

Town of Colchester
Open Space Advisory Committee

Monday, June 13, 2022 6pm

Meeting shall be held via Zoom- see link below Regular Meeting

AGENDA

1. Call Meeting to Order
2. Citizens Comments
3. Approval of Meeting Minutes of 4.11.22
4. Open Space
5. Any Other Business Deemed Necessary
6. Adjournment

RECEIVED
COLCHESTER, CT
2022 JUN -9 PM 4:12
Gayle Furman
GAYLE FURMAN
TOWN CLERK

William Hochholzer

Chairman

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84600142780?pwd=RWWQS11JL1NWb213ckp6eHdYU1RKUT09>

Or Telephone: US: +1 929 205 6099 or +1 301 715 8592 or +1 312 626 6799 or +1 669 900
6833 or +1 253 215 8782 or +1 346 248 7799

Webinar ID: 846 0014 2780

Passcode: 844443

**Town of Colchester
Open Space Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes of virtual meeting
Regular Meeting of 4/11/22**

Members Present: Chairman Will Hochholzer, Vice-Chairman Ted Fuini, Kris Barnard, Lindsay Floyd, BOS Liaison Rosemary Coyle and Town Staff Jay Gigliotti

Members Absent: Mary Stevens

1. **Call Meeting to Order:** Chairman Will Hochholzer called the 4/11/22 OSAC Meeting to order at 6:00pm
2. **Citizens Comments:** None
3. **Approval of the 3/14/22 Meeting Minutes:**

Lindsay Floyd motioned to approve the 3/14/22 OSAC meeting minutes as written. Seconded by Kris Barnard. Kris Barnard abstained. All other members voted in Favor. Motion Carried.

4. **Open Space:**

A. Middletown Road- Sablitz Open Space Property

Jay Gigliotti explained the Town was able to purchase the property with the assistance from an awarded DEEP Open Space grant. The awarded grant included a number of conditions the Town is required to fulfill. Recently, the program approved the A2 survey the Town completed on the property and required a revised title policy. The policy is currently being revised and will be submitted to the Open Space Program once complete.

At the February OSAC meeting, the Committee voted to recommend the Sablitz property be subject to a wildlife management plan (WMP) developed by UCONN students in the wildlife major program. In 2021, students in the UCONN wildlife major program developed a WMP for the Ruby Cohen Park on McDonald Road. The plan was a comprehensive document which supplied significant information regarding the wildlife and wildlife habitat at the park. It also provided recommendations on how the town could better operate the park so as to least impact wildlife.

The recommendation for a WMP at the Sablitz property was made due to the Town's intentions to conduct improvements to the property so the public could utilize the property for passive recreation purposes. The resulting plan will help guide the town in the park improvements to ensure the wildlife and habitat present on the property would be least impacted.

The UCONN Students have recently completed the WMP for the Sablitz and shall be present an abbreviated summary of the plan to the Colchester Board of Selectmen at the 4/21/22 regular meeting.

B. Brown's Mill- Comstock Bridge Road- Brownfield Assessment Grant

The awarded grant is providing funds to complete a supplemental Phase I Environmental Site Assessment and a Phase II Environmental Site Assessment. All contracts have been executed and next steps include the site testing and investigation. Alta Environmental shall be developing the Site Assessments. The Town is waiting on Alta's availability to commence the work. Once the investigation begins, the assessment documents should be completed within 1 ½ - 2 months.

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COLCHESTER, CT
APR 11 2022 11:00 AM

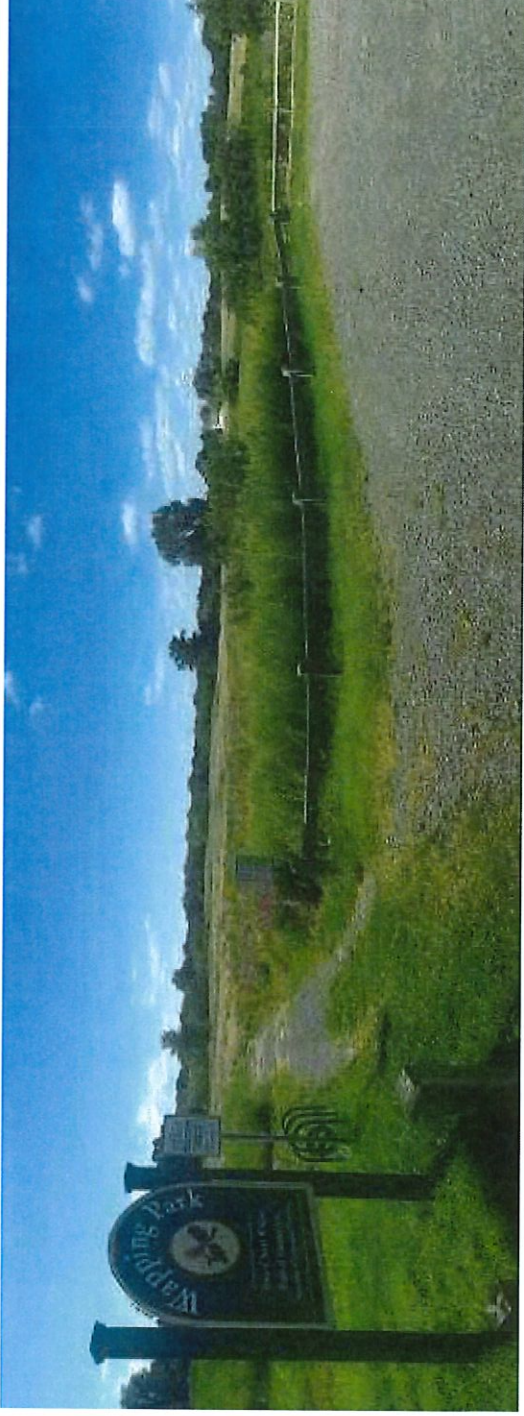
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Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection

