

**Preston Conservation and Agricultural Commission
Special Meeting
Monday, May 23, 2022
Preston Town Hall
7:30 pm.**

1. Call to Order

Chairman Piszczek called the meeting to order at 7:37 pm.

2. Roll Call

Regular Members

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

Alternates

Roberta Charpentier - seated
Rebecca Hayes - seated

Chairman Piszczek seated Roberta Charpentier and Rebecca Hayes

3. Approval of the April 25, 2022 Regular Meeting minutes

A motion was made by T. Zajac and seconded by G. Piszczek to accept the Regular Meeting Minute of April 25, 2022 as presented.

All in favor. Motion carries.

4. Comments from the Public

Pat Monahan, President Amos Lake Association presented information that should be included in the Town's Plan Of Conservation and Development (POCD);

PA 21-29 section (10) "In any municipality that is contiguous to or on a navigable waterway draining to Long Island Sound, (A) be made with reasonable consideration for the restoration and protection of the ecosystem and habitat of Long Island Sound; (B) be designed to reduce hypoxia, pathogens, toxic contaminants and floatable debris on Long Island Sound; and (C) provide that such municipality's zoning commission consider the environmental impact on Long Island Sound coastal resources, as defined in section 22a-93, of any proposal for development."

There is a fish migration path that allows alewives to journey from Long Island Sound to the Thames River to Avery Pond and Amos Lake to spawn, then return. This should be viewed and treated as a sensitive area requiring a buffer so as not to be disturbed. If fish can migrate from Long Island Sound to Amos Lake and back so can pathogens, toxic contaminants, and floatable debris. PA21-29 makes it our responsibility to prevent such.

The important message is that alewives tie our ocean, rivers, and lakes together, providing vital nutrients and forage needed to make healthy watersheds. Between and within those various habitats, everything eats alewives: fresh and saltwater fish, seabirds, bald eagle, osprey, great blue heron, gulls, terns, cormorants, seals, whales, otter, mink, fox, raccoon, skunk, weasel, fisher, and turtles. Alewives have been central to the web of life in Connecticut for millennia. If we give alewives a chance by helping restore them to their ancestral spawning grounds, alewives will once again play an important role in bringing our rivers, lakes, estuaries, and oceans back to life. Fish are an important part of our natural heritage. They also are an important link in the food web, consuming vegetation or smaller animals and providing food for wildlife. When they die, their carcasses can provide nutrients for plants.

CAC

Sections of Preston's current POCD are built around protecting these waterbodies. Our new POCD should continue this path. This migration pathway should be included in the SPECIAL RESOURCE PROTECTION OVERLAY DISTRICT.

Applications for development should require unbiased environmental impact studies containing

1. A complete species list of vegetation so that an analysis of the habitat quality change or loss can be made.
2. A complete on-site survey to identify and mitigate potential impacts on wildlife communities including turtles, snails, mammals, birds, reptiles, and amphibians. Identifying Endangered, threatened, and special concern species.
3. Impact of light pollution (changes the natural illumination at night) on the ecosystem. Measuring visibility disruptions and nuisance especially from glares and the spillover effects which may lead to human health problem.
4. Noise pollution insects are a foundational part of any ecosystem, and if their habits and behaviors are changed because of noise pollution, it can set off a chain reaction for the rest of the ecosystem. This can lead to a reduction of certain species or an increase in others. In either case, if an imbalance occurs, it disrupts the natural order of an area.
5. The impact of a land use and activities above the aquifers posing water quality threats. Accidental spills and leaks are a leading cause of contamination, whether it is from a leaking underground or above-ground contaminants, or from spills on roadways and driveways, excessive or unnecessary use of fertilizers or pesticides, the application of road salts and deicing agents, all find their way into the groundwater potentially harming an aquifer.

5. Communications

a) Annual Connecticut Land Conservation Conference 2022 , Gather on the Land, May 12-19, 2022, Conservations Among Generations, CT Land Conservational Council regarding registration.

b) Email dated Sunday, May 1, 2022 from Pat Monahan to Kathy Warzecha, Town Planner regarding Annual Environmental Champion Awards Nomination letter to Aquarian Water Company, and the Town Planner's letter recommending Pat Monahan for a \$5000.00 grant.

c) Let Them Bee, Roadmap to 30 buzzworthy pollinators to plant near power lines from Eversource (pamphlets were passed out at meeting).

6. Public Hearing

None

7. Old Business

a) Clustered Zoning Regulations

Tabled

b) State Hospital Development

Clean-up is in process. New fence and electric lock is needed.

c) Beaver bumper report

G. Piszczek stated he will be installing a beaver deceiver preemptively before the beavers return.

d) Petroglyph in Preston, CT

Will look for this in the Fall

e) Tri-Town Trail and Crosswalk

Grant received for crosswalk.

CAC

f) Eversource – Mary Dora Woodland parking area.

Eversource has not started working on the parking area yet.

g) The right to Farm Ordinance

M. Snurkowski not present

h) POCD

CAC Members went over map and discussed which member would be best to recommend ideas for various area in Town.

i) BMP – Farms & Watercourses

M. Snurkowski not present

8. Boots on the Ground – paddles in the water report, Amos Lake Association.

Pat Monahan stated that the first kayak trip on Amos Lake is on June 12th at 9:00 am. 3 have registered so far. (Flyer attached)

P. Monahan noted that participants will be given info on invasives and how to prevent transporting them on kayaks.

9. New Business

a) Blue Camp Hearing Recap

Chairman Piszczek noted that the public did a good job and the support from the public was amazing The developer allowed concessions that they probably never would have if it wasn't for the public.

10. Meanderings

None

11. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:54 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

RT Charpentier