

**Conservation Commission Meeting  
Cone Room  
February 7, 2019**

**Minutes**

**Attendance:**

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

**Staff present:** Patricia Sesto, director of environmental affairs, Sarah Coccaro, conservation resource manager, and Aleksandra Moch, environmental analyst

**Audience Present:** Tony D'Andrea, Rocco V. D'Andrea, Inc. and William Kenny, William Kenny Assoc.

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

**Meeting called to order** at 7:03 p.m. by Rutherford

- 1) Seating of Alternates:** Walworth was seated for Searle and Parker for Brower during the site plan review session for 42 Dublin Hill Road.
- 2) Review and approval of draft minutes:** A motion was made by Rutherford and seconded by Baker to include February 5<sup>th</sup> special meeting minutes (site walk).
  - January 3, 2019 regular meeting: a motion was made by Silberberg and seconded by Dickinson to approve the minutes, as corrected by Brower. The motion carried 7-0-0
  - February 5, 2019 special meeting: a motion was made by Dickinson and seconded by Silberberg to approve the minutes as presented. The motion carried 7-0-0
- 3) Review of Correspondence:** Connecticut Wildlife magazine was distributed to the Conservation Commission members. Sesto pointed out one of the articles on the new research conducted by CT DEEP and CT Agricultural Experiment Station on the lone star ticks in south Norwalk.
- 4) Chairman's Report:** Rutherford reached out to the office of the First Selectman to meet and provide an update on the Conservation Commission operations under the new Director of Environmental Affairs.

Rutherford reordered the agenda, moving the Planning and Zoning Referrals to 8 pm.

## 6) 2019 Priorities

In an effort to maintain focus within the work of the commission, members sought to establish priorities for the upcoming year. Prior to the meeting, Sesto emailed a listing of the work currently underway and added submitted comments. She felt this exercise is important to help field requests for participation from the many conservation-minded groups in town.

Sesto explained the order of the listed topics was not meant to confer any ranking. She called commissioners attention to specific wording; noting there is a difference in effort for tasks that begin with “support.” GCC is not the lead on these efforts. Discussion ensued. A topic identified as “Cultural, Historic, and Scenic Resources” needs to be added to the list. This topic was seen as one the commission would be poised to respond to rather than proactively seeking out projects. The exception being scenic roads, which Dickinson stated is likely to be more active. Also, protection of stonewalls as cultural features and hibernaculum was highlighted.

Henrey suggested the commission pursue a tree ordinance to manage tree cutting on private property. Members shared their views, with most indicating this would be a big project and the likelihood of success is doubtful. Sesto noted she is not aware of any town in Connecticut with such an ordinance. It was the consensus of the members to continue to use existing regulations to minimize tree loss.

After the review and comments from the Commission members identified Water Supply, Plan of Conservation and Development, and Community Sustainability as the top priorities.

## 7) Staff Reports

A detailed report for this topic was prepared by Moch and Cocco and forwarded to the Conservation Commission members prior to the meeting. The report included:

### a) Conference/Program reminders:

- Climate Adaptation Academy – Legal Issues III: Road Flooding, January 25<sup>th</sup>: Rutherford was pleased with the Conservation Commission spearheading the resiliency study of coastal areas which will put the town ahead of other municipalities in addressing climate change.
- Winter Energy Program, “Economically Compelling Energy Savings – Accessing technical and financial resources” Friday, February 22, 2019, 8 am at the Boy’s and Girl’s Club of Greenwich  
Cocco encouraged the members to respond to their invitations.
- Beach Cleanup at Tod’s Point, Sunday March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1-3pm.
- CT DEEP Water Quality Conference April 5<sup>th</sup>

- b) Fisheries/Wildlife: Cocco was contacted by Joe Cassone, former Conservation Assistant who was previously involved in an eel capture project, where he transported eels upstream in the Byram River. The CT DEEP is looking to expand the eel habitat deeper into the upper reaches of the river.

c) Education/ Outreach:

- Pollinator Pathway initiatives
- Green School Committee
- Skip the Straw
- UConn/Greenwich Partnership
- Waste Reduction Program
- *Phragmites* removal at Bruce Park – Parks and Recreation

**7) Old Business**

- a) High Water Marker at the Holly Grove, Greenwich Point: Brower updated the Commission on the status. The project needs a surveyor to ensure depicted elevations are correct. Tony D'Andrea offered to discuss the needs of the commission to see if his firm can be of assistance. Brower will follow up.
- b) Mylar balloon – status: Silberberg was informed by Savageau about a new legislation which was at work at the state level to ban balloons. He will follow up to check the details.

