

Agenda
Tolland Conservation Commission
Zoom Remote Meeting
Thursday, March 14, 2024, 7:00 p.m.

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Roll Call**
- 3. Seating of Alternate(s)**
- 4. Public Comments**
- 5. Additions/Changes to Agenda**
- 6. New Business**
 - 6.1. Earth Day activities and trash clean-up/drain stenciling
 - 6.2. Bigfoot Essay Results
 - 6.3. Bigfoot/Unicorn Event
 - 6.4. Discussion on Tolland Stage Road Property
- 7. Old Business**
- 8. Reports from Head Steward and Subcommittees**
 - 8.1. Conservation Corp (Bob Rubino)
 - 8.2. Management Plans (Gene)
 - 8.3. Communication and Education (Jane): Pollinator Pathway
 - 8.4. Property Boundaries and Trail Mapping (Adam)
 - 8.5. Town Owned Property Evaluations (Gene)
 - 8.6. Wanat Property Design Implementation (Peggy, Jane)
 - 8.7. Grant Writing and Fund Raising (Peggy)
- 9. Reports/Information from Other Organizations**
- 10. Staff Updates (David Corcoran)**
- 11. Items for Next Meeting**
- 12. Announcements**
- 13. Approve Minutes** – February 8, 2024 Regular Meeting
- 14. Adjournment**

To join the Zoom meeting, either click:
<https://zoom.us/j/4325402030?pwd=NG43ZHcyOXBQOGJldzZVTmQxNmhZZz09>
One tap mobile:
+13017158592,,4325402030#,,,*,444555#
Or call: 1-646-876-9923 and input:
Meeting ID: 432 540 2030
Passcode: 444555

The Legend of the Tolland Bigfoot

By: Jay Barry

One day in early April, 1713, a young woman named Elizabeth Hicks came to a rock that she thought was good for shelter. She was a traveler in Tolland. Elizabeth had no other places of shelter, so she had to make the best of it. She slept on the rock for 5 nights, but there was something off. Every day, Elizabeth would smell dead fish and see big footprints in the forest. They had 4 toes on each foot, and they were as big as her head. She knew the tracks couldn't belong to any type of human. Elizabeth went deep into the forest, while following the big prints. Once the marks stopped, she couldn't see the sky. The trees blocked the light from touching the ground. The ground was covered with scraps of fish heads and tails. Off in the distance, Elizabeth saw something, a cave. Elizabeth kept walking in that direction to further investigate. She heard a grumbling sound coming from inside the mysterious cavern. A big figure started to move, walking slowly out of the narrow space. "MONSTER!!", Elizabeth yelled. She turned and started running back to the rock. Once she got to the rock, she ran far away, never to return. She glanced behind her, but there was nothing there. She'll never know what he saw that day, but there has continued to be rumors of a mysterious dark figure north of Settlers Rock.

Jay Barry

Age 10

Tolland Intermediate School

Grade 4



The Legend of the Tolland Bigfoot

Written by: Chayne Wu (Grade 6 in TMS)

A long time ago in 1716, lived a giant, hairy creature. He lived in the lush, green forests, often coming out of his home to enjoy the fresh air and peacefulness of Connecticut. He loved his quiet life in the newly named town, Tolland. However, he wasn't the only one living in this town anymore. A large colony of settlers, and their hunting dogs, lived nearby. One of their many fierce hunting dogs was called Poseidon, who was a sneaky, medium-sized dog. Poseidon loved to eat food, but he had to spend most of his days hunting, because of the scarce food supply as the winter approached.

One early, winter morning, Poseidon went out to find food for the colony, but ended up much farther than he had planned. As he trotted through the forest, he suddenly heard a sound. Poseidon peered through the trees, and was shocked to see a big, gorilla-like creature, using its huge hands to feast on berries, an assortment of different nuts, wild celery, and leaves. Poseidon felt the rumble of his own belly just by looking at all of the food. "If only I could get my hands on that delicious food, then I would never be hungry again!" he thought. Suddenly, he heard a loud, thundering noise, and quickly hid behind a nearby rock. After a moment, it became silent. Poseidon looked over the rock, and saw that the creature had left the leftovers of his food on the ground, and was

getting ready to take a nap. Soon, the mysterious creature fell asleep on the ground. "This is my chance!" thought Poseidon. He quickly scampered over to the large pile of food and started eating. He munched on everything, and was soon finished. Poseidon was now full. Full of energy, Poseidon quickly left the woods. At around lunch time, he came back to the colony.

The next day, Poseidon excitedly went to the same hidden forest that he had been to the day before. By the time he got there, the huge creature wasn't there, probably searching for more food to stock up for the winter. Poseidon secretively peeked through the thin branches, and his eyes lit up as he saw the humongous pile of food spread on the ground. He quickly got to work, eating fruits, nuts, and anything he could possibly eat. Almost finished, Poseidon felt really full, but he wanted to eat every single last bit of food. Poseidon kept on eating until he was finally finished. He happily trotted back to the colony, just in time for dinner. That night, a huge snowstorm hit Tolland, accompanied with howling winds blowing in the night sky.