[CT.gov Home](#) [/0](#) [Department of Energy and Environmental Protection](#) [/DEEP](#) [Open Space in Connecticut](#) [/DEEP/Open-Space/Open-Space](#) [Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program](#)

Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program

(CGS Section 7-131d to 7-131k, inclusive)



Wapping Park, South Windsor - OSWA Grant Recipient

The Department is pleased to announce the [Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition \(OSWA\) 2022 Grant Application Sheet](#) and the [OSWA Grant Program Scoring Sheet](#) are now available. **The deadline for electronic submittal of the application package must be received by September 30, 2022.**

Additional Downloads:

[OSWA Applicant Letter from Commissioner Dykes](#)

[OSWA FAQs](#)

The Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition (OSWA) Grant Program provides financial assistance to municipalities and nonprofit land conservation organizations to acquire land for open space, and to water companies to acquire land to be classified as Class I or Class II water supply property.

Awards are granted to projects that offer the highest conservation and recreational value and that leverage the greatest percentage of private and municipal funding; DEEP also accepts applications from municipalities (often in partnership with non-profits) under the Urban Green and Community Garden Program (DEEP/Open-Space/Urban-Green-and-Community-Garden-Grant-Program). **Funding for these grants is derived from State Bond funds and/or the Community Investment Act. Grants are based on the merit of the project and the level of funds available. Awards may not be made until adequate funding is available.**

Additional Information and Assistance

Eligibility Requirements:

- Applicants must be a municipality, non-profit land conservation organization (e.g., land trust), or water company;
- Water companies must purchase land that can be classified as "Class I" or Class II" after acquisition, and must show if and how they intend to allow access to proposed land for recreational uses;
- If a non-profit land trust is purchasing land or interest in land located within a municipality considered as Targeted or Distressed (CGS section 32-9p), it must obtain approval from the chief elected official or governing legislative body;
- If a proposed property is being purchased from a water company, the property must be classified as surplus Class III land by the water company. The water company, as title holder, must be granted permission to dispose of the property by the State Public Utilities Regulatory Authority and the Department of Public Health;
- All lands or interest in lands acquired under this program must be preserved in perpetuity, predominantly in their natural, scenic, and open condition;
- For municipal applicants, **if the municipality's current Plan of Conservation and Development is more than 10 years old, a grant cannot be awarded;**
- Applicants must show evidence of compliance with the terms and conditions of any previously awarded grants;
- Applicants must clearly show how the public will access and enjoy the property. **If public access is not clearly shown, the property will not be evaluated or awarded a grant.**
- Applicants must show a reasonable anticipation that cost-share match funding will be available within one year of the State grant being awarded.

Grant funds cannot be used to purchase:

1. Land to be used for commercial activities or for recreational purposes requiring intensive development;
2. Land which has already been committed for public use;
3. Land to be acquired by eminent domain.

Grant funds cannot be used towards:

1. Development costs; and
2. Reimbursement of in-kind services or incidental costs associated with the acquisition of lands (including survey fees, legal fees, and appraisal fees).



View from Tri-Town Ridgeline Forest
by Avalonia Land Conservancy, Inc. - OSWA Grant Recipient

Grant Program Overview & Selection

An application form and required supporting documentation including maps, title searches, and appraisals must be submitted by the Department's grant deadline. Applications must be endorsed by local Planning, Zoning, Conservation and/or Open Space Commissions and must include an advisory report and the recommendations of the appropriate regional planning agency. Applicants are encouraged to apply for the acquisition of parcels that can realistically be purchased within a 12-month time frame. Projects having the required cost-share matching available, title and appraisal report(s) completed, and a current property boundary survey are encouraged.

