



## MINUTES

### Ridgefield Conservation Commission

Town Hall Annex, 66 Prospect Street

Ridgefield, CT 06877

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Meeting May 28, 2025 at 7PM

Present: Roberta Barbieri    Jana Hogan    Erik Keller    Jim Liptack  
          Anthony Markert    Pete Nichols    Matt Sharp    Allan Welby

Also Present: Caleb Johnson, Josh Wilson

Absent: James Coyle, Jean Linville, Jack Kace

### 1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**UPON** motion duly made (Sharp), seconded (Nichols) and carried, it was RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of May 12, 2025 be approved and filed in Town Hall. Liptack abstained.

### 2. TAYLOR DAM REMOVAL

Mr. Wilson from Biohabitats presented to the RCC, he was hired by the owner of the DAM to apply for a grant application to remove the dam. Ms. Barbieri reported that the Norwalk River Watershed Association had requested the RCC's support for a grant application to remove Taylor Dam. The Commission expressed several concerns, including potential impacts on downstream homes, existing wildlife, the need for Inland Wetlands review, the associated land owners, and effects on the Taylors Pond designated open space. The RCC feels as though they would be granting permission to remove something they have not been given enough information to provide a letter in favor of moving forward.

### 3. EXECUTIVE SESSION

**UPON** motion duly made (Sharp), seconded (Nichols), and carried, it was RESOLVED that the commission go into executive session.

Returned to public session at 7:53pm.

### 4. HENNY PENNY AND CORNERSTONE GARDENS

Henny Penny submitted a letter to the RCC, that they will be relocating and phasing out operations over the course of 2025, 2026 to NY. Mr. Welby mentioned this may be a great opportunity to turn the area to native grass lands. Mr. Welby will meet with a grassland specialist to understand next steps in that process. Mr. Sharp will reach out to Carlos for quotes on mowing the areas at McKeon.

Cornerstone Gardens will be leaving McKeon, shutting down this year. The RCC will be looking to create a native plant specimen garden in its place and think about how to best execute this with minimal maintenance.

### 5. FOREST MANAGEMENT STUDIES

Dr. Markert is in touch with DEEP regarding the grant application, as there were some questions to the RCC for clarity, however no update on the contract as of yet. He has also been in contact with the forester in preparation for his contract.

### 6. NEWSLETTER

The Newsletter draft is in process, Mr. Keller asked for any submissions to be sent by next Monday so the newsletter can be emailed out the first day of summer.

## 7. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Welby mentioned the beaver deceiver will be installed tomorrow at 10:30am in turtle pond and provided an update on bird counts where the RCC has set up blue bird houses and purple martin gourds.

Mr. Nichols would like to create a rain collection system for the chestnut trees at McKeon.

**UPON** motion duly made (Sharp), seconded (Barbieri), and carried, it was RESOLVED that the commission approve up to \$300 for the purchase of the rain collection materials.

Mysterious activities have been reported on the trails, ATV's claiming they are allowed on trails when the RCC has signs posted "no motorized vehicles", someone collecting firewood, and a large stack of cut logs on Pine Mountain that Mr. Nichols and Mr. Sharp will assess.

## 8. MEETINGS FOR ATTENDANCE

### **P&Z**

June 3 – Welby

June 17 – Barbieri

### **IWB**

June 12 – Hogan

June 26 – Kace

## 9. CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

Mr. Keller added Vice Chairman remarks; the vernal pool project is on hold until September for now. The CEO has identified a number of violations on open spaces that will be addressed throughout the summer. Dr. Markert offered to coordinate the Forest Management walks with the CEO's visits to potential violations.

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**ADJOURNMENT UPON** motion duly made, and carried, it was RESOLVED that the meeting adjourn at 8:32 PM.