The next morning, Poseidon woke up to a beautiful winter scene, with blankets of snow, covering the once, dry grass. Without telling the settlers, Poseidon disappeared off into the white, glistening forest. He felt his paws sink into the snow each time he took a step. The snow was as high as his ankles! When he arrived, he saw that the strong-looking creature was examining the ground several times, probably wondering who had stolen all the food. Again, the

mysterious animal went out to collect more food. This time, there wasn't as much food on the ground. Poseidon was very annoyed, and quickly finished all of the food. Not even full, Poseidon was unsatisfied with what the creature had left. He disappointedly got ready to go.

As he was about to leave, he suddenly tripped over what seemed to be a hole. After uncovering the heavy layers of snow, Poseidon's eyes laid upon a deep hole in front of him that he had never noticed before. The hole was filled with fruits, plants, and even nuts! It must've been the creature's emergency pile for when he ran out of food. Poseidon's eyes sparkled, as he excitedly eyed the hole. Before Poseidon could stop himself, he started eating. After some time, Poseidon was finally satisfied and very full. It was now past dinner time, and the settlers would probably be wondering where he was. As he was about to leave, an idea suddenly occurred to him. "I should bring all of the food home back to the colony! Then I would have enough food to last me a lifetime! I would never have to go hunting again!" he happily thought. He quickly pounced into the hole and started grabbing some food to take back to the colony. With his mouth holding lots of food, he tried to get out of the hole, but because of the ice, his paw kept slipping. Poseidon kept trying, but the hole was too deep to get out of. Soon, he gave up and fell asleep.

That night, the air became even colder than before. Poseidon, who was covered in a layer of frost, curled up into a ball, shivering. Suddenly, he heard the ground shake and saw two huge hands reaching into the hole.

The next morning, Poseidon never came back to the colony. The settlers, who had guessed that he had probably frozen to death, kept going on with their regular business; hunting for food, growing crops, and trying to stay warm.

A few days later, the settlers brought muskets to go hunting for food, but as soon as they were about to go, they spotted paw prints in the snow, identical to Poseidon's small, but strong feet. Curious, they decided to follow the paw prints. After some time, the paw prints ended, and the settlers finally saw where the sneaky dog had been going. They curiously looked around at the food, when suddenly, a humongous animal, with huge claws and lots of black fur, stepped out of the forest. The settlers immediately stopped moving and looked at the scary creature standing in front of them. The settlers were terrified and started firing their muskets at the creature, scared for their life. The shy creature quickly ran away into the woods, leaving huge footprints in the snow. The settlers, still shocked by what they had seen, examined the unusually big footprints left in the snow, and decided to name the strange creature, "Bigfoot". After one last glance at the strange place, the settlers decided to go, fearing that Bigfoot was going to come out of the forests again.

While walking back to the colony, the settlers suddenly heard a whimpering sound nearby. As they peeked into the nearby trees, they discovered a medium-sized dog, with a familiar face, looking up at them. It was Poseidon! His fur seemed to be covered with snow, and he was limping and couldn't walk.

The settlers picked him up and carried him back to the colony. As the settlers walked, they talked about the scary creature they had encountered. Little did the settlers know, that the scary creature had saved Poseidon's life.

From then on, Poseidon became less greedy, only eating what he needed, not everything he wanted. Bigfoot, who was scared of the settlers, became more secretive, staying in the forests, and only coming out at night to find food. A few centuries later, around the 1800s and 1900s, the Tolland Green community was gradually built, and Bigfoot disappeared to other areas, his existence forgotten by humans.

The Legend of Bigfoot In Tolland

Unless you live under a rock, you've probably heard of Bigfoot. Maybe you've heard of Sasquatch, or the Yeti, or even the Skunk Ape. Wherever you're from, there's probably a story or two that's been told within your hearing. And if you live in, or grew up in, wooded areas, chances are that at some point, you thought you'd maybe even spot one in the woods on a hike or behind your home.

Tolland, a quiet little town in Connecticut with scenic roads and historic homes, is the quintessential small town with plenty of forest space, lakes, and trails in beatific hilly settings. Originally land belonging to Native Americans, it was deeded to settlers in 1713, and incorporated in 1722.

And it might just be the spot for a Bigfoot to hide in plain sight.

Since time before written accounts, oral traditions passed on stories of a large, muscular, hairy ape-man living in the wilds of Tolland. The Native Americans knew of its existence and respected its territories. Tribes would mark trees with carvings to warn others that this is as far as you go – any further belongs to the Sasquatch, and while they normally left these tribes alone, if someone did venture into their areas, there was no guarantee you would return. Thought of as shy beings, the Native peoples coexisted by keeping clear of those places, and teaching their children to respect the boundaries.

