

**Town of Barkhamsted
Low Impact Development
Land Use Committee
June 29, 2010
7:00 PM Town Hall**

Minutes

Attendees:

Michael Beauchene, Roger Behrens, John Greaser, Chris Lavieri, Tom Nelson, Johnny Polderman, Mario Santoro, Deborah Simon, and Don Stein.

Scott Johnstone was absent.

Also present were Michael Klemens (Cary Institute), Marty Connor (Town Planner), Tom Grimaldi (Town Engineer), Marc Cohen (sourcewater protection consultant); and residents Jim Becktel, Khea Cook, and Tim Grohowski.

Discussion:

The committee reviewed and accepted the minutes of the May 19th meeting. The only changes that were recommended was to change the term “bio-survey” to “biodiversity survey” It was also noted that the June meeting had been changed from June 21 to June 29.

Dr. Klemens submitted a report on the status of the biodiversity survey. His findings are summarized in the draft newsletter (attached). The overall conclusion is that the town has healthy vernal pools and strong headwater areas, which are indicators of good groundwater. Much of the discussion centered on species that were identified and other findings that will be presented in the final report. There was also discussion of the definition of state-listed species, which is as follows:

In Connecticut, 584 plants and animals are listed on the endangered, threatened and special concern species list:

Special concern species include those with a naturally restricted range or habitat and a low or declining population level. Some special concern species, including many plants, are listed because over-collecting could be detrimental to their conservation.

Threatened species are those that could become endangered, and have no more than nine occurrences in the state.

Endangered plants and animals are in danger of becoming extinct in Connecticut and have no more than five occurrences of their population in the state.

The survey will continue through the summer to gather data on stream beds and species evident in those locations

Dr. Klemens also stated that his final report would be in the form of a technical paper, including maps, locations of vernal pools, GIS data and the findings of the biodiversity survey. It will be submitted to the DEP for their approval prior to publication.

The committee discussed the proposed changes to the road ordinance as proposed by Tom Grimaldi. Tom had reviewed Marty Connor's proposed regulation changes and recommended that we consider tailoring road specifications to the area to be developed and that subdivisions include a landscape architect review. He felt that early coordination between the town and a developer was a must, and that proper design for biological, bioretention, minimum impervious surface and hydrological issues should be incorporated into the specs. Design requirements should also include minimal stormwater diversion, retaining existing flow patterns, wetlands considerations and roads not as wide as currently required. He recommended that the ordinance allow for some flexibility by either the PZC or the Board of Selectmen.

The draft newsletter was presented and agreed-upon with a few minor changes. The committee was requested to provide any additional comments to Don Stein this week, so that he can submit it to the DEP for approval before it is mailed to the town's residents.

At the next meeting, the primary focus will be the development of a process for merging the recommendations from the biodiversity study, the proposed subdivision regulation changes and the driveway/road ordinance changes. This process, plus the agreed-upon regulatory changes, will then be referred to the PZC for their action and consideration. Michael Klemens, Marty Connor and Tom Grimaldi will meet prior to the next meeting to develop their recommendations for the merged process. The next meeting will be held on Monday, August 2nd at 7:00 PM in Town Hall.

The committee agreed that an extension to March 2011 was appropriate to complete the biodiversity study and to finalize the regulations and the final report.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:00 PM

June 2010 - Update



DEP Farmington River Enhancement Grant - Update Barkhamsted Zoning Regulation to Incorporate Low Impact Development Practices



Last fall, the Town was awarded a grant funded under the Farmington River Enhancement Grant, administered by the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to study “Low Impact Development” (LID) practices. LID is a term used to describe a land planning and engineering design approach to managing storm water runoff.

To assist in this effort, an advisory committee was formed, consisting of members of the town’s land use commission members and other volunteers interested in helping to develop common sense regulations that help preserve the town’s rural character, without compromising sound regulatory practices. The scope includes:

- A biodiversity study focusing on larger undeveloped parcels within the Town to determine areas of ecological sensitivity.
- Development of LID practices for potential incorporation into the Town’s regulations. These changes will be recommended to the Planning & Zoning Commission for adoption, at which point the Commission must follow their normal procedures.

To familiarize the residents of this activity, two informational meetings were held earlier this year featuring the chairman of the advisory committee, Mike Beauchene, and Dr. Michael Klemens of the Cary Institute.

