

Woodbridge Conservation Commission

Meeting Minutes

Special Meeting

Thursday February 18, 2021; 7:00 pm

In attendance: Jason Morrill (Chair); Tim Austin, Traci Cipriano, Sharon deKadt; Kate Rozen.

Members not present: Frank DeLeo; Leland Torrance

Call to order 7:09 pm

- 1) There were no public comments.
- 2) January 2021 minutes will be reviewed and approved at March 2021 Special Meeting
- 3) Chairman Morrill updated the Commission on the status of the crumb rubber artificial turf installation at Amity Regional High School. Work is scheduled to begin once the ground thaws. At this stage, the turf has been approved and town officials report they are not able to intervene. Jason asked commission members whether the WCC wants to weigh in on concerns about wetland contamination, as well as recommend a long term study of wetland status and potential contamination on a regular (i.e., 5-year) basis. Amity Regional High School property is surrounded by wetlands, including the football field, which directly abuts wetlands. In addition, during seasonal high temperatures, contaminants are released into the atmosphere. The high school property has also been identified as a habitat for an endangered species by the State of Connecticut, which habitat can be negatively impacted by crumb rubber runoff and other associated contaminants.

Motion (Rozen, second by Morroll): The Woodbridge Conservation Commission will draft and send a letter to the Woodbridge Board of Selectmen and BoE stating our concerns about environmental impact of crumb rubber turf field that is planned to be installed at Amity Regional High School in 2021. Recommend that the Board of Selectmen and Amity Board of Education put a halt on construction of the turf until the Federal EPA completes current research on the impact of environmental and health impacts of crumb rubber artificial turf.

Motion withdrawn (Rozen)

Motion: The Woodbridge Conservation Commission will draft and send a letter to the Woodbridge Board of Selectmen and Amity Board of Education stating its concerns about the environmental impact of the crumb rubber turf field that is planned to be installed at Amity Regional High School in 2021. WCC will recommend that the Woodbridge Board of Selectmen

and Amity Board of Education put a halt on construction of the turf until the Federal EPA completes its current research on the environmental and health impacts of crumb rubber artificial turf. Jason will draft the letter and WCC members will review it at a special meeting before the letter is sent to the Woodbridge Board of Selectmen and Amity Board of Education. Motion passed unanimously.

The Chair will draft a letter and send it to WCC members *via* email. The special meeting will be held on Thursday February 25th at 7:00 pm.

New information relevant to halting installation includes (1) DEEP groundwater classification for the land housing the football field and whether runoff from the crumb rubber turf would fall within protected categories. (2) Installation of PFAS materials would also be in violation of Governor Lamont's Executive Order to put a halt on use of PFAS, (3) the high school property includes an endangered species habitat (DEEP Species of Environmental Concern), and (4) the high school property is surrounded by wetlands.

WCC needs to clarify whether the town Inland Wetlands Commission and Planning and Zoning Commission addressed this artificial turf issue and took into account the impact of crumb rubber on ground water supply and endangered species.

- 4) Members discussed next steps for the draft Use Designations of Open Space. Jason reported he learned CUPOP has its own classification system (not limited to open space) and it might be worthwhile to see what CUPOP has done before continuing our review so efforts are not duplicated. Jason will attend the CUPOP meeting on Monday to share our Use Designations and learn more about CUPOP's. Tim Austin made recommendations for revision, including adding protection designations to the WCC document. Jason will circulate Tim's recommended revisions to WCC members for review before March meeting. Jason will also report on CUPOP designations at March meeting.
- 5) Chairman's Report: a) Town of Orange has purchased former Racebrook Country Club property to prevent it from being sold to private developers. b) Woodbridge Trails website – Woodbridge Land Trust is very interested and would like Kate to attend their next Board Meeting to discuss. c) 57 Park Lane solar farm. Jason toured the property a few weekends ago with Andy Danzig (Woodbridge Trail Master), Jim Urbano (concerned Woodbridge citizen) and the lead engineer for the solar farm development company. The solar farm representative told the group the company was open to allowing a trail to pass through the property as long as it does not cross the developer's proposed fence line. They will also try to build the solar farm fencing around an existing old building foundation if feasible. The plan is to begin installation in the summer, panels and fencing will be installed simultaneously, and existing trail will be re-routed. The developer has plans to ensure a full growing season for grasses and plantings.

Motion to Adjourn: Sharon deKadt, Second: Jason Morrill. Meeting Adjourned at 8:12 pm