

**Minutes of Friends of Auerfarm Scenic Reserve (FASR) Steering Committee Meeting
4-16-18
Town Hall, Bloomfield, CT**

Attendees: Christopher Shepard, John Maier, Jeffrey Read, Eric Hammerling, Beth Schiro, Stephen Bayer, Elizabeth Appel, Jo-Ann Bowen, John Guglielmoni, Capt. Cynthia Schneider & Sgt. Tate Begley.
Absent: Naomi Cohen & Kate Shafer.

Meeting commenced 6:35 pm.

1. Agenda: Christopher made a motion to approve. Jo-Ann seconded. The agenda as written passed.
2. Minutes: There were no minutes to review.
3. Special Guests: Capt. Cynthia Schneider & Sgt. Tate Begley were special guests as CT Environmental Conservation Police, which is part of CT DEEP. Auerfarm is in their Northwest district which covers a large area of the state. Six officers cover the whole NW district. There are two on during the day and one at night. The dispatch number is 860-424-3333. If there is a violation, the patrolling officer will be contacted by the Park Ranger, or there may be a first call to local law enforcement. Particular issues for these officers would be illegal hunting and poaching. Officers Schneider and Begley reported the entire force will decrease in size over the next year due to planned retirements. The group expressed appreciation to the officers for attending the Friends meeting this evening.
4. Governance
 - a. Proposal to be a CFPA advisory committee: Beth and Stephen represented the group to the CFPA board in March. The board approved status of FASR as a committee of CFPA. Eric mentioned the committee's [operating guidelines](#) are well thought out and will further the CFPA mission. Periodically, FASR will update the board. Christopher appreciated the efforts of Beth and Stephen and Naomi and Elizabeth in drafting the operating guidelines.

Special attention to article 3 stating that all Steering Committee members of FASR need to be members of CFPA.

Christopher asked that members sign up as a volunteer with CFPA and when doing so, pick "other" category. There is a volunteer handbook and form to be completed acknowledging receipt of the handbook. John Guglielmoni mentioned there might be a State volunteer form that needs completion prior to work on the property.

Christopher presented a conflict of interest document, and Jo-Ann moved to adopt the conflict of interest policy which passed unanimously upon vote. Eric mentioned he is our designated liaison to CFPA and will attend steering committee meetings as a nonvoting member.
 - b. Officers: Christopher mentioned we have a process to match officers' terms to the calendar year. The decision will be postponed until the May meeting. A motion was made to extend the current terms of existing officers through May, which was approved unanimously. An email will go to the at-large membership to allow them to nominate officers for election in May.
5. Infrastructure

- a. State actions: John Guglielmoni presented an update on “what is new” in the park. Asbestos abatement has been completed, but there is a large amount of debris. Eversource will finalize the electrical disconnect. Balbrae resident group has inquired about building demo near the Condos and the broad time for demolition is after recreational season, with November 1st as the target date.

Seasonals are being interviewed, and there is a large applicant pool. John is working on arranging a gate and sign. Christopher asked John to reach out to 4-H to see if Master Gardeners program will expand.

John mentioned the Scenic Reserve is being managed passively for wildlife. There is no specific plan for the property, but DEEP will focus on safety and security. Christopher is asking about a longer range management plan for use. Eric mentioned FASR might host a visioning session to get people in the community thinking on how to use the property. John will outline his top 10 activities, and FASR will work to get the community more involved. John reminded the group that the Windsor Locks Canal Friends group does a yearly update with a speaker and that might be a model for FSAR going forward.

- b. Trail development: Eric has no update for trails. They are working with 2 people at MDC on permission to cross MDC property for future trail from Auerfarm. Jo-Ann has found Ted Cole, who has experience developing accessible trails.
- c. Landscaping: Several volunteers are working to identify plants around the existing buildings and on the hill. Only native plants can be transplanted. John will send Christopher a list of permitted plants. Beth mentioned that she met with Carol Stanley who was concerned about invasive species on the grounds.

6. Outreach Programming

- a. Legislative Day 3/27: Beth updated her activity at Legislative Day. Several legislators attended the event. Eric stated there was good energy at the event. Beth Bye did become a sponsor for the constitutional amendment SJ35, and the group is reminded to contact their representatives before the legislative session ends May 9, 2018.
- b. CT Trails Day Saturday 6/2: Auerfarm will again be represented at Trails Weekend June 2 & 3, and events are listed on the Trails Day website. Kevin Gough of the Wintonbury Land Trust will lead a walk to find Bobolink birds on Auerfarm.
- c. Other: E-bird website now lists Auerfarm, and several species have been identified on Auerfarm and posted on the site. Beth is in touch with the president of Audubon, Mary Peretto. John reminded the group that no permit is needed for birding.

7. Other: REI is having a pre-opening party (invitation only) April 26. Eric mentioned Gov. Malloy will attend and that the focus will be public lands and outdoor recreation. Eric will send an invitation to all Steering Committee members.

8. Next meeting: The next meeting will be Monday, May 21 at Bloomfield Town Hall. Planned future meetings are July 16, September 17, and November 19.

9. Christopher motioned to adjourn, and Stephen seconded.