**8) New initiatives:** was not discussed

**9) Committee and Liaison Reports**

- a) Energy Committee: Parker stated the work of the committee is presently focused on the upcoming winter energy program.
- b) Parks and Recreation Board: The meeting was canceled due to the weather.
- a) Greenwich Recycling Advisory Board (GRAB): Dickinson reported latex paint will be accepted at the upcoming hazardous waste collection day.

With regards to recycling other products, she noted the vast majority of plastic and glass are processed domestically. Film bags are not recyclable with other items, but when collected in aggregate, they are. Local supermarkets have collection points for bags and then *Trex Company, Inc.* picks them up. The same company sponsors plastic wrappers and bags drives, with Eastern Middle School being part of this competition.

Cos Cob school continues to make efforts towards waste reduction in their cafeteria and they reportedly achieved a 60% reduction. The new dishwasher will reduce the waste even further as Styrofoam trays are replaced with permanent plates.

- b) Harbor Management Commission: Baker reported the HMC was contacted by Sesto to see if they were interested in participating on the coastal resiliency report

review team. The HMC declined the invitation and instead asked to be kept up to date. This is the same position taken by the Shellfish Commission.

Two million dollars was added to the budget for the dredging of Greenwich Harbor.

The proposal for creation of a kelp farm off the coast of Greenwich was withdrawn.

## **5) Planning & Zoning Referrals**

Brower recused himself and left the meeting. Parker was seated.

- a) Rocco V. D'Andrea, Inc. for SBP Dublin Hill, LLC 5-Lot Subdivision, 42 Dublin Hill Road

Commissioners Rutherford, Henrey, Silberberg, Baker, Henrey, and Walworth were identified as having visited the site.

Anthony D'Andrea, engineer with Rocco V. D'Andrea, inc., provided a summary of the proposed 5-lot subdivision. The parcel is over 19-acres site and is located at the end of a private road, Dublin Hill. Due to a private deed restriction, the five lots must be at least three acres each. Additionally, an open space parcel is planned. Each lot will feature independent storm water system and waste disposal. Municipal water will be connected to this area from Stanwich Road. The post-development condition will preserve the existing drainage patterns. A portion of the proposed open space will be restored with native meadow and new trees will be planted to enhance the habitat. An archeological report prepared by Earnest A. Wiegand, Archeologist, showed no cultural material of significance at the site.

Sesto and commissioners raised concerns about the proposed plan. The major issues focused on the width of the road, its profile, the extensive grading and site manipulation, imprecise and extraneous grading, a conservation easement to the rear of the lots, and a specific evaluation of trees and detailed plan to protect those at the periphery of disturbance. The proposed plan needs revisions which will better align with the low impact development approach and consider site limitations such as undulating topography and shallow soils. Mr. D'Andrea agreed to consider the concerns of the commission and return next month with revised plans. Sesto committed to providing the applicant with a written summary and offered to meet with Mr. D'Andrea to discuss proposed revisions.

A motion was made by Silberberg and seconded by Parker directing the staff to draft comments reflecting the discussion and meet with the applicant to go over the plan revisions. Motion carried unanimously.

**8) New Business:**

Baker was concerned about overuse of the road conditioner within the parking areas of Greenwich Point and Town Hall. She wanted to know what type of product is being used and whether or not it may be harmful to the coastal environment and the soil. Sesto will check with DPW what is used.

The Greenwich Tree Conservancy and Greenwich Library will host Peter Wohlleben, author of *The Hidden Life of Trees* on Tuesday, March 12, 2019 at the Cole Auditorium, Greenwich Library at 6:30 pm.

Greenwich Shellfish Commission and Skip the Straw will participate in Million Oyster Project.

As part of the UConn Partnership with the Greenwich Shellfish Commission and Greenwich Conservation Commission, UCONN scientists will document and study the distribution of microplastics in a number of harbors of Long-Island Sound.

**9) Adjournment:** A Motion was made by Dickinson to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Walworth, and carried, 7-0-0

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Submitted by,

Aleksandra Moch  
Environmental Analyst