The Department uses a selection process to objectively evaluate proposals. Land identified for acquisition will be evaluated by a review team consisting of staff from the various resource management divisions of the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, the Department of Public Health, and the Department of Agriculture. Decisions to grant awards for the acquisition of parcels will be based on the ranking scores and comments provided by the review team, in addition to considerations such as:

- Meeting minimum eligibility requirements of the grant program;
- Total project cost;
- Protection of multiple natural resource values/public benefit needs, such as drinking water supply protection, connecting public trail greenways and wildlife corridors, and core forest preservation;
- Project proximity to urban or highly populated areas;
- Project proximity to existing protected open space, agricultural land, or water company land currently classified as Class I or Class II water supply land;
- Availability of a property for donation or bargain sale;
- Anticipated land stewardship needs and constraints; and
- Project compatibility with the State's Plan of Conservation and Development and other statewide natural resource plans, policies, goals and objectives.

Please be advised: This grant program is competitive. Any missing information required by the application will result in a less-than optimal score. Any information found in an application to be misleading will be grounds for withdrawal of the application and forfeiture of any possible or awarded grant. The scoring sheet for Department review of applications is attached to the grant application form.

Grants are awarded for the purchase of land that is:

1. Valuable for recreation, forestry, fishing, conservation of wildlife or natural resources;
2. A prime natural feature of the state's landscape;
3. Habitat for native plant or animal species listed as threatened, endangered or of special concern;
4. A relatively undisturbed outstanding example of an uncommon native ecological community;
5. Important for enhancing and conserving water quality;
6. Valuable for preserving local agricultural heritage; or
7. Eligible to be classified as Class I or Class II watershed land.

Land acquired will be preserved in perpetuity predominately in its natural scenic and open condition, for the protection or provision of potable water, or for agriculture. A permanent conservation easement will be provided to the State of Connecticut, Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to ensure that the property remains in a natural and open condition for the conservation, open space, agriculture, green space or water supply purposes for which it was acquired. The easement will include a requirement that the property be made available to the general public for passive recreational purposes. Where development rights will be purchased and where general public access would be disruptive of an existing agricultural activity, an exception to the provision for unlimited passive recreational access may be made, at the discretion of the Commissioner. Where development rights are to be purchased, the State of Connecticut will become an equal holder of those rights as a substitute for the easement. The Department retains the right to reduce grant awards for limited public access proposals.

Natural Heritage, Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Review Board

The Natural Heritage, Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Review Board is an independent advisory group of volunteers appointed by the Governor and the leadership of the House and Senate under Connecticut General Statutes Section 7-131(e) to oversee the Protected Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program (OSWA) and the Recreation and Natural Heritage Trust Program (RNHT).

Meeting Schedule

As of January 2021, the Review Board meets the second Thursday of every month from 10:30am – 12:00pm. Until further notice the meetings will be held via Zoom. The meetings are open to the public. Please contact Co-Chair Amy Blaymore Paterson in advance of the meeting for a Zoom link: abpaterson@ctconservation.org

Additional Assistance

If you have any questions, first reference the [Answers to Frequently Asked Questions](#) . If you still have additional questions or need additional assistance, please contact:

[Allyson Clarke \(mailto:Allyson.Clarke@ct.gov\)](mailto:Allyson.Clarke@ct.gov), Property Agent

Phone: (860) 424-3774

Department of Energy and Environmental Protection

Office of Constituent Affairs/Land Management
79 Elm Street, 6th Floor
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

For any questions about protecting working farmland, please contact Elisabeth Moore, Project Director at the Connecticut Farmland Trust, at emoore@ctfarmland.org (<mailto:emoore@ctfarmland.org>).

Content Last Updated: October, 2021

Fruit Tree Trails

These edible gardens on Main Street and at Stafford Library burst with blueberries, raspberries, and basil during the summer, all for picking by visitors to downtown and the library. The trails are a collaboration by the town of Stafford, the North Central District Health Department, and the Stafford Garden Club. They were made possible by grants from the CT Department of Health.

Get Directions:

Main Street Fruit Tree Trail:

Main Street & Spring Street, Stafford, CT

Library Fruit Tree Trail:

Stafford Public Library, Levinthal Run,
Stafford, CT





WESTMOOR PARK



Welcome to Westmoor Park!

Westmoor Park is a self funded environmental education center operated by the Leisure Services Department of the Town of West Hartford, encompassing 162 acres. Our demonstration farm, wildflower meadows, perennial gardens, woodland trails, and ponds are open to the public daily. We also offer a wide variety of educational farm and nature programming for folks of all ages.

Westmoor Park is an environmental, agricultural and horticultural education center dedicated to generating awareness and appreciation for the natural world.

The park encompasses 162 acres and includes a diversity of natural habitats. A particularly popular attraction is the park's demonstration farm,

which is home to a variety of barnyard animals. There is a large garden area devoted to seasonal flower beds as well as herb and vegetable gardens, and three miles of nature trails (one-half mile of which is handicapped accessible) that encourage visitors to explore the park throughout the four seasons.

The education center at Westmoor Park features an exhibit area, a nature discovery room and a heated greenhouse. There is also a spacious meeting room available for classes and community use.

Westmoor Park is maintained by experienced staff with backgrounds in biology, natural sciences and agriculture. Their commitment to quality interpretation has helped the park achieve its reputation as one of the finest environmental education centers in the state.