When European settlers began marking their homesteads and clearing land, we have to imagine they didn't pay much heed to stories about a big hairy creature living in the forests. These early settlers may have traded not only goods with the Natives, but stories as well. And it's probably safe to assume they were much more focused on building shelter to protect their families, and getting trees downed to get their crops started, than pay heed to "tall" tales. We do, however, have one recount from the family of one of the very first settlers in the Grant Hill area. On Gehring Road, near the Coventry Town Line, there is a rock formation called Settler's Rock. It is here that one Ebenezer Cadon took shelter on a snowy December night in 1715. According to the written account left in a letter to his family, he was traveling alone on horseback when a sudden storm blew in. He found himself unable to see very far, and stopped under the rock ledge to wait out the squall. There had already been snowfall that season, so this was just adding to the powder already there. Cadon settled in for the wait and in the limited moonlight, watched the snowfall through the trees. He spotted movement a small distance away and was concerned a wolf was prowling. Squinting to see as sharply as he could, he realized the shape was too large to be a wolf. Maybe a bear? It definitely was not a deer, so he stayed as quiet as possible and calmed his horse so as to not draw attention. After all, he was literally backed up against a wall (of rock). To his relief, the figure moved slowly and steadily away from him, into what now leads into Crandall Park's woods.

According to Cadon's letter, he "was mightily relieved when that stinking figure was out of my sight." He remained there the next uneventful hour, and when there was light enough (and less snowfall) his curiosity urged him to find the tracks that surely must have been left by whatever he saw. What he found confused and upset him. He states, "Never have I seen such a track. And I been hunting since I was old enough to hold a gun. These prints were as long as a rod, and I do so swear they looked like they had toes. I know that sounds impossible, but I know what I saw. I do suppose I seen the Indians' wild-man." Cadon's family, some of whom reside in Tolland to this day, wholeheartedly believe Ebenezer had an encounter with Bigfoot, and was lucky enough to survive.

Cadon's narrative may be the oldest written statement still preserved in Tolland Town today, but it is not the only tale, that is certain. From an 1879 diary entry of Madeline Deninger, who lived on a modest farmstead near the cranberry bogs at Skungamaug with her husband and six children, we have the following record: "The air was crisp this morning as I sent the boys out to take care of the animals. Little Thomas came running back in with an awful report- two of our pigs had been killed during the night, and the remains were strewn about the pen. Poor thing was beside himself he was so frightened. I called for Pa to hurry to the pig run and be careful about it, take the gun, something killed the pigs last night. Well, he comes back in shaking his head. He tells us there was footprints in the muck that looked very wrong, very big, like a man's foot with no shoes but twice the size they should be. He also felt odd- like someone was watching him from the tree line. We will hurry to finish chores while we have daylight, and we are not going outside after dark falls. I will take a ride to the neighbor's home to advise them well."

Reading Madeline's entry, we can only imagine the fear of the unknown that entered their house that day, and probably never left. At that time, the term Bigfoot had not been coined, but it is clear from her description what happened that night: a creature with very large human-looking tracks was hungry and muscular enough to slaughter two pigs with its bare hands (well, we assume hands). Families began to pull in tighter, children were given curfews, and livestock was locked up at night. We have to remember, this was a time when everything you owned was precious: if you lost animals or crops, your family would be in serious trouble. Nothing was readily available like it is today, and that includes communication. If Madeline Deninger did indeed warn her neighbors about something coming out of the woods in Tolland, we can be sure those neighbors warned their neighbors, and hopefully so on. The need to rally together and care about each other is as valid today as it was yesterday, and the early Tolland residents knew the value of that.

In 1921, there appeared an article in the Sunday Evening Post, a local publication that serviced Tolland and the surrounding towns. It gave the account of a local ice company delivery man by the name of Edward Quinlan, who had a frightening encounter one early spring evening. He was hauling blocks of ice for a customer, and the ice house was a short ways into the forestry of the property. The deliveryman had to take an old woods road to a trail that twisted past an old stone wall, and curved towards a brook, upon which the ice house stood. He states that suddenly the forest was quiet. No birds chirping, no frogs croaking; the only thing he heard was the gurgling of the brook up ahead. All at once, he felt the hair on the back of his neck stand up, and distinctly felt he was not alone. Quinlan relays that he heard twigs snapping, and a "sickening stench" filled his nostrils. Instinctively afraid now, he keenly scanned the sparse foliage and saw a hulking figure, about 7 feet tall, furtively watching him from behind a tree trunk, standing as still as a statue. Neither moved for a good 10 minutes, Quinlan frozen to his spot much like the ice he was delivering. He reports that suddenly the stealthy figure turned in a flash and disappeared as if he was part of the landscape, taking his noxious smell with him. Jolted, Quinlan dropped the ice pallet and raced back to his horse and cart, terror and a panic born of self-preservation driving him the whole way. He tells the Post, "That was not natural, and I know what's natural and not. Them stories we've heard since youngins is true: there's a hairy wild-man in the Tolland woods. And I've seen 'im for my own self!"

