

**Conservation Commission Meeting  
Town Hall Meeting Room  
January 5, 2017**

**Minutes**

**Attendance:**

**Members present:** William Rutherford, Lisette Henrey, Urling Searle, Sue Baker, Nancy Dickinson, Gary Silberberg, Eric Brower, Theodore Walworth III and Skip Parker.

**Staff present:** Denise Savageau and Aleksandra Moch

**Audience Present:** Jane Kochersperger; Jay Lauden; John Nelson; Robert Frangione, Frangione Engineering, LLC; Matt Popp, Environmental Land Solutions, LLC; Tom Heagney, Heagney, Lennon & Slane, LLP; William Kies, Greenwich Land Trust; Hollace Shantz.

**Commission Discussion Session** – 7:00 p.m.

**Meeting called to order** at 7:05 p.m. by Rutherford.

**1) Seating of Alternates:** none

**2) Review and approval of minutes** for December 1, 2016 regular meeting: A motion was made by Silberberg and seconded by Henrey to approve the minutes with the following corrections: Item 5-a-ii, second sentence should read, “ The First Selectman then presents a town-wide budget...” and Item 5-c should read “ Savageau stated that Dickinson, Brower, Wetmore and she would meet...” Motion carried unanimously.

**3) Correspondence:**

- a) CT DEEP magazine – *Connecticut Wildlife* – Sept/Oct 2016 issue
- b) Letter from Anne Young, Greenwich Historic Preservation Trust member and staff for the Historic District Commission dated November 23,2016. GHPT is asking for help with Environmental Assessment (Phase I and II) of Tomas Lyon’s House. Savageau explained that this type of assessment is conducted by the Dept. of Public Works. She has referred the letter to DPW and the First Selectman’s office.
- c) A letter from concerned neighbors was received regarding the proposed site development at 500 Lake Avenue.

**4) Chairman’s Report:** no report

## 5) Staff Report

### a) Administration

b) **Staffing:** Savageau stated that the office is in the process of putting out a notice to fill the position of the Conservation Resource Manager I. At the meeting with the First Selectman, it was determined that this position would remain part-time.

c) **Budget and Planning:** Savageau stated that the budget would be reduced from the full time salary to part-time salary. It will be a very challenging year with the potential loss of funding available at the state level for municipalities.

### d) Water supply

i) **Drought conditions:** Savageau stated that even though we had some rain, the reservoirs are only 43% full which is pretty low for this time of the year. She hoped to go into Spring season with 100% capacity, but in order to achieve this goal the area would have to receive above average precipitation which so far has not been the trend. The good news is that the property owners are conserving water and the water consumption is below the average for this time of year.

ii) **Water Conservation Task Forces/Workshops:** Savageau discussed measures being discussed at the state level. She has recommended that a water conservation fund, similar to the energy conservation fund that comes from a small charge on each electric bill, be established for water. This would create a needed source of funds for education/outreach programs promoting water conservation.

iii) **CT State Water Plan:** The state is working on finalizing a plan which would help to better manage the competing water uses and water conservation. A draft should be available later this year for comments.

### e) Long Island Sound

i) **Citizen Advisory Committee:** Savageau stated that the committee met last month to discuss the ways the water quality would be presented on the new report cards. The major change is reflected in separating the deep water data from the one collected within the embayments.

ii) **Blue Plan:** Savageau provided an overview of an issue with the siting of alternative energy on open space and farmland that the CT Council on Environmental Quality is looking at. Of importance is that these fall under the jurisdiction of the CT Siting Council in most cases does not require proper environmental evaluation. Because the Blue Plan is looking at the physical “uses” of LIS including for energy (wind farms) she has brought this discussion on energy sprawl to attention of the folks working on the LIS Blue Plan.

iii) **MS4 Stormwater Permit:** Savageau stated that the new report summarizing storm water management efforts in 2016 is being completed. CT DEEP requires that each

municipality details their measures used for storm water improvement and how the measures are maintained.

