I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 p.m.

II. Roll Call

Randy Yale called the roll.

Commission members in attendance were David DeFusco, Randy Yale, William Sherman, John Pepper and Robert DeVylder, Sr.

Staff present: Suzanne Simone, Environmental Planner.

Absent member (s): Bonnie Mayer.

III. Determination of Quorum

Mr. Yale determined there were enough members present for a quorum.

IV. Pledge of Allegiance

All present recited the pledge of allegiance.

V. Acceptance of Minutes – August 11, 2010 – Regular Meeting

Motion: To approve the minute of the August 11, 2010 meeting; no corrections noted.

Moved by William Sherman. Seconded by Dave DeFusco. The motion to approve the minutes was approved unanimously by Commission members present.

VI. Communications

1. Cheshire Fall Festival Vendor Application

Ms. Simone said the first communication is a copy of the vendor application for Cheshire Fall Festival.

2. Roaring Brook Hike Advertisement
Ms. Simone said the next communication is the Roaring Brook Hike advertisement; it’s listed on two websites - the Connecticut walk website at www.walkct.org and the National Public Lands Day website at www.npld.org.

3. Staff Report: Casertano Access Report

Ms. Simone reported the staff report – access report which is listed under unfinished business.

4. Confirmation of the Booth Location for the Cheshire Fall Festival

Ms. Simone said that handed out at tonight’s meeting was a confirmation of the booth location for the Cheshire Fall Festival – the Commission will occupy booth A10; and the Town will take care of putting the booth up.

VII. Calendar – Events

1. Cheshire Fall Festival- Saturday, September 11, 2010 (Rain date is Sunday, September 12, 2010)

Mr. Yale said Commission members need to decide who need to be at the event and at what time; the event starts at 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. The Commission will have coverage starting at 12:00 noon.

Commission members discussed and agreed upon coverage at the event.

Ms. Simone said she is coordinating the pick-up and return of the extra handout materials after the event; she said she requested that staff bring the 200 bags and all of the handout information (500 copies of each of the maps of Roaring Brook, DeDominics, Boulder Knoll, the Linear Trail, as well as other information and a handout for the hike and composting event).

Ms. Simone said she was hoping someone on staff would be able to bring the items over on Saturday and bring the remaining items back to the Town Hall Saturday night. She said if that is not the case she will let the members who will be staffing the end of the event know and together they can coordinate something else.

There was discussion about how the information and the banner would be displayed. The Environment and Energy Commission will share the booth.
2. National Public Lands Day- Saturday, September 25, 2010

The Commission will hold a hike of Roaring Brook to mark the National Public Lands Day on Saturday, September 25, 2010 at 10:00 to 11:00 a.m.

There was discussion regarding who from the Commission would host the event. Mr. DeFusco said he would be available.

Ms. Simone said she would inform the Commission of her availability to attend but as of now she did not think she could. She said she would send out the key point about Roaring Brook to Commission members.

3. Earth Day- Friday, April 22, 2011 (Park Bulletin listing deadline: January 10, 2011)

Mr. Yale informed the Commission about the January 10, 2011 deadline for event information to be submitted for the bulletin.

Mr. Yale said the Commission needed to decide soon if they were going to hold an event.

Ms. Simone said staff has started booking some lectures; there is going to be a wildlife biologist. She said the Friday of the week of Earth Day is Good Friday, Holy Saturday and Easter Sunday so public attendance may be sparse.

Ms. Simone explained the lectures would be held in the evenings but nothing has been schedule for the day.

Mr. Yale asked for suggestions for an event during Earth Day Week. He asked that suggested be brought up no later than the November 2010 meeting; the Commission would talk about this item again at the next meeting to try to come up with a couple of ideas and to make a decision.

VIII. Unfinished Business

1. Tip of the Month

Mr. DeFusco agreed to prepare and submit the tip of the month; he said he would come up with a topic and share it with the group.

Mr. Yale said he would follow-up on the status of the last tip of the month's; it was the one regarding recycling.

2. Casertano Subcommittee
a. Property Walk

b. Proposed Property Access and Trail Maintenance

Mr. DeFusco informed the Commission that he, Bill Sherman and Suzanne Simone took a walk through a portion of the Casertano property and scouted out potential access points and also roughed out the beginning of a trail that would connect to an existing trail.

Mr. DeFusco said Ms. Simone did some research on the vitality on two different access points.

Ms. Simone said when they went out to the property, they looked at the most obvious place to park; one was on the street, second being off on to the shoulder of the street as well as the driveway that the Town owns going to the Carmody house. She said for various reasons it was determined those three locations were not ideal for parking; specifically the Police had identified that the road is narrow and there are curvature in the road that makes it difficult to park on or immediately off the road and to do anything in the driveway area would require a lot of earth removal and cutting down of mature Hemlocks.

Ms. Simone explained she met with a Police Officer from the Traffic Division out at the site and they looked at the property across the street that is currently being farmed. She said there is already a curb cut there and there is ample room to pull in and it appears there may be area to have cars parked; there is a farm road that goes around so cars would be able to pull straight in and then back out onto that road and then come out nose first on the Marion Road instead of having to back out of that area.

Ms. Simone said they are finalized checking on the site line to install a painted crosswalk in that area and signage.

Ms. Simone said she looked at the lease for the farmed portion of the property and as of right down there is no language that authorizes parking of vehicles but the lease expires in December 2010; she said she spoke with the Town Manager about this parking issue and the timing of the lease renewal and notification sent to the renter regarding the Town’s interest in having a small area of land for parking.
Ms. Simone said from what she could tell what was growing in the area wasn’t something that was important to the farming operation; it was just a grassy weedy sort of area; the area would require minimal maintenance.