Some lore states bigfoot can hop between dimensions, and Quinlan's story certainly would sustain such a theory. The stories don't end there. Since Quinlan's report in the newspaper, there have been numerous other testimonies coming out of Tolland: mysterious whistles in the woods at night, livestock found either half-eaten or simply vanished completely, fishermen reporting huge stones being flung at them from the

tree lines, hunters describing odd knocking on trees from all directions around them, thought to be communication between bigfoots. In 1957, a resident and amateur photographer was taking a fall stroll in the Campbell's Conservation Area, and came upon a set of footprints in the woodland area near the bluff. The tracks were humanoid and twelve and half inches long. In 1974, two young boys were walking home in the twilight hours after buying penny candy at The Homestead General Store and decided to cut through the woods to save time because it was getting dark. They claim to have been watched and followed by "a huge hairy creature" all the way through the woods, and were so shaken by the experience that they were "never so happy to see my mom" when they got home.

In 2008, a group of teenagers were chased out of Heron Cove Park after picnicking by the water on a sunny afternoon. They thought a bear was in the woods, but when they returned the next day, the tracks in the mud near the water's edge were what appeared to be 13-inch long footprints with five toes. Two of the teens took photos of the prints with their phones.

All images, letters and articles are available for viewing at the Tolland Bigfoot museum in the center of Town.

All of these mysterious unexplainable happenings that we attribute to the hairy wild man of the woods of Tolland offer us a learning opportunity. We know from oral tradition that the Native Americans in Tolland held certain areas sacred to the Sasquatch, and children were taught to stay close to their families. The early settlers knew dangers truly existed in the woods, and they told the tales as warnings to keep their families safe. We treasure our children as the most precious gifts of our lives, and teach them to stay near us for as long as possible. We must teach each other to be respectful and to coexist with those creatures we don't understand, because they are out there, watching and listening, and probably more afraid of us, as we bulldoze and reduce the living space they've owned for centuries here in Tolland.

So, if you are out for a beautiful day of sunshine and fresh air on one of the trails here in our picturesque Tolland Town, and come across a Bigfoot sunbathing on a jutting outcrop of rock at the peak of your hike, and his unicorn is grazing off to the west, be respectful, keep your distance, give him some privacy. After all, isn't that what we all deserve?

Meeting Harry

By: Juliet Vander Poel

Hi, I'm Alex. You see I'm not like any other kid, I'm into comics, fantasy's and books. I'm also in 3rd grade at T.I.S. Some kids in my grade call it 'Torturing Innocent Students'. Creepy, right? Anyways, I have to go to school.

"Alex, come on!"

That's me. As always, I first open my window and poke my head out and see the middle school, but something was hiding behind a tree. It was brown.

I call out, "Who are you?" but there's no response from the creature hidden.

"Alex!" my mom calls again.

"Coming", I yell.

When I went downstairs my Mom said the worst words like always "You need to get rid of a couple of your books".

"NO!"

Like always I ate my breakfast super fast to get out and go to school even though its also horrible. After I ate, I went outside and got my bike. Whenever I go to school I use the same route. I bike down near the green and Old Post. Sometimes I use the long way around to the jail and loop around to the church. Sometimes I would even stop at the jail and peek into the creepy windows and sometimes I would even stop for a snack. Literally I would do ANYTHING to get out of school.

When I got there, I parked my bike but when I was locking it I felt a wormy drool and soft fur. When I turned around I saw Big Foot. As I saw him run I yelled "Stop, wait!". When I went inside I thought, if I told the popular kids, I would be popular too. So, I went to the popular kids and told them and the response wasn't nice. They said, "Ha Bigfoot isn't real". "Yeah, nerd" "Geek".

Uggh. I hate everyone. Oh well. As I walked to history everyone laughed at me, but I was used to it. When I got there, on the board said "Field Trip to Benton Homestead". I totally forgot about that.

When our teacher said to line up, I went to the back so I wouldn't get noticed. The bus was a little bit better. I sat in the one-seater. It was either that or sitting with the teacher. Also, the bus ride was pretty quick. When we got there we got a tour of the homestead. It was pretty cool. In the kitchen there was a bed for the sick kids so the parent could watch them.

At the end we got to go in the basement. It was kinda scary because that's where the prisoners lived. I went in last because well, I'm kind of the least popular and I also went in alone. In my mind I was imagining a dead prisoner came alive and killed me and then suddenly I heard a 'ka-plump!' Then followed by a "Eeek" type of voice. Suddenly, a huge boy stepped out of the fireplace and oddly said "Hi my name is Harry, can we be friends?" I had to answer so I said the joyful words "Yeah, sure!"