## 6) Committee/Liaison Reports

- a) **Parks and Recreation Board:** Baker reported that a large portion of the discussion was devoted to the Eastern Greenwich Civic Center. The main concerns were drainage, artificial turf cover for the fields and potential ice-skating ring. There will be a pilot program run this year extending the dog season at Greenwich Point. In addition, goats would be tried to control invasive species.
- b) **GRAB** (Greenwich Recycling Advisory Board): there was no meeting in December
- c) **Education/Outreach**
  - i) **Leaf recycling:** Moch stated that the program currently focuses on installation of outdoor composters and student education. The most recent bin was installed at Greenwich High School. This bin was constructed as an Eagle Scout project.
  - ii) **Earth Day Month:** Savageau stated that the staff would team with Bruce Museum to host the First Science Sunday in April. This event most likely would be used for Earth Day Month proclamation.
  - iii) **Water Supply Protection Education:** Savageau stated that the new organic waste management program would be a part of this effort. The program is going to focus on both quality and quantity as it relates to lawn care. The may include educating on the use of irrigation, fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides. In addition, it would promote enhancement of soil absorption via usage of organic matter to improve soil structure resulting in decreased storm water runoff from the landscape. She is looking at having a forum on this in the spring and has contact several partners including the League of Women Voters.
  - iv) **PTAC Curriculum Workshop:** Savageau stated that the workshop is scheduled for January 26, 2017 from 9:30 am to 11:00 am at Greenwich Library to discuss how to enrich schools' curriculum using qualified volunteers.
- d) **Harbor Management Commission:** Baker reported that there were two short meetings. Both the Conservation and Shellfish Commissions were recognized for their efforts to improve the newly drafted Harbor Management Plan.
- e) **Cemetery Committee:** there was no meeting
- f) **Energy Committee**
  - i) **Eversource/Energy Efficiency Planning:** Urling reported that the committee met with Bruce Museum to discuss an energy audit and benchmarking. A similar meeting will take place shortly with the New Lebanon School.

- ii) Green Bank – Clean Energy Rewards: \$13,500 has been received that will be used for LED lighting in one of the schools.

**7) Old Business:**

- a) POCD – Open Space Planning
  - i) Plan implementation meetings: Savageau indicated that we need to begin implementation working with our partners. This would include looking at the Conservation Zone.
  - ii) Regional Partnership meeting: was not discussed

**8) New Business**

- a) 500 and 0 Lake Avenue – Final Site Plan Special Permit (8:00 p.m.)

Chairman Rutherford provided an overview of the proceedings. All 9 members of the Commission in attendance also attended the site walk on January 4, 2017. The applicants representatives gave an overview of the proposed development for the Commission. Savageau provided a written staff report and went over key concerns with the Commission. The following attendees also provided remarks for consideration by the Commission: Nelson was concerned about a large number of trees which would be cleared for the new access. Kies worried that the open space abating the site which is owned by Greenwich Land Trust would be impacted by the increased storm water runoff and potential sedimentation during the construction activities. Shantz was concerned about land preservation and how the new development would affect soil absorption and amount of storm water draining off-site. The Commission then asked questions of the applicant and proceeded with a lengthy discussion on the proposal. Following this discussion, a motion was made by Silberberg and seconded by Henrey as follows:

*The Conservation Commission supports the findings of the Conservation Director's staff report dated January 5, 2017 as corrected and does not recommend approval of the application as presented. The Commission strongly recommends that the applicant re-work the application as follows:*

- i) *A Conservation Zone subdivision should be developed that is in keeping with low impact development guidance in the drainage manual and provides connectivity between the open space owned by the Greenwich Land Trust and the on-site wetland ensuring that critical habitat and corridors for wildlife movement are preserved. The CZ zone shown in the staff report may be used as a template for creating such a zone.*
- ii) *Access to the site should be through the existing common drive located off of Lake Ave. No access should be allowed off of Round Hill Road as this area has very steep slopes and drains directly to Horseneck Brook. Development, including deep cuts and multiple retaining walls, of such a steep slope, much of which is in the vicinity of*

*25% is not in keeping with the POCD.*

- iii) To mitigate for any additional disturbance to the on-site wetlands, it is recommended that the applicant investigate the potential to reconnect the currently bisected wetland corridor along Lake Avenue by the existing drive. Modifying a portion of the existing driveway to include a “critter tunnel” or a short metal grate span would allow for the unfettered movement of species.*
  
- iv) The area off Round Hill should be denied as an access way and the area preserved for as a scenic vista, roadside forest, and protected vegetated slope to the adjacent open space property. The 2009 POCD calls for the protection of scenic views including “views from the public right-of-way which greatly add to our perception of openness and community character...” The Plan recommends further that other roads, including Round Hill Road, be evaluated to raise awareness of important character elements and possible designation as scenic roads.*

The motion carried unanimously.

As stated in the staff report, the plan has not been thoroughly reviewed for storm water management or E&S controls. Given that the Commission is recommending substantial changes to the plan, a more thorough review will take place once the final layout is determined. It should be noted, however, that the Commission is very concerned about erosion on the steep slope and is not sure that the proposed rain garden will adequately handle runoff from the site. Additionally, the E&S control plan does not address controls during construction. How runoff is handled during construction, especially near the slopes on the west side of the property will be critically important to protecting the existing open space parcel and associated wetlands and watercourses.

## 9) Adjournment

A motion was made by Baker and seconded by Silberberg to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 10:00 p.m.

Submitted by,

Aleksandra Moch  
Environmental Analyst