

REPRESENTATIVE POLICY BOARD

LAND USE COMMITTEE

MAY 14, 2025

MEETING TRANSCRIPTION

Mark:

Hello, everybody. Okay, recording.

Okay, everybody, I'm calling the meeting to order, the Land Use Committee Meeting of the Regional Water Authority on today's date, May 14th. Okay, safety moment. Despite progress in mental health initiatives, more than 30 million people in the U.S. still lack access to comprehensive high quality care. According to the National Council for Mental Wellbeing..." And you can read the rest, but just remember, there are a lot of people out there just like you.

Okay, next is approval of the minutes. Can I get a motion to approve the minutes from last month's meetings?

Mike:

This is Mike, I am calling for approval for April 9th meeting minutes...

Mark:

Thank you.

Brian:

Second.

Mike:

... along with the April 17th minutes.

Mark:

Okay, thank you very much. All those in favor of approving the minutes?

Committee members:

Aye.

Mark:

Now, any abstentions? Any negatives? Okay minutes are approved. Now it's up to John Triana to bring us all about it.

John:

Yes. All right. So, today, we were supposed to meet at Skiff Street in Hamden, but we punted because of the threatening weather. The reason why we're doing this is because, sometime in the future and sometime this year, there will be a disposition application for this house.

I want to give some general background. I can't give all the details now because that's going to be part of your application that you'll be reviewing and hopefully approving. But at this point, I just wanted to give you some background of the situation.

So, of the 15 or so houses that we had, coming out of the early 2000s, this is the last one that we have to dispose of or demolish. All the others have either been demolished, such as the case in North Branford, for the three that were by North Street and Great Hill Road, or by the Amity barn on Route 63. This one is the last one to be sold. And once we do this, then we'll get back, for dispositions, more into the vein of those dealing with the land we need for the Water Reuse program, more the raw land that's Class 3 land. This one is actually Class 1 and Class 2. It is right next to the Mill River, making it almost entirely Class 1 land.

What you see here is our two photographs of the house. Well, sometime in the 2000s, I mean, I think it had been long before I started in this position in 2013, but we were aware that the town of Hamden, with the assistance from the state, were going to rebuild the bridge over the Mill River at Skiff Street. And then we were approached by the town to potentially use the front yard as the staging area for the construction project, and we agreed. We signed the license agreement with the town for that effect.

And what you see here are the photographs of the building as it looked just before everything started. So, we actually signed the license agreement with them at the end of 2015. They didn't really start actively working on the site until 2016. And you see, these photographs are late in 2016.

Front porch there, you see vine-covered. It's still vine-covered today. And also the other photograph that you see the start of the equipment being rolled onto the site, this is... Their contractor was Rotha.

So, they worked on it for two to three years, which you see here are a couple of photographs from February of 2019. They didn't just use the front yard. They used the whole yard, all in the back as well, oh, where you can see some of the materials next to the garage. The house is a one-and-a-half-story house that will-

Mark:

Excuse me, John?

John:

Yes?

Mark:

Did they make that mess there, or did we make that... Or is that what it was?

John:

Well, it wasn't that tidy, but what you're looking at here were all the materials that were being used by Rotha, the construction company hired by the town.

Mark:

did they ever clean it up?

John:

Yes.

Mark:

Okay.

John:

Yes, and I'll show you pictures of that. So, this is February 2019. So, there's more photographs from February of 2019. This is the front yard. Storage containers were out there and various supplies that they had.

And we go on to the project is done. Well, this is still while it's going on in October of 2019, where everything is wrapping up. Still storage containers have been moved around in the front yard. You can see the excavator in the backyard.

By the end of 2019 or beginning of 2020, they had completed the work on the bridge and the sidewalk. There was also a storm drain that they put the drain across the front yard of the house, as well. So, you see this photograph from 2020, in July, where all the construction material has been gone by then, as Mark asked about.

And then, later in the year, go back out there and take photographs of how it looked, and you could see the sidewalk had been improved and the bridge is now all installed. You can see, also, the bottom right photograph shows the outlet for the storm drain. Before, that drain just went right into the river. It didn't have the splash pad with it, so everything was really just going straight into the Mill River, at that point.

