

Southwinds Association, Inc. President's Report  
December 8, 2020 Annual Meeting

A. Status of 2020 Board Priorities:

1. Evaluate cause of silt buildup in Birchmill Pond and identify solutions with corresponding costs.

**Status:** On October 21, 2020, Joe Budrow, Zoning and Inland Wetlands Enforcement Agent met with Jack Kearns (Pond Committee Chairperson) Peter Bonnano (Open Space Committee Chairperson) and me to review silt and sand build up from two feeder streams that flow under Mares Hill/Southwinds Drive and Birch Mill Trail roads into Birchmill Pond. As of this writing, Mr. Budrow is exploring with Bob Doane, town engineer, ways to prevent silt and sand build up. The cost and installation of filters, if identified as feasible, would be the responsibility of the town.

2. Electronic traffic speed monitoring of Birch Mill Trail and Mares Hill Road, with subsequent reports sent Southwinds Association, Inc. property owners.

**Status:** An electronic speed monitoring system was set up on Mares Hill Road (12/27/2019 to 1/16/2020) by State Trooper Mark Roberts. A summary of findings was sent out to all members on January 20, 2020. An electronic speed monitoring system was set up on Birch Mill Trail in October, 2020. I will forward a summary of findings when it becomes available.

3. Clarify responsibilities of the Department of Public Works with respect to dangerously overhanging tree branches along South Winds Drive, Birch Mill Trail and Mares Hill Road.

**Status:** Based upon a phone conversation with Mr. August Pampel, Essex Tree Warden, the Town is responsible for a 20-foot easement along Mares Hill Road. Likewise, it is responsible for a 10-foot easement along Birch Mill Trail and South Winds Drive. The easement is measured from the edge of the pavement (e.g. Mares Hill Road) straight back 20-feet. Any tree or branch that falls within the easement is the responsibility of the Town. Anything beyond the easement, is the responsibility of the homeowner, or if on open space, Southwinds Association, Inc.

4. Monitor the installation of a new dry well, catch basin, including a six-inch overflow pipe, and new pavement on Birch Mill Trail near the entrance off Mares Hill Road.

**Status:** The work was to have been done this past spring, but was delayed. In a phone conversation with Mr. Ryan Welch, Director of Public Works, installation is now scheduled for November, 2020.

B. Other Issues Addressed during 2020:

1. Retained a Southwinds Association, Inc. member and his college friends (Shoreline Odd Jobs) to clear weeds near the trail leading to the floating dock in July, at a cost of \$300. The board wants to thank James DiLuca and his team for a difficult job well done;
2. After an August storm, six residents volunteered to clear the path from South Winds Drive to the floating dock area and picnic area. This included cutting down leaning trees, and cutting up felled trees and large branches. A note thanking all those who volunteered (Mike Bonacorsa, his stepson Griffin, Peter Bonanno, Steve Farley, Stu Fisher and Joel Severance) was sent to all homeowners;

3. An unclaimed, deteriorating canoe, near the floating dock, was removed by Just Dump It, LLC in October, 2020 at a cost of \$125.00; and
4. On at least two separate occasions in October, Southwinds residents received harassing phone calls from an individual who had breached our online membership listing. The Connecticut State Highway Patrol and Essex Town Police were notified. The Connecticut State Patrol's Dispatch phone number was given to all residents in case of further harassment.