



**Seymour Conservation Commission  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

Community Center Conference Room  
20 Pine Street, Seymour, CT 06483  
Thursday October 16, 2025 – 6:00 PM

COPY RECEIVED  
DATE: 10/20/25  
TIME: 11:59 AM  
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE

*Our mission is to inventory, manage, and protect town open spaces and natural resources while preserving Seymour's historic character. We promote and foster public appreciation of the environment through education, community engagement, sustainable practices, and conservation efforts that enhance watershed resources.*

**Members Present:** Joe Niezelski, Jr., Chair (6:08); Nancy Chucta; Marietta Sabetta

**Others:** Jeff Baryla, Advisor

**Members Absent:** Karen Bertapelle, Vice-Chair; George Cipows

**1. Call to Order**

*Chair Joe Niezelski, Jr. called the meeting to order at 6:09 PM*

*All present stood, saluted the flag, and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.*

*Chair appointed Jeff Baryla to Secretary Pro Tempore for this meeting.*

**2. Public Comment**

*None.*

**3. Approval of Minutes**

**A. July 17, 2025 Minutes**

**B. August 21, 2025 Minutes**

**C. September 18, 2025 Minutes**

*Motion by N. Chucta to approve the July, August, and September 2025 regular meeting minutes, as presented. Seconded by M. Sabetta.*

*J. Baryla requested that everyone confirm they've read all the past minutes above, and asked if there were any changes to be made before voting. All confirmed with no changes. Motion carried 3-0.*

**4. Reports & Correspondence**

J. Baryla, Trail Manager, summarized the Trails Report **[Attached]** for the board. These monthly reports will be presented to the Beautification Commission instead starting in 2026, as the information contained within is more relevant to that board. A copy of these reports will, of course, be forwarded to any commissioner or town staff upon request. The Conservation Commission received no correspondence this month.

**5. New Business**

**A. Kieth Mitchell Forest**

The First Selectwoman will have a ribbon-cutting for the acquisition of 56 Squantuck Road on Tuesday, October 21 at 9:00 AM. Later that same day, Peter & Barbara Rzasa are presenting 'The Hidden History of Keith Mitchell Forest and Squantuck' at 6:30 PM in the Seymour Library. The town purchased 56 Squantuck from the South Central Regional Water Authority in order to expand a portion of the town forest. This acquisition allows for a seamless hiking trail to be cut on either side of Fourmile Brook. Once complete, the trail will bring visitors from the parking lot at Eagle Landing to the reservoir and beyond.

**6. Old Business**

**A. Status of Outreach & Education**

**Review of 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Sunset Hike (Oct 4, 2025)**

All attendees had a great time, but turnout wasn't as high as anticipated. Board members discussed possible reasons for this and brainstormed ideas on how to increase attendance at future public events. Some of these included: hanging flyers in the community center and/or library, more aggressive promotion through Facebook posts, trying to pick a date that doesn't coincide with other major local events (e.g., Seymour Pink, Ansonia Harvest Fest), asking for the event to be posted and promoted on the town's website and/or community calendar, and having trailhead kiosks constructed to advertise all our events.

Jeff attended the CT Trail Symposium on Friday October 3. The breakout sessions he went to were: **CT Trails Program: What's New with CT Trail Census and CT Trail Finder, Building Out an Urban Greenway Network: Opportunities, Challenges and Lessons from New Haven, and Ecological Design for Trail Projects.** He also joined a group walk on the urban and historic Cheney Trail, in downtown Manchester.

Jeff noted that the Beautification Commission will be approving their volunteer Work Party schedule later this evening for the remainder of October through mid-December. It will be included in the final monthly **Trails Report**, attached to this meeting's minutes.

Reminder that CACIWC's Annual Meeting/Conference will be on Saturday November 15. As a member of this association, commissioners/staff receive reduced price on admission.