And that said, let me go back. See if I can... Yeah. So, what we found out, as we then started to carve the lot out for the house, was that the bridge was put too far over the property line. They put the bridge and the sidewalk over the property line rather than keep things as they were.

So, all that had to be ironed out as well as we gave them a license agreement for the storm drain. They needed an access easement for the storm drain, so we got into a back-and-forth with the town about that, that took many years to iron out. That only got ironed out about 15 months ago or something to that effect. We conveyed in total, in fee, the sidewalk and the bridge to the town, we don't want to own their bridge, and also conveyed to them an easement for the drainage that you see there.

At that point, now we were then ready to carve out the lot for the house, and we had to go to P&Z to get variances and everything else. It had to be a re-subdivision because we had already carved out parts of this property before. It wasn't a first cut. That finally got completed. The whole thing got completed a week ago, as I took the approved re-subdivision plans from P&Z, who filed them on the land records.

So, at this point, I'm ready to compose the disposition application. I will say, just other historical stuff, is that this house has not always been at this location. If you remember, or... Let's see. Did I get... You see that in the other photograph?

Yeah. All right. So, in the top left photograph, what you see there is ACES. ACES has, actually, properties on either side of this house. They're, now, trying to sell both of those properties. The ACES property that you see in the top left photograph, that was built by the New Haven Water Company.

I think I mentioned this in one of the recent meetings to you guys, is that in... What was it? In the '50s, anyway, they had a sort of fleet garage and construction and field operations all worked out of a office or a building that I think was on Church and George. The offices were on Crown Street. By the 1950s, they knew they wanted to move all the operations out of New Haven, and they looked to their own property to see where can they move things like construction and forestry and all that stuff, distribution. They settled on 205 Skiff Street, and that's the building that you see in the distance, on the top left.

They built the offices of Skiff Street in Hamden at that time. 1959 is I think when they were either started it or completed it because this house, the one on Skiff Street, was on that site, that side of the Mill River at that time. Once they built the new office for the New Haven Water Company, they moved this house from the west side of the Mill River to the east side.

When the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, now called Preservation Connecticut, looked at all of our houses, they could tell that this house was probably built in the 1800s, probably mid-1800s, when they looked in the basement and saw all the beams. The basement was a cinder block foundation, clearly from the '50s-'60s era, but the wood itself, the beams, they could tell had much earlier origins. That's how it got to be on its current location, so it hasn't been there for the 150 plus years. It's only been there for about 70 or so.

Mark:

Why did we move it from... Did we pay to move it to-

John:

Well...

Mark:

So, we must have paid to move it, right?

John:

The New Haven Water Company did in 1959-ish.

Mark:

Well, why did we pay to move it? Was there a reason we wanted to keep that house? I mean, I don't understand why we would have kept it.

John:

Yes, I mean, they...

Bob:

It was a rental property, right?

John:

Yes, it was rental property. And the powers that be in 1959 and '60, so that would have been Arthur Corbin decided that they still wanted the house, was still in good shape. They were still renting it, and so they moved it on the other side of the river.

Mark:

That's a costly move.

John:

Yes, I don't know how they did it. They did it all in one shot or they dismantled it all and rebuilt it? We don't have records to that effect.

Mark:

All right. Well, look at the chimney. The chimney, you know, it's old. That's old.

Committee members:

Mm-hmm.

Mark:

Well, that's very interesting.

John:

So, are there any other questions? If not, that's it.

Joe:

John, is it possible to ever live in that house again?

John:

Yes. I mean, it's got to be severely rehabilitated because it has got every kind of problem that you can imagine with a house that's been vacant for over 20 years. Animals have penetrated it. Water has penetrated it.

One of the problems that we had during the construction is that on the... What you see there on the left side, that's a mudroom entranceway that goes into the kitchen. So, on inclement days, the staff from Rotha would go in there to get out of the rain. And Joe Antinozzi didn't appreciate that. I didn't appreciate that. They're not supposed to be using the house at all, so we told them, "You got to get out," and then we boarded the whole thing up. At that point, they were out. So, it needs a lot of work, yes, which is true for all of the houses that we sold.