As part of the biological survey of vernal pools and other areas which impact our groundwater, about 168 parcels were selected for participation in the survey. The selected property owners agreed to allow the survey to take place on roughly one-third of the total number of parcels, encompassing a little under 25% of the total land in town not owned by the Connecticut DEP or the MDC. This survey is underway and summarized in the next column. We would also like to thank the residents who made their property available to be surveyed for their cooperation.

MCA SURVEY UPDATE

APRIL 1 --JUNE 15TH 2010
Michael W. Klemens, PhD
Research and Policy Conservationist
Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies

To date, we have surveyed approximately 75% of the total 3200 acres of accessible land, as well as several hundred acres of public land. We plan to

revisit certain sites during the surveys planned for July and August for spring salamanders. .

Seventeen vernal pools have been identified to date, including two that contain Jefferson salamanders, the first records from Barkhamsted of this State-listed species.

A nesting area for wood turtles, a State listed species, has been documented, also the first records for this species.

A box turtle, a State-listed species, was also found in that nesting area. More work is needed to confirm whether that specimen represents an indigenous turtle or a release as it is far beyond the species' Connecticut range described by Klemens 1993: [Amphibians and Reptiles of Connecticut and Adjacent Regions](#).

Robust populations of stream salamanders have been documented in many headwaters areas indicating healthy headwaters. To date, we have not found any spring salamanders; however, we will be making a major effort to document this species during July and August when stream levels subside.

The town planner and engineer are currently working with the committee and have presented a first draft of revisions to our zoning, wetlands, and road/driveway regulations. The proposed regulations will not be voted on by the committee until the results of the biological survey are known and a detailed review has been completed. The current estimate for completion of this study is early 2011, and the committee has already presented recommended LID changes to the Inland Wetlands regulations to the Commission for their consideration.

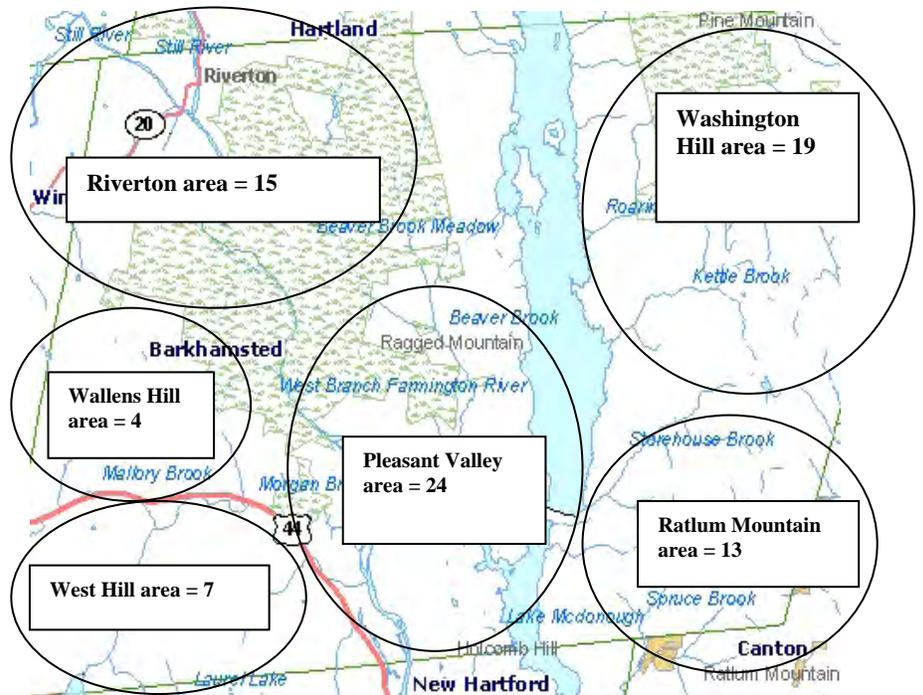
In addition, an on-line survey was made available to residents asking about their observations of wildlife around their property. This survey was intended for general information and is not part of developing new regulations. Check out the information on the reverse side of this newsletter or look at the town website for the report.

Please check the town website for agendas and minutes if you are interested in learning more about the work being accomplished under the grant. For more information, contact Don Stein, First Selectman, at 860-379-5969 or by email at dstein@barkhamsted.us.

Town of Barkhamsted
67 Ripley Hill Road
PO Box 558
Barkhamsted, CT 06063

If you took the on-line survey earlier this year, please check out the town website at the link below for the results.

109 people completed the survey, with fairly equal representation from all areas of town. However, Pleasant Valley led the way with 24 participants.



<http://barkhamsted.us/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=i7QTZLQmW1k%3d&tabid=156&mid=622>