

East Windsor Conservation Commission
MEETING MINUTES
August 24, 2011

Members present: Albert Grant, chairman
 Barbara Halloran
 Robert Slate
 Jim Stremper
 Jan Warren

Staff present: Robin Newton

J. W. assumed note taking after discussion began:

OLD BUSINESS

Discussed: **Community Gardens**

Moving forward in Broad Brook section~ Robin meets with 1st selectman D. Menard 8/25. Commission unanimously moves that town employees should approach the current lessee of the property. Boundless Playground plans to expand and there is currently no space designated in the Warehouse Point section of town. R. S. suggested new Warehouse Point area may be near the ball fields close to the water treatment plant. Gardens within walking distance of neighborhoods are ideal.

B.H presented information from research of surrounding towns' community gardens.

Farmland Application

Goal is to help farmers with 30 acres or more apply for development rights money. Question from commission to staff: must the 30 acres be contiguous or can it be in parcels. Robin will research.

Melrose Bridge

Reviewed letter of support for the project. Unanimously accepted with changes. American Heritage Rivers is taking the lead for advocacy.

NEW BUSINESS

Development Rights

Discussion regarding river recreation and trail preservation: both should be a priority and increased awareness regarding recreation available should help draw attention to the need for land acquisition adjacent to rivers. Current landowners do not want people to cross their parcel and the land is designated for the benefit of heirs.

Commission unanimously agrees that the inventory completed for the Farm Bureau grant should be updated so purchases can be considered. What is already acquired, who is willing to sell. American Heritage Rivers folks continue to lobby selectmen.

If easements are obtained, what kind is needed to hold property owner harmless. B.H. will research for next meeting. Discussion of state law holding landowners not liable for recreation activity.

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Somers trail committee does agreements for private property trail crossings each year so the landowner does not feel locked in.

Tabled discussion: Who can report on AHR activity~ can we have a joint committee member designated to attend and report?