Mark:

And now we're just putting it on the market? Or we're giving it back to the Historical or giving it back to the town? I forgot which one we're doing.

John:

It would go on the market. I mean, these are more questions I shouldn't really get into.

Bob:

Shouldn't discuss, Mark.

John:

Yeah. That's more appropriate for the public hearing when we get to the disposition application.

Mark:

Representative Policy Board
Land Use Committee
May 14, 2025

Okay.

Stephen:

Hey, John, this is Stephen Mongillo.

John:

Yeah, Steve, go ahead.

Stephen:

I just want to comment to the Land Use Committee that where we are now is just a testament to your professionalism and tenacity because the town has been very slow to respond to very reasonable requests that you've made over time.

Mark:

Yes, I remember that.

Stephen:

John, and I have had a lot of conversations. It has been a very difficult process, so to get it to this point was really a great accomplishment. It is the last house.

Mark:

I imagine it was.

Stephen:

Yes, and I'm sure RWA wants to sell it and finally be done with this process.

John:

Yes, just as a matter of comparison, I was working on the disposition for this house and for Ives Street at the same time. Because, if you remember, when we had these former rental houses or buildings in the same town, we tried to get all the dispositions together, so we could have public hearings all in the same night. We didn't have to burden you with coming to X town multiple times.

In this case, I was shooting for something in early 2021, is probably what it was going to be. And Ives street was all done. It was ready. It was a plane on the taxiway, ready to take off. And Skiff Street just languished. I couldn't get the town to respond to my inquiries, my emails. Steve tried to help as much as humanly possible, and we just could not move the needle. It went so slow.

So, eventually, I said to Ted Norris, at the time, "Ives Street deserves to go. It's ready, and if we have to do two public hearings, so be it. There's no reason to hold Ives Street up anymore because it's not helping that building, at all, in its degraded state."

So, we did the... I don't remember the exact dates, but I want to say that we did the disposition for Skiff... I'm sorry, for Ives Street in late 2021, and I think you approved it in early 2022, or maybe it was all 2021, so that we sold it, I think, in 2022. And that one is now rehabilitated. We had a guy buy it, and someone, see... I believe he got a renter in there, a tenant who lives in Ives Street. So, this has been more or less ready to go, from our perspective, for four plus years.

Mark:

And this meets zoning for Hamden. That was one of the big problems, right, that you had to cut off some land to make it enough to be a piece of property that we could sell.

John:

That's correct. It's a longer story than that, but that's the Reader's Digest version.

Mark:

That's right, the Reader's Digest version.

Stephen:

Hey, John, when this comes up for sale, can someone buy... I mean, this is in the middle of a commercial area. Can someone buy this and tear it down, put up a commercial establishment?

John:

I'll answer the question generally because I don't want to talk about things that will come to you in disposition. In all the cases for the houses, they have to rehabilitate what's there. They can ask to take things down, but we have to give it their approval. So, in the cases of all the houses that we've done so far, we approved one that basically came down, and the rule is that he's got to put it up, make it look like it did as it was when we conveyed it to him. That one was the Orange house, the one on Route 34 in Orange.

All the others that we sold were basically... They worked with what was there, and they've done pretty good. We've got a couple, or one in particular that's still languishing out there, that's Johnson Road and Woodbridge, but the other ones have been worked on quite well.

The other weird thing here that... Again, it applies to all the houses. I've gotten this question for other ones before is that, can you make it into something else? Can you make it into a duplex? Can you make it into an office? Can you make it into a business? And the answer is no. In the amendment to the Enable legislation, which was first approved in 2003, and then amended in 2013, just to all the amendment in 2013 just got rid of its sunset clause. It now allowed us to work on it infinitely.

Is that whatever the building was before, it had to be in the future.

In one case, we had a barn. That barn actually got taken down because it was so bad, the one in Bethany, but all the single-family houses have to be single-family houses. We cannot change them to other things such as an office or some other use.

Stephen:

Okay, thank you.

Mark:

Okay, thank you.

John:

Yes.

Mark:

Great presentation, John. Great presentation. Are there any other questions? Okay, we're going to move on to the next item. And if anybody wants to see it, they're welcome to drive by it, right, in person?

John:

Correct.

