make information about the CT Department of Agricultural Programs including Farm Transition Program available to farmers. (The CAC is trying to do this with the Farm Dating Program).
- Adopt Open Space zoning such as clustered zoning. (The CAC has worked on designing clustered zoning).
- Document historic farms considered critical to the character of Preston's community.

Chairman Piszczek stated that this is something the CAC should do.

- Remind developers and new residents that CT has a right to farm law and explore community supported agriculture.

Chairman Piszczek noted that he will attend the next Historical Society meeting to talk to them about this.

h) Request of returning budget surplus to the Open Space Fund.

Chairman Piszczek will talk to the BoF chair and ask when a good time would be for he and R. Charpentier to attend a meeting to discuss.

i) White Gate LLC

Possibly a future project.

8. Boots on the Ground – Paddles in the Water Report

a) Beaver Baffle Battle Report

Chairman Piszczek explained that the beavers try to flood the culvert at night. He puts a piece of metal over the culvert at night, the beavers pack some mud on it, and then he removes the metal in the morning so it drains.

Chairman Piszczek noted that he has to get there by 4:00 pm. If he gets there by 7:00 pm, they have beaten him to it.

9. New Business

a) Sue Nylén and having annual conservation/outdoors event in memory of her son Justin
Sue Nylén could not make the meeting tonight.

Members threw out a few ideas, which would be in Justin's name

- Naming the annual Preston Clean Up Day after Justin.
- Fighting invasives or building paths for Avalonia Land conservancy.
- Raising awareness about Open Space with a Community event.
- Putting up Blue bird boxes with a pot luck supper after.

Chairman Piszczek wanted Sue Nylén to know that the CAC is very receptive with this idea, and noted that he would like to have some kind of community event in honor of her son.

b) Avalonia Open Space Partnership request

M. Gibson explained that Avalonia has acquired property that goes over three towns. 35.15 acres belongs to Preston. They are asking the Town of Preston to consider collaboration and provide a portion of the funding of \$25,000 on the combined acquisition of 212 acres. After discussion, CAC members thought before voting on this there should be a request to Avalonia to provide a letter of assurance that the \$25,000 will be put toward the funding of the Tri-Town Forest Preserve and Rude Road/Lewis Road that are in Preston.

Chairman Piszczek stated that Allyn Brown is going to convert his building used for bottling into a wedding facility and the CAC was asked to comment.

The CAC did not see any issues because the building is already there he is just changing the use of the building.

L. Cray stated that the Scare Crow Festival committee is considering having a Preston grown tent. A free booth will be provided in exchange for a 20 minute talk on the vendor's product.

10. Meanderings

No comments

11. Adjournment

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 8:27 pm.

All in favor. Motion carries

Respectfully submitted,

Roberta Charpentier
recorder