



Seymour Beautification Commission REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Community Center Conference Room
20 Pine Street, Seymour, CT 06483
Thursday October 16, 2025 – 7:00 PM

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

Our duty is to oversee and manage town-owned parcels and open spaces through routine maintenance or enhancement, and to monitor all passive recreational trails. We shall develop work plans, produce maps, and ensure the safety of residents by promoting trail rules.

Members: Stuart Brannen, Chair; Nancy Chucta, Vice-Chair; Jeff Baryla, Secretary/Trail Manager; JoElle Anderson

Others: Rocky Stone, Seymour Land Trust; Allie Miller, Seymour Land Trust

Absent: Zachary Succow

1. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Brannen called the meeting to order at 7:14 PM

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

2. Public Comment

None.

3. Approval of Minutes

A. August 21, 2025 Meeting Minutes

B. September 18, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Motion by N. Chucta to approve the August and September 2025 Minutes, as presented.

Seconded by J. Anderson. There was no discussion. Motion carried 4-0.

4. Reports & Correspondence

Jeff reported on his research into the history of the Gary Park area. Using the interactive 1934 Fairchild map and comparing it to modern satellite images, he determined that much of the playing field at Gary Park was a meadow, and the wooded area outside it already had signs of early succession by 1934. Therefore, he believes most of the native plants observed in this area are from the existing seed bank and not intentionally planted.

On 09/16, Jeff participated in the US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) webinar 'Finding Refuge in Suburbia: Managing Forests for Habitat in an Urban Environment'. The next free USFWS webinar 'Mature and Old Growth Forests' will take place on Tuesday Oct 28 from 12:00-1:30 pm. All webinars are recorded for later viewing, as well.

Stuart mentioned that he, Jeff, and Marietta from the Conservation Commission attended the Seymour Land Trust (SLT) Meeting on October 5. The other commissioners and representatives from SLT then engaged in a brief discussion on the results of that meeting.

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 built 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.

B. Approval of Work Party Schedule

Jeff presented the following schedule for the rest of October into mid-December:

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

S. Brannen motioned to approve the upcoming work party schedule as presented.

Seconded by N. Chucta.

The November 9 event is pending approval and confirmation from Land Trust President. There will be no Work Party on Nov 15 due to CACIWC's Conference happening that day.

Board voted 4-0 to approve the schedule as presented.

C. Fields, Forests, and Streams Event at Seymour Land Trust

Jeff shared that, following the Oct 5 Land Trust meeting, Alex asked him if he'd be willing to present an event at the building to discuss native/invasive plants. Jeff commented that this was a great idea and agreed to participate. Later, upon flipping through his Project Learning Tree Environmental Educational Activity Guide, Jeff came across activity 48: 'Field, Forest, and Stream'. This activity seemed as though it was tailored specifically for the Legion Pool property. It focuses, instead, on the different characteristics of field, forest, and stream ecosystems, breaking visitors into three groups to visit each site and record their observations. Jeff believes this would be a better introductory event. He can present another event in early 2026 to discuss invasive plants, just before they all emerge.

6. Old Business

A. Annual To-Do List Update

The board's to-do list [**Attached**] had only minor changes and updates made.

B. Status of Volunteers, etc.

No new volunteers or requests this month.

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

Rocky stated that he sees great potential in this board's collaboration with the Land Trust.

9. Adjournment

J. Anderson made a motion to adjourn. N. Chucta seconded.

All in favor (4-0). The Meeting adjourned at 8:20 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeff Barysa

Secretary/Trail Manager

Seymour Beautification Commission will next meet on Thurs Nov 20 at 7:00 PM.

Attachment – Seymour Beautification Commission's 2025/2026 To-Do List

Status & General Maintenance

- ☐ Boundary markers to be posted at all properties (fall/winter)
- ☐ Universal signage for all properties. Ask Land Trust what future plans are for their parcels.

Kieth Mitchell Forest (188 & 34. Eagle Landing, Falls Trail, Great Hill Reservoir)

- ☒ Continue action plan for controlling invasive plants, replacing them with native plants
- ☐ Long-term plan to work on details outlined in CERT report (after RWA parcel purchase)
- ☐ Improvements to Falls Trail, connection to Eager Beaver Trail (north/west side of Brook)

Little Laurel (36 Tibbets Rd. Perimeter Loop, Cave Trail, and paper street)

- ☐ Per CT DEEP (A. Urbano/P. Picone), close all access points but one to motorized vehicles and install a locked gate at the final point for official municipal and emergency access only.
- ☐ Per CT DEEP (Urbano), notify nearby residents of ATV laws and ask them to report violators
- ☐ Install trail cams, monitor activity (suggestion: T. Gallagher, Shelton Natural Resource Mgr.)
- ☐ Decommission all unsanctioned and illegal trails, especially those near vernal pools
- ☐ Fix/Address drainage issues; Restore upland habitat between the two large vernal pools
- ☐ Finalize/Promote only official trail(s) (produce map and send to NVCOG / CTtrailfinder.com)

Fountain Lake North (131 Davis Rd i.e., North Loop Trail)

- ☐ Look into native shrubs that can be hedge/privacy rows. Acquire and plant in key areas.
- ☐ Restore original trail. Partner with BSA to build 2 or 3 footbridges for stream crossings.

Fountain Lake South (899 Fountain Lake Rd i.e. South Loop Trail, Lemay's Pond)

- ☐ Meet with Derby & Ansonia boards to discuss ATVs (possibly form joint citizens' focus group)

Paramount Pollinator Garden (21/22 Paramount Drive, paper street)

- ☒ Continue mapping/identifying invasive plants on property. Create a list of native alternatives.
- ☐ Meet with Scouts and Culture & Arts Commission to share ideas & proposals [mid-2026]
- ☐ Preliminary design and layout of native/pollinator garden [mid-to-late 2026]

Gary Park (18 Osprey)

- ☐ Meet with Scouts to discuss preferred native plants & interpretive trail design suggestions
- ☐ Survey and flag narrow connection to Osprey (part of our 2026-2036 Greenways Plan)

Seymour Dog Park (10 Moss/1 Colony)

- ☐ Invasive plant management around parking area and pond. Schedule cut-and-paint party.
- ☐ Conduct site visit and come up with potential locations and designs for Rainbow Bridge.

- Land Trust Parcels -

(24 Chucta)

- ☒ Trail Manager to submit a report to the Land Trust with BMPs for invasive *Akebia quinata*.

(338 Roosevelt)

- ☐ Organize Clean-Ups [Spring 2026 – Fall 2027], similar to how KMF was done a few years ago
- (2 Butternut/25 Maple Ridge, paper streets)
- ☐ Ask SLT about their land/forest management plan here and potential future design(s)
 - ☐ Update and Revise the outdated Seymour Land Trust Trail Guidebook (on the Town website)