Committee members:

But don't go in.

John:

Don't go in.

Mark:

Just don't go in. Okay, John, here you go.

John:

Yes, I'm just checking on my computer down here, and then I'll get on the horse again. Okay, Land Use Committee Summary, April 30th, we were at 92% for surface water supplies. Last year we were at 98. And then historical average 94. Note that this figure does not include all the rain that we've gotten in the last two weeks for May.

We are almost at 100% now. I believe the only thing that's kind of down is Gaillard is down a couple inches. That's about it. And we have Saltonstall is down sort of artificially. We're trying to maintain water to flow out of the reservoir so that water, when it comes into First Pond, doesn't flow back towards the intake. Usually when that occurs it is rather very turbid and cause problems for the water treatment process, so we try to maintain the downstream releases at First Pond to prevent that.

April, we have less than average rain, 2.76 inches compared to the long-term average of 4.26. And when we look at the fiscal year, we're still below average there because we endured the very dry fall of 2024. We're at 36.82 compared to the long-term average of 42.68.

Land we need for the Water Reuse program, Madison, this is a change. Now that we've signed the agreements for this, I'm happy to describe what's going on here. This is a 24-acre parcel that's in North Madison, just south of where Joe Olander lives on County Road. We signed the purchase/sale agreement with the Webers, and we have inspected the property. All the titles come back clean. We have not scheduled a date for the closing yet, but we're going to get it done before the end of this month, before the end of the fiscal year. Everything is a go, and we're happy for that because this is a property that has no frontage, has no known legal access. When the Webers accessed it, they probably exited through the old Oslander property. I don't know if you... Do you know Weber?

Joe:

Well, there's no Webers in Rockland at the present time, that I am aware of.

John:

There is one. Yeah.

Representative Policy Board
Land Use Committee
May 14, 2025

Joe:
What?

John:
He lives up there off of 79 somewhere, but on the other side.

Joe:
Oh, John?

John:
Robert is his name.

Joe:
Robert.

John:
Yes.

Joe:
Okay.

John:
The last time that I understand that he accessed the property, he came down from County Road, which had to be through the property that your family sold to us. And the last time that occurred was like 20 years ago.

If this property were to be sold to another private individual, and they wanted to do anything, whether they want to access it or build something on it, then we'd have to determine or the court would have to determine how they would get access. Well, they'll definitely have to come through our property one way or the other, from County Road or Route 79.

So to prevent that kerfuffle or dumpster fire 20-50 years in the future, we moved on this and we made a in-person sale agreement we're going through when we're going to acquire it. We border it on the west and now south, and HFA, Hammonasset Fishing Association, borders it on the north and the east. So, it's out there. It's remote. I mean, Joe can tell you. When you get out behind his property there, it's pretty-

Joe:
Clears it right up.

John:
Yes, clears it up. Gets rid of a bad annulment.

Joe:
How large is it?

John:

24 acres. I'll show you... Well, I mean, when we get past it, I'll show you a map, so you can see where it is, in space.

Cheshire, Bis property, we're corresponding with DEEP about updating the legal description in the survey for the Osmo Graham rental houses at 233 Skiff Street. We updated the survey and resent it to the Planning Office. I can report now, as I just did, that the Re-subdivision Survey has been filed in the land record, so we're good to go. And you will see the disposition application sometime later this year.

Forestry update, Casey and Josh organized the planting of 1,100 trees and shrub seedlings over various properties, including Gaillard, Peat Swamp, Brenski, Swamp, Maltby, and Saltonstall. Nathan, and just whatever our... No. Oh, met with Nathan on April 3rd, discussed Firewood Program, and he's one of our employees here. And the renewal process is a first step to developing an online renewal payment system with WebTrac. Nathan is our point person with recreation and the online vendor that we use from Vermont. He was talking to Casey about how we might use the Firewood Program in the same kind of vein.

In April, for recreation, we held a history walk at Genesee and had about 15 attendees. That was Casey and Josh running that. Bethany Horsemen worked on horse bridges at Chamberlain. We corresponded with the trail coordinator at West Rock about potentially adding trails on our property over there, near the Quinnipiac and Regicide Trails.