Bigfoot jumped in the air, no wait, that was wrong, Harry jumped in the air. I was e because he was so happy. I was excited too, but something was wrong. A-ha, how was Harry going to come to school? Wait, my teacher never realizes, so we can sneak him on the bus. When I came out of the basement, Harry followed. I was fine with him following me. We got on the bus and off the bus perfectly. I told Harry to go to his home and come back when school was over. School the rest of the day was pretty boring and horrible. We had gym which I hate! But when I got home I introduced Harry to my parents and guess what they approved him as a friend and Harry is also going to school tomorrow, awesome right? Well I'll see you later then, bye!

If you plant it, they will come.



- If you live along the Pollinator Pathway we especially hope you'll decide to join the fun and sign-up to be part of the Pathway.
- Our goal is to create a corridor of contiguous properties including open spaces and the adjacent private ones of our residents.
- Everyone should consider getting on the Pollinator Pathway since the bees and butterflies don't recognize the signs and only look for the nectar!

This Pollinator Pathway has spread from one town to over 300 across the region since 2017, all connected. Volunteers, often from land trusts, garden clubs, nature centers, watershed associations, and conservation commissions get together to create steering committees which help build the pathways.



Contact us!

Phone:
877-679-2463

Email:
info@pollinator-pathway.org

Visit us on the web:
Pollinator-pathway.org

Sign Up

To sign up, email us at Info@Pollinator-Pathway.org. Also check our website Pollinator-Pathway.org for events throughout the region such as planting parties and talks by experts on native and invasive plants, birds, bees, and butterflies as well as resources for making your yard and your town more pollinator friendly.



PPP 3.14.22



The Pollinator Pathway

Cover Photo by Katalyn Lamb, Croton, NY



Photo by Louise Washer, Norwalk, CT

What is a Pollinator Pathway?

- a wildlife corridor providing habitat and nutrition for pollinators
- includes healthy yards and public spaces for pollinators, pets & families

“To share suburbia with wildlife, we need to: Create corridors connecting natural areas; Reduce the area now in lawn; and Begin the transition from alien ornamentals to native ornamentals.”

—Doug Tallamy,
professor of entomology and wildlife ecology at
the University of Delaware

How to “Bee” Part of the Pollinator Pathway

1 Plant Native Plants

- Trees, shrubs, and wildflowers native to this area provide food and shelter for local pollinators
- Plant a container or garden with pollinator plants or integrate natives into your existing landscaping
- Remove non-native invasive plants

2 Go Pesticide-Free

- This means a healthy lawn for your children and pets too
- Landscape to minimize tick habitat
- Consider organic alternatives to poisons

3 Rethink Your Lawn

- Consider using slow-release organic fertilizers, if any
- Leave the clippings on your lawn rather than adding chemicals
- Convert some of your lawn to native trees, shrubs, flowers
- Mow less often, every 2–3 weeks is best
- Leave some leaves in beds for overwintering insects
- Mow remaining leaves in the fall and let them fertilize the lawn
- Provide a source of clean water for pollinators and birds
- Leave some dirt patches for native ground nesting bees

What are pollinators?

- birds, bees, butterflies and other insects, bats and other mammals, rodents and amphibians

What do they do?

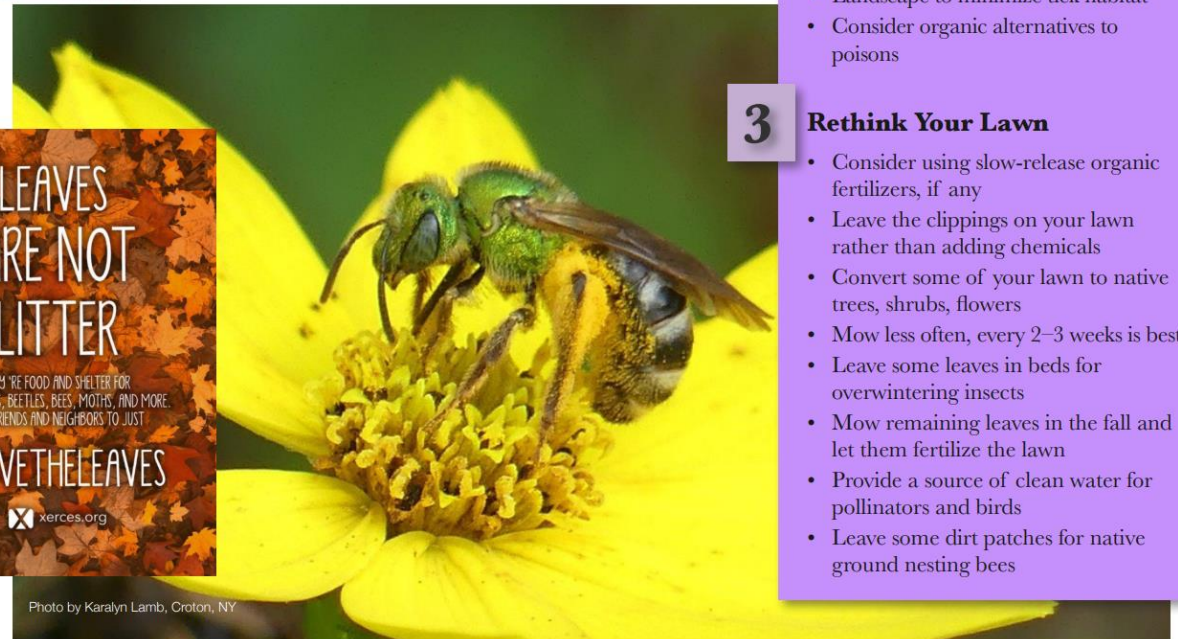
- move pollen from one plant to another, enabling cross fertilization and allowing the reproduction and the growth of new plants — 35% of our food grows as a result of the work pollinators do

