Conservation Commission Minutes
January 30, 2007

Meeting was called to order at 7:35 p.m.

Present: Beaudin, Davis, D. Davis, Hinckley, Harvey (8:00), Knickerbocker, Rogovich, Smith, Yeich, ex officio Parker

James Burke, Economic Development Director spoke on industrial, corporate, and retail development in town. In the last 2-3 years, there has been a commercial building boom, more development than in the past 12 years, predominantly on Day Hill Road and International Drive. Benefits to town include increasing tax base, providing jobs (1/3 of which are slated for the disabled), and meeting community needs. There are approximately 1,900 of undeveloped commercial land remaining, again predominantly on Day Hill Rd. and Industrial Drive. There has been no rezoning of property with this new development. Most of the rezoning in town has been from AG to AA.

Economic incentives include improvement to the physical infrastructure and tax abatement.
Example given on tax abatement was Walgreens -a $200 million project, which would generate $4 million in taxes if immediately on tax rolls. However, the next two years are construction years. In year three, $1.5 million in taxes will be collected. The cost to widen International Drive - $1.9 million; $750,000 to make improvements to Day Hill Road for ING.
Windsor offers a high level of services for a reasonable tax rate. Industrial developments help keep tax rate reasonable.

Q & A - Concerns shared:

- Additional town services. Jim explained that many of the large companies have internal security systems, sprinkle systems, etc., therefore, reduced service demand on the town.
- Other concerns - Road safety, land usage, MDC assessments, vacant office space, buffer zones, tax reductions, animal corridors, corporate responsibility.

Jim will get back to us on amount of developed acreage in town.

Land Trust - Newsletter sent; membership drive in motion; town allocated $2,000 from general fund; researching several properties.

Open space fund should have 30K balance – anticipate an additional $74,000. Frank will appear before town council to ask for $15,000 from last year and $15,000 for 2007.

Sam - Amtrak Trail between Windsor's Plan of Development shows potential trail from Windsor Center to the Bissell Bridge. Contacted town planner and found out that the track between Springfield, MA and New Haven has been approved. Blaise suggested that the timing might be ripe to address creating a parallel walking trail, as heavy equipment will be on the site. Sam and will contact Riverfront Recapture with further inquiries.

Roundtable
License Plates- Colette outlined application process for original license plates; suggested that we partner with another organization. Will contact DEP.
Frank reported that both the town manager and town planner think our open space map can be resurrected. Town manager requested open space plan with desired properties identified. Better chance of getting monies if we have a project in mind.
David – inquired as to whether a map of CT outlining wildlife corridors is available. Will check with state.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.