About 1800 trout were stocked in Maltby Lakes, and 12 of those were larger fish that had the tags on them. One was caught by an angler earlier in April, and got his prize. He gets a gift certificate, when you find one of those.

Docks were put into Lake Saltonstall, and a piece of broken railing was replaced, repaired. Four new picnic tables were purchased for Saltonstall and Maltby rec areas, and boat rentals began at Saltonstall on the 26th. Jeff got a \$750 grant from Whitetails Unlimited to assist with the kids' archery event, which he has been holding annually for the past few years.

And the Water Wagon was brought to two events by recreation staff. Rain canceled the third event.

So, at the end of April we were at 4,974 permittees, whereas last month we were at 4,842.

Mark:

That's great.

John:

That's pretty typical. We always see a-

Mark:

See a jump, yeah.

John:

... bump in the spring, and that's all the anglers getting their permits in line so that they can go fishing.

Mark:

You know that because of COVID that it really jumped. We were always at 2,000 for years, right?

Representative Policy Board
Land Use Committee
May 14, 2025

John:

Well, we got down to 4,000, and we were kind of always declining, and at this time five years ago, now, we were just above 4,000. And then after... Well, once COVID lockdown started by the later spring in 2020, including the summer, then we started rising quite dramatically where we didn't hit... Our peak wasn't hit until... I believe it was this time in 2021, where we hit over 6,500.

Committee members:

That's a [inaudible 00:29:38].

John:

Since that time, we've now come down about 1,500 permittees, and that was COVID, everything opening. That's a whole other-

Mark:

Still holding pretty good. Still holding pretty good.

John:

Yes, I mean, we're 1,000 more than we were prior to COVID.

Mark:

That's what I'm saying. That's right.

John:

That's credit to Jeff and the recreation staff there because that's a lot of people that have stuck with the program, which we're happy about. Special activity permits, three were issued by Linda in the last month. One thing that we will be doing next month, our meeting will be out in Madison. The guy who harvests the witch-hazel will be the special speaker, special topic that Bob and I talked about last month. So, we'll do that in June.

Mark:

Is that going to be in Durham? I mean, in Madison?

John:

It'll be in Madison. We're going to meet off of 79. Just like at Genessee.

Mark:

The witch-hazel harvest, that's going to be very interesting.

John:

Correct. Yes.

Mark:

Very good.

John:

Other items, encroachments and agreements with agricultural agreements, we met with the abutter for a road field to talk about our expectations, especially annual mowing to control invasives. Just corresponded with the tenant of one of the Downs Road's field about... She was asking whether or not she can put up a shed, greenhouse or beehives. Nothing has come to that.

In Madison, at 752 Summer Hill Road, we met with the abutter. He had materials that were over the line. He said he was going to remove them. I know he has removed some of them, but not all, so I'm still on him about that.

At 702 Summer Hill Road, we sent a certified letter to the abutter, met with him about our intent to reset the points and install a fence. This is an abutter who has had an encroachment there, I can see in our files, back to 2006. He moved things at one time, at that time, but then things started migrating back and got worse, so we're just going to put up a fence to end it all.

And he supplied a survey of his own that showed a different geometry to the lines than what our survey showed. But I checked his deed and our deed, and his deed matches our survey. It doesn't match his survey. So, he has got to talk to an attorney about that and tell me how those two things argue against each other. Yeah.

Greg:

What kind of stuff is he putting on there?

John:

He had a giant boat. He had a backhoe, dump truck, lots of firewood, some stone, a small storage container, a couple small sheds. I mean, it's a whole bunch of stuff.

Initially, like in 2006 and '08, when Diane first noticed it or sent him letters, then it was firewood and a pile of gravel. And the records upstairs in my office, from Diane, said that he said he was going to move them, and they checked it. They were okay with it. They didn't do any follow-up after that. But over time, you know he's back, so we're going to make sure that the fence is there to prevent repeated encroachments.

Whalley Ave in PRV, we noticed two vehicles parked there all the time. We contacted the owners, and they had them moved. And Shingle Hill Tanks, we reviewed a draft of the new license agreement with our attorney to give to the town.

At this point-

Mark:

Whalley, the avenue, that's that ice cream place, right?