What is threatening our pollinators?

- widespread application of pesticides and other chemicals on lawns, landscaped plantings, and agricultural crops
- climate changes that lead to lack of larval host plants
- loss of habitat as more and more natural environments become urban and suburban
- the spread of invasive (non-native) plants



Photo by Karalyn Lamb, Croton, NY



Cassandra Santoro

From: David Corcoran
Sent: Tuesday, March 5, 2024 8:14 AM
To: Cassandra Santoro
Subject: FW: [EXTERNAL]RE: [EXTERNAL]Shenipsit Lake Shoreline

[For the conservation commission packet](#)

From: Scott Lappen <slappen@Tollandct.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, March 5, 2024 08:12
To: Jessica Baldwin <Jessica.Baldwin@ctwater.com>; FRANCIS SYPECK <fsypeck@aol.com>
Cc: David Corcoran <dcorcoran@Tollandct.gov>; Michael D'Amato <mdamato@Tollandct.gov>
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL]RE: [EXTERNAL]Shenipsit Lake Shoreline

Jessica, Frank,

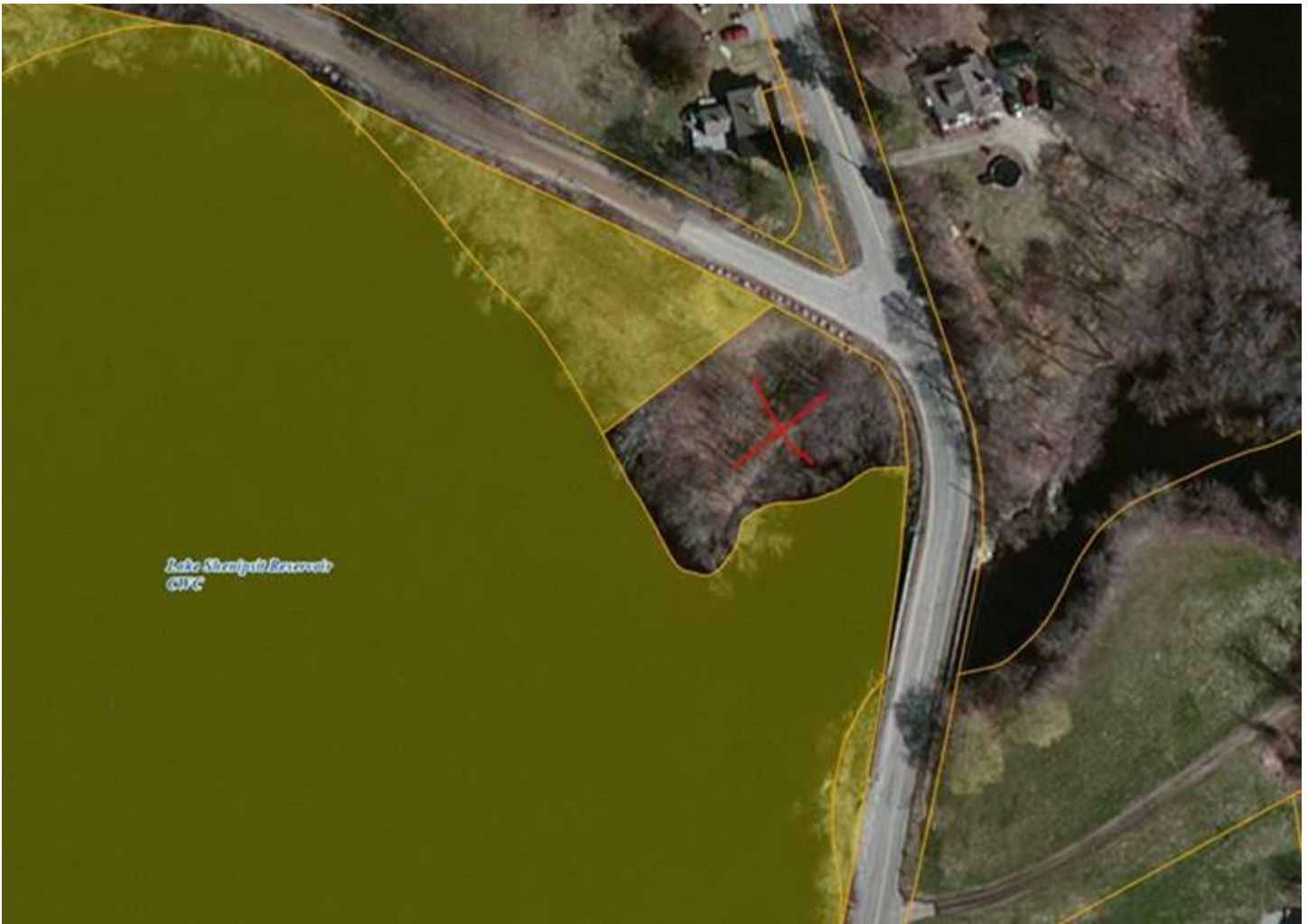
I can plant the seed within our Staff and see if there are any Volunteer groups willing to get involved, thank you.

