Conservation Commission Meeting
Town Hall Meeting Room
January 8, 2015

Minutes

Attendance:

Members present: William Rutherford, Eric Brower, Sue Baker, Gary Silberberg, and Theodore H. Walworth, III.

Staff present: Denise Savageau and Aleksandra Moch

Audience Present: Hans Christian Thalheim, Board of Parks & Recreation.

Commission Discussion Session – 7:00 p.m.

Meeting called to order at 7:15 p.m. by Rutherford.

1) Seating of Alternates: Walworth was seated for Henrey

2) Review and approval of minutes for the November 6, 2014 meeting: A motion was made by Silberberg and seconded by Baker to approve the minutes with the following correction: under section 6.e Harbor Management it should read “…there was a meeting of the subcommittee attended by John Gaucher…”

3) Review of Correspondence:
   a) Savageau distributed the winter copy of CT Wildlife.
   b) Savageau distributed a copy of an email from Anne Young regarding the Byram Cemetery.

4) Chairman’s Report: Rutherford commemorated selectman, David N. Theis who passed away suddenly. He will be remembered as a strong supporter of the Conservation Commission and understood the need for institutional knowledge on local boards. He will be missed.

5) Staff Report:
   a) Administrative
      i) Budget 2015-16: Savageau reported that the First Selectman will present his budget at the February RTM meeting. Discussion ensued as to the importance of Conservation Commission budget having the upgraded position in the First Selectman’s budget. Rutherford will work with Savageau and the board to coordinate our message through the budget process.
iii) **Operations Plan FY 2015**: Savageau distributed a copy of the submitted operational plan to Commission Members.

b) **Emergency Operations/Climate Change Adoptions**
   i) **Hazard Mitigation Grant Program**: Savageau announced that she has received approvals for three additional applications.
   ii) **Ecosystem Services Restoration Grant**: Savageau stated that she has not heard any news regarding the grant designations, but she will be speaking at UCONN about the proposed methods planned for shoreline protection.

iii) **Community Resiliency Planning – Hazard Mitigation Plan – SWRPA**: Savageau reported that the planning meeting on the new plan was held December 18th and was very well received. SWRPA will be finalizing the draft plan and presenting at a public hearing date tbd. She also stated that SWRPA is now officially the Western Connecticut Council of Governments (WCCOG). Savageau will continue working with WCCOG on the updating the Hazard Mitigation Plan for the Town.

c) **Watersheds**
   i) **Long Island Sound**
      1) **Regional Conservation Partnership Program**: Savageau reported that the Agriculture Secretary is coming to Connecticut on January 15, 2015 to announce funding for a Conservation Project related to the Farm Bill Initiatives. She has been invited to Hartford for the announcement and is hoping that the grant will be awarded to Long Island Sound Watershed protection proposal.

d) **Wildlife/Fisheries Habitat**
   i) **Greenwich Point Habitat Assessment and Restoration**: This is a cooperative project with P&R. Savageau stated that Conservation Commission staff had been mapping invasive plant species over the Greenwich Point area. This spatial data will help Spaman and the Conservation staff to develop a comprehensive invasive species management plan for the park.
   ii) **Fishway – upcoming season**: Savageau stated that CT DEEP will be repairing the old fish counter for the upcoming season. Goclowksi is working on this with DEEP and will be planning for the volunteer training.

e) **Status Reports**
   i) **POCD – Open Space Plan Update**: Savageau handed out a copy of the draft to Conservation Commission members for their review and comments. This report will be maintained as a work in progress with the ability to update the data as needed. The next Open Space Committee meeting is scheduled for January 21, 2015 at 2 p.m. This will be the last meeting before the plan is released for public comments. One of the new items in the plan is recommendation for updating the conservation zone subdivision regulations to make them more attractive. All Commission members are invited to attend this important meeting.

   ii) **Byram Cemetery**: Savageau stated that Historical Perspectives, Inc. is finalizing their report. A site walk will be scheduled.
6) Committee/Liaison Reports

a) **Parks and Recreation Board**: Baker reported that Franco provided an update on the Old Barn project at Greenwich Point. Franco stated that the Town will provide the Greenwich Point Conservancy a one year license to enable them to do the work. When the license expires, the building will be turned back over to the Town. The license should be finalized in the next few days, work should commence shortly, weather permitting. At Parks and Recreation Board meeting, Joseph Siciliano displayed some pictures of Cos Cob Park. It is expected that the soft opening of the park will happen in February with a formal opening in mid-March or early April. At the meeting Nancy Caplan advised that the Town of Greenwich Foundation website has been launched. Greenwich Point Conservancy and the Friends of Greenwich Point are having an event to celebrate the 70th year since Greenwich Point has been purchased by the Town. Following Baker’s report, a discussion ensured about the IBA report being prepared for Greenwich Point.

b) **GRAB** (Greenwich Recycling Advisory Board): was not discussed

c) **Education/Outreach**: Savageau announced that Parkway School became a Green Leaf School. The next goal for them is to become a Green Ribbon School. This title is national and requires meeting several rigorous conditions. Both, Savageau and Gayle Hagegard were recognized by the school for their involvement in this program and by the Board of Education. There is a hope that more schools will follow the path. Savageau indicated that she hoped to schedule the Environmental Round Table for the end of January.

d) **Energy Committee**: was not discussed

e) **Harbor Management Commission**: Baker stated that there was a meeting in December which was focusing on the Commission’s jurisdiction. Savageau stated that the HMC should focus on beaches and mooring. Reaching further will be duplicative and may result in conflict with other departments and their jurisdictions and statutory responsibilities.

6) **New Business**: was not discussed

10) **Other/Announcements**: none

A motion was made by Walworth and seconded by Silberberg to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Submitted by,

Aleksandra Moch