

**EAST LYME PLANNING COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING II
Tuesday, AUGUST 4th, 2009
MINUTES**

The East Lyme Planning Commission held a Public Hearing on the Town of East Lyme Open Space Plan on August 4, 2009 at Town Hall, 108 Pennsylvania Ave., Niantic, CT. Chairman Picarazzi opened the Public Hearing after the previously scheduled Public Hearing and called it to order at 7:20 PM.

PRESENT: Lisa Picarazzi, Chairman, Francine Schwartz, Secretary, Chris Sandford, Mike Bowers, Paul Dagle, Alvin Sher, Alternate

ALSO PRESENT: Art Carlson, Open Space Committee Chairman
Gary Goeschel, Planning Director
George McPherson, Alternate

ABSENT: Tom Perron, Drew Kenny, Alternate

Public Hearing II

1. Town of East Lyme Open Space Plan

Ms. Picarazzi noted that the Commission has heard this presentation before. She noted that the Legal Ad had run in the Day on July 24, 2009 and July 31, 2009. She then called upon Art Carlson, Open Space Committee Chairman to make the Power Point presentation.

Mr. Carlson passed out a copy of the Power Point presentation that he would be showing and explaining to them (Copy attached at end of Minutes with notes). He said that this project began in 2006 and commended Meg Parulis for initiating it and forming a committee to study it. He said that he has been the Chairman of this committee and that there were nine members participating. He also thanked Mr. Goeschel for picking up the ball and aiding in the completion of this project.

Please see attachment on Power Point presentation – Items covered include:

- ◇ Approximately 60% of the land in the Town has nothing on it
- ◇ Some large areas of land include the Yale Property, Stones Ranch and Bride Lake
- ◇ 17% of the property is Open Space
- ◇ They have determined eight (8) Natural Resource Elements
- ◇ There are five (5) different watersheds (aquifers)
- ◇ Natural Resource Elements were given numerical values after much discussion by the committee members and then areas of land/property within the Town were identified that have these elements and these properties were deemed desirable for the Town to acquire. The landowners would be asked three questions regarding their property as the Town would like the right of first refusal should it be up for sale. 1) – Would you like to sell your property to the Town; 2) Would you sell development rights or an easement; and 3) Would you be interested in gifting the property to the Town.
- ◇ Open property areas on aquifers were located
- ◇ It was determined that 50 miles of footpaths could be put in throughout the Town
- ◇ The vision is to ideally acquire 3,000 acres of open space in 20 years time
- ◇ PA 490 – which reduces taxes for farm, agriculture or forestry use does not ensure that the property remains this way as it can be sold at any time

Mr. Dagle extended his thanks to Mr. Carlson and the committee for all of the hard work they have done on behalf of the Town.

Ms. Picarazzi asked if anyone from the public wished to speak regarding this plan –

Ed Jutila, 23 Brainerd Road thanked Mr. Carlson and said that it was a great presentation and that he was glad to hear it. He asked, with regard to the 3,000 acres that they wished to acquire if the committee has made any determination on how the parcels would be delineated – such as passive, agricultural, etc.

Mr. Carlson said yes, the committee has looked at and made determinations regarding the properties. He added that the Planning Office also knows how the properties could best be developed.

Mr. Goeschel said that he worked with Mr. Miniutti from UCONN and that the approach that was taken by them was to determine what things they would want met if the parcels were to be developed. He said that he also had Mr. Miniutti overlay his plan with this plan and that they came out to be fairly similar.

Ed Morris, 16 Terrace Avenue thanked the committee and Art Carlson for working on the plan. He said that for 50 years what has bothered him is the Yale Property as the Town gets nothing from them except for a stipend from the State and Yale could sell that property at any time if they find themselves low on funds. He said that he thinks that we should go down and speak to them in New Haven about that as we provide them with police and fire services that are not free.

Mr. Bowers said that although the UCONN and Carlson studies came from different aspects that he feels it should be noted that they came up with basically the same results and this is a tribute to the work that they both have done.

Mr. Dagle said that in reality the Town cannot afford to purchase all of these properties however the study provides them with some valuable methods of minimizing the effects on it.

Ms. Picarazzi asked if there were any other comments or questions –
Hearing none –

Ms. Picarazzi closed this Public Hearing at 8:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Zmitruk,
Recording Secretary