From: Jessica Baldwin <Jessica.Baldwin@ctwater.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 5, 2024 8:09 AM
To: Scott Lappen <slappen@Tollandct.gov>; FRANCIS SYPECK <fsypeck@aol.com>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]RE: [EXTERNAL]Shenipsit Lake Shoreline

Scott, Frank,

I believe the property in question is the property owned by the town - red X on the map below. (CT Water owns the land highlighted in yellow.) I did meet with members of the Town many years ago, maybe 2019, about clearing that area for a park-like experience but the project never got off the ground. At this point CT Water does not have the resources to lead a volunteer effort like this. Might the town have any resources to assist?

Thanks
Jessica



Jessica Baldwin
Connecticut Water Company
Regulatory & Environmental Compliance Coordinator
Office: 860-664-6190
Mobile: 203-623-8657

-----Original Message-----

From: Scott Lappen <slappen@Tollandct.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, March 5, 2024 6:22 AM
To: FRANCIS SYPECK <fsypeck@aol.com>; Jessica Baldwin <Jessica.Baldwin@ctwater.com>
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL]Shenipsit Lake Shoreline

CAUTION: This email originated outside the SJWG organization.

Mr. Sypeck,

The water and land surrounding it falls under the purview of CT Water as the lake is used for drinking water. The Town of Tolland works with CT Water to assist them at different times to address issues near the Snip. I am expecting that CT Water will weigh in on this request as well, thank you.

-----Original Message-----

From: FRANCIS SYPECK <fsypeck@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, March 4, 2024 5:58 PM

To: Jessica Demar <Jessica.Demar@ctwater.com>

Cc: Scott Lappen <slappen@Tollandct.gov>

Subject: [EXTERNAL]Shenipsit Lake Shoreline

Jessica Demar: Connecticut water company Scott, Lappin: Director of Public Works town of Tolland

I took a walk yesterday up Ellington Rd. along the bank of the Shenipsit lake reservoir, and I thought how beautiful this area is. It could be enhanced if somebody could clear out all the brush on this corner by the bridge. It was such a beautiful walk yesterday with the temperature in the high 60s but in that first hundred yards of Ellington Rd. I could barely see the lake. When the leaves come out and the brush starts to grow, you can't see the lake at all. This project would be a big benefit to the entire town of Tolland and the Ct. Water Company would certainly receive praise for doing a job like this. It is a very scenic road, and I believe it has been designated as a "state scenic road". This project could enhance the scenic route even more.

Could this be a job for the Crystal Lake Association? I certainly would help. I would also lead the work party if necessary. I have chainsaws and a heavy duty weed whacker. It would be really nice to take all the brush off of that corner and all the trees 6 inches and below to make it a little park and fishing area. The trees and bush could be fed into a wood chipper and it would make a nice blanket of chips to walk on. The chips could also keep down the brush from continuing to grow.

I talked to a few neighbors in the area and they are in favor of the idea. I also talked to the previous owner of my house at 384 Shenipsit Lake Rd., Sandy Richmond she said that she was dead against it back when the idea came up years ago from the Connecticut Water Company. She informed me that Water Company wanted to make parking places and a little park for fishing back a few years ago. But I as the new owner feel quite the opposite; I'm in totally in favor of the idea. It could do nothing but enhance this whole Northeast section of the lake.

Please get back to me at your earliest convenience.

