



Town of Seymour
Conservation Commission (CNC)

Thursday, April 23, 2026 6:00 PM

Regular Meeting Minutes

Christopher Willis Conference Room
20 Pine Street 2nd Floor, Seymour, CT 06483

COPY RECEIVED
DATE: 4/30/26
TIME: 2:00am
TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE

Members Present: Chairman Joe Niezelski, Jr., Vice-Chair Karen Bertapelle (6:20); Nancy Chucta; Marietta Sabetta

Others: John McKenzie, Land Use Dept Liaison; Jeff Baryla, Advisor

Members Absent: George Cipows

1. Call to Order

Chair Joe Niezelki, Jr. called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM

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

Chairman appointed Jeff Baryla to Secretary Pro Tempore for this meeting.

2. Roll Call

A quorum was established.

3. Public Comment

None present. The commission also received no written request for comment.

4. Approval of February 19, 2026 Minutes

Motion by M. Sabetta to approve Feb 19, 2026 regular meeting minutes as presented.

Seconded by N. Chucta. No discussion. Motion carried 3-0.

There was no meeting held in March.

5. Reports & Correspondence

A. Monthly Trail Manager's Report

Commissioners reviewed the report. There were no questions, comments, or corrections.

B. Emails/Letters to Commission

Baryla read all emails received since the last meeting. Commissioners briefly discussed.

K. Beratapelle arrived at 6:20 PM.

6. Old Business

A. Review of 2026 CLCC Conference

Chucta and Baryla shared their experiences with all board members, noting which sessions they decided to attend and what they liked most about this year's conference.

B. Discussion on Annual Earth Day Hike

The board briefly discussed event itinerary, route, and other details. The hike is April 25.

7. New Business

A. Information on CT DEEP Resilient Forestry Practices Grant

This grant was announced on March 3. In order to be apply, a municipality must have a population of less than 50,000 and have a Forest Management Plan that outlines at least one primary resilient forestry practice, and optional secondary goals. J. Niezelski, Jr. and J. Baryla responded to an open public Request for Information (RFI), and were contacted

by representatives from CT DEEP. The two will be meeting DEEP Service Forester David Beers at Keith Mitchell Forest on Wed, April 29. David will draft a Forest Management Plan for the Town. Should Seymour decide to apply, up to \$150k would be available with no match required. Applications are expected to open sometime in June.

Some examples of eligible **Primary Practices**:

a. Tree Regeneration with Deer Protection (NRCS CPS612)

- Maintains or increases extent of forest ecosystems, Enhances forest recovery following a disturbance, Maintains/Enhances existing carbon stocks while retaining forest cover
- Protects saplings from browse, ensuring carbon sequestration potentials are met
- Plantings stabilize soil, reducing soil erosion/sedimentation, maintain water quality
- Long-term maintenance of deer exclusions, Invasive plant establishment & spread

b. Shrub Planting (NRCS CPS612)

- Enhances forest recovery following disturbance, Maintains/Enhances existing carbon stocks while retaining forest character, Enhances/Maintains sequestration capacity through significant forest alterations, Guiding shrub spp. composition to meet expected future conditions, Planting shrubs increases woody biomass and carbon stocking
- Shrub establishment & continuity benefits wildlife/biodiversity, stabilizes soil & reduces erosion/sedimentation, maintaining soil moisture
- Long-term maintenance of plantings, Watering needs, Planting tools, materials, skill

One example of an eligible **Secondary Practice**:

Medium Mechanical Invasive Control (NRCS CPS-314)

- Removing invasive plant species increases long term carbon storage capacity associated with trees that can establish and grow absent of competition
- Removing invasives reduces competition for moisture, nutrients, and light, allowing trees and shrubs to establish and grow more vigorously
- Removing invasives allows for multiple pathways of recovery following a disturbance, increasing the likelihood of native biodiversity and longevity following a disturbance

8. Public Comment

None.

9. Adjournment

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

All in favor (4-0). The meeting adjourned at 7:01 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

Jeff Barysa

Secretary Pro Tempore/Advisor to the Commission

Seymour Conservation Commission will next meet on Thurs May 21 at 6:00 PM.

Town of Seymour
DEPARTMENT OF LAND USE & CODE COMPLIANCE
20 Pine Street 2nd Floor, Seymour, CT 06483

Monthly Trails Report for April 23, 2026

Keith Mitchell Forest [KMF]

The first (spring) clean-up of the adjacent Seymour Land Trust Parcel took place on April 11. Ten volunteers helped remove hundreds of pounds of bulk waste including several tires, drum barrels, glass bottles and more. Huge thanks to Public Works for picking up on Monday! Additional trash still exists. A second clean-up is planned for the summer. Conservation Chairman Joe Niezelski, Jr. and I will meet with State Forester David Beers April 29. David will draft a Forest Management Plan, which the Town needs to apply for the Resilient Forestry Practices Grant. Future work here will focus on trail reroutes & extensions, and some of the issues mentioned in the ERT summary.

Paramount (pollinator garden) [PPG]

Next Work Party at this location will likely take place on May 2 or May 9, weather permitting.

Little Laurel Lime Ridge Park [LL]

The town's Annual Earth Day Hike will be held here on April 25 beginning at 9:00 AM. Stuart and I walked the entire loop trail (~1.75 mi) on Sat April 18 to remove trash and resolve minor hazards.

Gary Park (18 Osprey) [GP]

The first Work Party to cut knotweed should be May 16–June 1. Second cut is early-to-mid July; third cut by mid September. A Work Party in June or Aug will be for trail maintenance/restoration.

Fountain Lake North/South [FLN/FLS]

I would like to restore the original Davis Road trailhead at some point this year, if time allows.

Seymour Land Trust [SLT]

"Places I Like To Visit" educational event on May 30 at 10 AM at the Seymour Public Library.

Other

- I will be presenting a "lightning round talk" about KMF to NVCOG on May 6, between 9am-1pm.
- Recommendations and BMPs for Land Trust properties will be sent to Alex Danka when done.
- Commissioners have still not gotten back to me on visiting the Dog Park. I would very much like feedback and suggestions on rainbow bridge details prior to drafting any initial plans.

Proposed upcoming event schedule (pending final approval by the Beautification Commission):

Sat Apr 25 9 AM Earth Day Hike at LL	Sat May 2 9:30 AM Work Party	Sat May 9 9:30 AM Work Party	Sat May 16 9:30 AM Work Party
Sat May 30 10 AM Part 3 of Educational Series (Library)	Sat Jun 13 9:30 AM Work Party	Sat Jun 20 9:30 AM Work Party	

All planned Work Party events after May 1, 2026 are based on job/task priority, not location.

Thank you!

Jeff Barysa
Trail Manager