Ms. Simone said that the request for use of the property could be timed so the Town Manager and Council were aware that this request incorporated into the lease and maybe able to go into effect in January 2011.

There was about the expense involved clearing of the trail head abutting that property to remove the earth material and cut down the trees.

Mr. DeFusco stated there was an area identified on Marion Road as a potential access point; it’s a wide flat area.

There was discussion about the location of the trail access area; the area is a broad flat area that doesn’t really have a lot of mature trees; some dead trees and immature trees that could be cut.

Ms. Simone said she spoke with Public Works and they could allocate staff to go out to the site and cut down the larger trees and chip them so there is a supply of mulch so the trail connecting to the established trail could be mulched so people could visible see where the trail is.

Ms. Simone said something needs to be prepared to go to the Town Manager; she said she put a call in to the Traffic Division today so hopefully they could get something in writing to this Commission for the next meeting.

Mr. DeFusco that was suggested that a group of people be assembled in early November – a group of volunteers go in there and establish the trail itself and put it in good shape and ultimately make their way to throughout the entire property – but this would be a start.

Ms. Simone also said this would allow for Town vehicle to access the areas that are really impassable and start to chip away the really thick story of Olive.

Mr. DeFusco said if the Commission established a date then that would give Public Works the ability to prioritize their portion of the work.
The proposed trail would be a good 10’ to 12’ to allow vehicles to get up into the priority to do their chipping; Public Works could help guide the Commission regarding the specifics of the trail width.

Ms. Simone said Public Works was receptive to helping with the project; staff did not have a date to give them knowing the Commission had other things to figure out first.

The Commission talked about the trail construction and the establishment of a parking area.

Mr. DeVlyder suggested information the person leasing the land that the Town will need about ¼ acre for parking.

Ms. Simone said the parking lot would accommodate about 10 vehicles; the lot would be depicted on a map that would provide more details – they would avoid areas that are currently being farmed.

There was discussion about setting a date to move forward; staff stated that more details were needed before moving forward but the details were in the works.

Mr. Yale thanked Mr. DeFusco for this report.

3. Logo design/contest

Mr. Pepper shared with the Commission the logo design he is proposing to mark the Cheshire trails. He talked about how he came up with the logo design and that he feels the design represents open space/Cheshire trails.

The Commission reviewed the logo/sign design which was an 8” round sign depicting a hiker and the signage wording said “Cheshire Trails”, had a directional arrow and the name of the trail.

Mr. Pepper said maybe he could work with someone from the high school art department to pretty up the sign.

Mr. Pepper said wise, maybe the signs could go up around the time the work started on the unfinished trails or on the properties that are already set up.
Mr. Pepper said the logo is tied a little in with the branding of the Commission.

Mr. Pepper proposed to post the signs under the appropriate street sign, major intersection and at the trail site.

Ms. Simone said she could look into the sign regulations and getting it attached to other signs.

Mr. Yale said they needed to find out what kind of approval they needed.

Mr. DeFusco said he liked the sign – he said it was clean and visually conveys what the Commission is trying to get across.

Commission members agreed they liked the sign. The Commission talked about also using the property markers they have to also mark the trail locations.

Mr. Pepper said he had a few more details to work out.

The Commission talked about where they would have the signs made, the types of materials to use for the signs, sign size and the language to use on the signs and placement of signs. Costs need to be accessed for the production of the signs.

It was mentioned that once the designed was agreed upon they could publicize the logo in The Cheshire Herald.

Ms. Simone said she could provide the Commission with a list of businesses the Town has worked with to get signs. She would also check to see who at the Town level would needs to be involved in discussion about posting the signs and if town funds were available to make the signs.

The Commission thanked Mr. Pepper for his work on the sign logo.

4. Staff Updates

Mixville Hill Access – Draft Management Plan

Ms. Simone said she did not have a chance to speak to the Town Attorney regarding the Mixville Hill access.

Ms. Simone informed the Commission the draft management plan was sent to the Council on Mixville Hills back in November 2009; she agreed to check on the status of that.
IX. New Business

1. Cheshire Fall Festival
   a. Commissioner Coverage
   b. Materials

   The Commission reviewed commissioner coverage and distribution of materials at the fall festival under the calendar of events section on the agenda.

   Mr. Sherman would be bringing the bags donated by Shop Rite.

   The Commission talked about having the bags stuffed with the materials prior to the event.

   Mr. Pepper suggested having the draft logo on display at the fall festival.

2. Election of Secretary

   Mr. Yale opened the nominations for the election of secretary.

   Dave DeFusco nominated William Sherman for secretary. Robert DeVlyder seconded the nomination.

   There were no other nominations made. The nominations were closed.

   William Sherman was elected to serve as the Environment Commission secretary.

3. Other

   Mr. DeVlyder asked that lowlands be addressed at the next meeting. Mr. DeVlyder also asked about the birdhouses on Boulder Knoll.

   Ms. Simone reported the birdhouse project has not started yet; it is being considered to start in the winter. The Parks Department would need to set the posts in the ground.

X. Adjournment

Randy Yale called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:50 p.m.

Moved by Dave DeFusco. Seconded by John Pepper. Motion adjourned unanimously by Commission members present.
The next regular meeting of the Environment Commission is scheduled for Wednesday, October 13, 2010, at 7:00 p.m. at Town Hall, Room 115.

Respectfully submitted

Carla Mills
Recording Secretary
Cheshire Environmental Commission