Frank Sypeck -

384 Shenipsit Lake Rd., Tolland, CT 06082 Cell 860-205-1267

Tolland Conservation Commission (TCC)

Meeting minutes

08 February 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

Virtual meeting via Zoom

1. Call to order 7:02 p.m.

2. Roll call

TCC Members: J. Simao (Chairman), K. Ackerman, S. McGown, G. Koss, L. A. Swan

Public: D. Corcoran, B. Rubino, P. Swan, R. McCann

3. Seating of Alternate(s)

None needed.

4. Public Comments

There were none.

5. Additions/Changes to Agenda

J. Simao asked if an Executive Session on Land Acquisition could be added to the agenda. D. Corcoran stated an Executive Session could not be added today and he will discuss with J. Simao after the meeting.

6. New Business

6.1. Planning for Bigfoot/Unicorn Event

A planning spread sheet to help with the Big Foot/Unicorn Tracking event was reviewed.

- J. Simao discussed making several Big Foot themed snacks to sell.
- Holding a contest to author "The Legend of the Tolland Big Foot" was discussed. This contest will be open to the public and the winner will read their Legend at the start of the Bigfoot/Unicorn Licensing Event. All agreed to proceed. The contest submissions can be sent to D. Corcoran and are needed by 03/01/2024. K. Ackerman will create a flyer with a QR code explaining the contest and rules. Early next week K. Ackerman will send the flyer to the group for review. J. Simao will post on social media and G. Koss will help post in stores, libraries, etc.
- Currently the schedule date of the licensing event is Easter. After discussion it was decided that the date should be moved to 04/06/2024.
- L. Swan stated she would update the event planning spreadsheet and will send it out for review.

6.2 Invasive Jumping Worms Presentation

A presentation on invasive jumping worms was given by B. Rubino. The presentation was extremely informative and very well received by the group.

7. Old business

There was none.

8. Reports from Head Steward and Subcommittees

8.1 Conservation Corp

- B. Rubino reported that he talked to an Eagle Scout who would like to work with the TCC & Corp on his Eagle project. His project will be to install a public announcement sign at Parciak Conservation Area explaining why there is a tree harvest and how it benefits the forest. All agreed that B. Rubino should work with the scout.
- B. Rubino asked if the logging that was postponed at Parciak due to wet conditions, has resumed. D. Corcoran stated that the logging has resumed and should be finished at the end of the month. Excess stones will be put in the parking area. B. Rubino stated he was concerned there may be damaged areas that need to be addressed. D. Corcoran stated he will see if the members of the TCC and Conservation Corps can be involved with the final walk through with the forester.

- B. Rubino and R. McCann will be receiving the Annual Steward Reports from the stewards in the coming weeks. A plan for the Tolland Conservation Corps trail days will be developed from these and presented to the TCC for approval.
- Bob. Rubino stated that the Annual TCC Potluck Dinner will be held 03/22/24, 5:30 to 9:00pm. Frank Servo will be speaking about the Parciak timber harvest. All are invited to attend.
- Bob Rubino reported that Brian Foley (town manager) has given use of two four wheel drive Quads to the Conservation Corps. A memorandum of understand with the town will be developed to allow use but maintain ownership by the town.

8.2. Management Plans

E. Koss stated he would bring some management plans forward in a couple of weeks.

8.3. Communication and Education

J. Simao stated that the CT Land Conservation Council Conference will be held 03/23/2024 at Wesleyan University. There are many interesting events/presentations on the schedule.

8.4. Property Boundaries and Trail Mapping

None.

8.5. Town Owned Property Evaluations

None

8.6. Wanat Property Design Implementation

J. Simao stated that the next activity is to put a mural on the Silo.

8.7. Grant Writing and Fundraising

None

9. Reports and information from Other Organizations

9.1 Upcoming Events at CT Audubon

J. Simao reported that a zoom presentation discussing alternative energy programs will be held on 03/04/2024 by the CT Audubon. The Joshua's Trust will be holding a hike on 2/17/2024 (10 AM) at the Madeline Reserve.

10. Staff Updates

- D. Corcoran reported that the September tree harvest has \$15,000 left in it's budget. These monies need to be allocated to another activity. Discussion on creating a tree harvest plan for the Campbell conservation area was held. D. Corcoran asked the commission to keep this on the radar.
- D. Corcoran reported that the Town Council has asked him to inventory the open space properties in Tolland. There are over 300 pieces of property.

11. Items for Next Meeting

Earth day activities, trash clean up or drain stenciling and update on Big Foot/Unicorn event.

12. Announcements

There were none.

13. Approve Previous Minutes

A motion was made by E. Koss, 2nd by K. Ackerman to accept the minutes of the 11 January 2024 meeting. The motion was unanimously approved.

14. Adjournment

A motion was made by K. Ackerman, 2nd by E. Koss to adjourn the meeting. The motion was unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 8:13 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Lee Ann Swan

Secretary, Tolland Conservation Commission