#### **B. Updates on 2025 Goals**

- Newtown's Native Plant Policy has been placed into the Commission's GoogleDrive.
- Nancy collected more seeds: bee balm, coneflower, partridge pea, and others.
- Brief discussion took place on suggested site visits, with potential dates and times.
- Jeff would like everyone's "Top 3 Wish List" for our properties at the next meeting.

#### **C. 'The Seymour Sun'**

The next issue will be out December 20. Jeff is now accepting articles for consideration.

#### **7. Any Other Business**

Commissioners must prepare the 2026 regular meeting schedule for approval next month

#### **8. Public Comment**

None.

#### **9. Adjournment**

*Motion by M. Sabetta. Seconded by N. Chucta.*

*All in favor (3-0). The meeting adjourned at 7:13 PM*

Respectfully Submitted,

*Jeff Barysa*

Secretary Pro Tempore/Advisor to the Commission

***Seymour Conservation Commission will next meet on Thurs Nov 20 at 6:00 PM.***

## **[Attachment 1] Trails Report for October 16, 2025**

### **Little Laurel Lime Ridge Park [LL]**

Work Party held on 10/02 & 10/04 (2.5 hrs total). Trail was inspected prior to the annual Sunset Hike. Footing was improved slightly in one area. The newly restored original section isn't getting as much foot traffic as the unofficial route. So, leaves aren't getting moved or crushed as often as they should be. I went over this section with a leaf blower prior to the public hike, and attempted to make the original path more visible to encourage use. The unsanctioned trail/route is unsustainable and badly eroded. It will be decommissioned after entry points are addressed.

### **Paramount (pollinator garden) [PPG]**

No work or maintenance performed. Next Work Party will be on Saturday October 18, 9:30 AM.

### **Keith Mitchell Forest [KMF]**

No work or maintenance performed. There will be a ribbon cutting for the newly acquired parcel on Tue Oct 21 at 9 AM. The next Work Party is scheduled for Saturday October 25 at 9:30 AM.

### **Gary Park (18 Osprey) [GP]**

I've continued to manage the mugwort and knotweed on Thursday mornings when I'm available.

### **Fountain Lake (North and South parcels) [FLN/FLS]**

Work Party at FLS 09/27 (2.5 hrs). Work Party at FLN 10/11 (2 hrs). Did cut stump treatments (paint dauber application) at both parcels. South Loop Trail had lots of stump growth from our spring cuts. North Loop Trail had never been cut. Only went off-trail in sections where invasive plants were really noticeable and obvious (primarily *Euonymus alatus* and *Berberis thunbergii*).

### **Rolling Hills Forest [RHF] (Land Trust parcel)**

Saturday Oct 18 would be a great day to site visit RHF, following the work party at Paramount.

### **Other**

- I'm still drafting my report on 24 Chucta, which I will forward to the Seymour Land Trust. I may include recommendations for Rolling Hills, too, pending a site visit and any observations made.
- I'm asking commissioners to visit Seymour Dog Park with me. Perhaps on Sat Nov 1? Invasive plant management is needed, and I'd like your feedback on the location for the rainbow bridge.
- We are penciled in for Sun Nov 9 to do the public event at SLT. Will confirm with Alex Danka.
- Sat Nov 15 is the annual meeting & environmental conference for CACIWC. No Work Party!

### **Upcoming work party schedule (as approved by the Seymour Beautification Commission)**

|                       |                   |                     |                   |
|-----------------------|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| Sat Oct 18 at PPG/RHF | Sat Oct 25 at KMF | Sat Nov 1 at LL/SDP | Sat Nov 8 at PPG  |
| Sun Nov 9 at SLT      | Sat Nov 22 at KMF | Sat Dec 6 at PPG    | Sat Dec 13 at KMF |

All Saturday events start at 9:30 AM. Sunday event is tentative with a 1:00 PM start time.

Thank you!

*Jeff Barysa*  
**Trail Manager**