John:

That's right. We have a PRV there. Our property is a little bit larger. Well, the owner of the property of the ice cream establishment asked, many, many years ago, if they could use some of our property for parking, and we allow that by a license agreement. They pay us every month something. They pay us a small figure every month so that we allow that.

Invasive plants, we treated and documented invasive plant populations in West Haven, Haddam, Hamden and North Branford, and portions of the Great Hill Road field in North Branford were cleared of autumn olive. The amount documented or mapped in the last month was about 5.5 acres, and the amount cleared was three acres.

For Arbor Day of 2025, Nicole coordinated a team of RWA staff to plant trees in East Haven and North Haven at Kroupa Pond. This is on 148 in Killingworth. We discussed ownership of the dam with engineering staff and reviewed our files, checked the site in the field. And I met with the DOT staff, a surveying crew, at the site.

Guilford for the Goat Lot Road, excuse me, we received notice from the town engineer, excuse me, that they approved an installation of a gate to prohibit vehicular access. We are just required to post a sign saying that people can still walk the town road there.

And just a weird thing in most instances, and that doesn't apply to County Road and Rockland Road, but all the other roads that went through our property on the Guilford-Madison line, there are still town roads in Guilford, but Madison had discontinued all their roads. That includes like Race Hill Road, Goat Lot Road. They're all our property now, in Madison, but in Guilford, they're still town roads. Thankfully, the town engineer was nice enough to give us a quick decision on that.

North Branford UI water-main easement, we emailed the surveyor about producing maps separately for the UI and town easements that we would hope to acquire. The Land Use Plan, we sent out the draft for the West River, Maltby, and Prospect section [inaudible 00:35:31] our staff for comments, so that's moving along.

North Branford, North Street had a gate. We researched the responsibility for the fence at the cul-de-sac at North Street and determined that we are responsible for the fence. Now, one of our police officers put in the work order for it. That had been damaged by... I don't know. It was vehicles or trees over time.

And drone flights, Josh conducted a drone flight at Whitney Dam to collect face map and information for the CBYD blueprints. This is all part of the Whitney Dam project. And then he conducted drone flights at Lake Gaillard, And the treatment plant, we've exercise the new drone detection sensors, sensors that were installed at the water treatment plant.

And then there's another handful of articles for you to read, including the decision of the Southbury encroachment where the couple cut down many trees on town property over 140. The judge sided with the town but did not grant the full amount of what the town was looking for, but still they were on the hook for 600,000, with later article said that the property owners were not going to argue it. They're just going to pay the 600,000. That was very interesting. That was the second-largest award that made it to court in Connecticut.

Any questions on anything? I'll be happy to answer.

Stephen:

Yeah, and I have more questions.

John:

Yes.

Mark:

Okay. Obviously, of course, you had to duct, right, [inaudible 00:37:03]. Who is responsible for cleaning that stuff up?

John:

Well, most of the horse trails, nobody, but we do require the Bethany Horsemen to clean it in certain locations at Chamberlain that are close to the reservoir and could easily be washed into the reservoir. This goes back several years now where they have a... They're always required to scoop the stuff off the ground if it's near the causeway, which is at the very northern end of the reservoir.

The road slants down, gets gravel and some asphalt there to a concrete bridge. They have to clear anything that is coming out of the horses there. And then the other place where it's important is over by our boat ramp because that's another asphalt entryway into the reservoir. Other than that, if they just go on the trail, it's okay. It's far enough from the reservoir or from watercourses, where it shouldn't be an issue.

Mark:

Hey, John, I saw you said something about the police report and a gate and stuff. How is our vandalism doing, since our police force isn't... Have you noticed a change to how the property is kept now because of our increased police protection?

John:

Yes, things have definitely improved. I get regular reports from the police that they've encountered trespassers out there, and the number of instances that we see have definitely gone down.

Mark:

Okay.

John:

It's not to say that they are zero. We still get them from time to time. Police are still issuing, the police that are out there on the patrol, and when they run into people, they regularly issue tickets. That's all a credit to them.

And then they're also checking recreation permit holders' permits. We get many thankful comments back from permittees saying that they're grateful for the police presence, and that we are checking permits so that the freeloaders, the trespassers aren't able to just walk the property with impunity, that they have to pay, too.

Mark:

That's excellent to hear. I mean, we went through some really tough times. What, about three, four years, maybe longer than that, of a lot of problems with the trespassers and damage and stuff like that. So, it's really good to hear that it's making a big improvement.

Anybody else have any questions for John?

Joe:

Yes, John, the Shoreline hikes, Trevor Cash, did you meet him or speak to him?

John:

We corresponded through email. I don't know if it was me or if it was Jeff. I mean, the way that we handled him was that he would get a special permit to go out and walk any of the properties to collect data on the trails, and then he was going to make a website that highlighted them. And then, also, of course, he's got to put there that a permit is required for people to access our property, our trails in those two areas.

Joe:

Okay. I was at a meeting with Madison Land Trust. He was invited to that meeting primarily because the Land Trust has quite a number of trails in Madison. And also Rockland Preserve, we have another eight to 10 trails there.

He's doing part of what's a senior graduation project. So far, he's got over 600 people hooked up to his website and whatever, so he's really gung ho, doing really a great job with this. So, it's good to see.

He's going off to college, though, but he's setting it up in such a way that he'll be able to get somebody to take his position. And he's working with a member of the Rockland Preserve Committee, who happens to be a teacher at Daniel Hand High School, who's chairing, who's actually a teacher that's backing up what he's trying to do. It's got a lot of positives to it.

John:

Excellent.

Joe:

Yes. Good.

Mark:

Okay, other land items? There's no other land items either, right?

Did we make a mistake and not approve both minutes there, or do we only approve one minutes from the meetings last month?

Bob:

I think the motion was for both of them, Mark.

Mark:

What, the motion was for both? Okay. I just want to make sure we did that right. You know I'm getting old. I don't remember it as much as I used to.

Okay. Our next regular Land Use meeting is Wednesday, June 11th, and it's going to be in Madison, I think. Right, John?

John:

Yes.

Jamie:

Representative Policy Board
Land Use Committee
May 14, 2025

Is it 4:30 or 5:30? Can you confirm?

Mark:

For that meeting? 5:30, it says here.

Jamie:

All right.

John:

Yes, it's 5:30.

Mark:

So, it's 5:30.

Jamie:

Thanks.

Mark:

The June meeting is 5:30. Okay, everybody, anybody have anything else to bring in front of us? Want to talk about any new business?

Bob:

You'll send out directions, right, Jennifer?

Jennifer:

For where? Madison? Yes.

Mark:

I think it's going to be really interesting. If anybody knows about witch-hazel, they should look it up what it's about. So, we're going to hear about it. It's very interesting.

Bob:

John, I don't know if you know this, but how much do we get from when they [inaudible 00:44:17] start trying to get the witch-hazel off of our property, how many parcels do they harvest from, and how often? Should we wait till next month?

John:

I'll answer, but you should repeat the answer for them next month. Is that, basically, the witch-hazel they'll harvest is handled like a timber sale. The foresters will work with the harvester to identify a place that has sufficient density to make it worth his time. In this case, the location... I think it's all in Guilford. It may go over the town line in Madison, a little bit. It's off the Goat Lot Road where the gate was being allowed by the town engineer.

In these cases, they're just... I don't know how often he comes or how often he requests this kind of stuff. I think [inaudible 00:45:16] was... This is the first one in couple of years at least, if not several years.

Bob:

Because I know they were in Prospect probably about five years ago.

John:

Yes.

Joe:

Somebody was on Route 79 a few years ago.

John:

That's right. Yes. I think that was just a couple years before the Prospect one. This is all the same guy. It's all the same guy who's doing all the harvesting for that distillery. I don't know how many people they employ to do the harvesting of the plants, like him, or if he's the only show in town. That that all questions to ask him.

Mark:

That's right. Hey, listen, let's not blow it. Let's wait till next month to hear about this. Anyways, maybe he'll bring some witch-hazel samples. Can I get a motion to adjourn?

Greg:

So moved.

Joe:

Second [inaudible 00:46:10].

So moved.

Mark:

All those in favor to adjourn?

Committee members:

Aye.

Mark:

Thank you very much.