

**Conservation Commission Meeting
via a Zoom virtual meeting.
March 4, 2021
Minutes**

Members present: William Rutherford, Eric Brower, Nancy S. Dickinson, Sue Baker, Lisette Henrey, Laura di Bonaventura, Gary Silberberg, and Theodore H. Walworth III.

Staff present: Sarah Coccaro, and Aleksandra Moch

Audience Present: Nancy and Andy Chapin and Debbie and Matthew Palmer-Biagioni

Commission Discussion Session – 7:00 p.m.

1) Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 7:04 pm by Rutherford

2) Seating of Alternates: Walworth was seated for Searle

3) Review and approve minutes of February 4, 2021: Motion was made by Silberberg and seconded by Henrey to approve the minutes as presented. The motion passed 7-0-0.

4) Review of Correspondence: no new correspondence.

5) Chairman's Report: no report

6) Friends of Pinetum, Pomerance, and Tuchman

Nancy Chapin thanked the Conservation Commission, Sarah Coccaro for her preparing the map of train and Patricia Sesto for help with site evaluation. She was pleased with large number of people interested in the park history, presentation, and new improvements. In her presentation, Nancy walked the Commission members through the history of the park reviewing the acquisition/donations of the parcels. The first organized group formed in support of the park was Pinetum Coalition. Initially formed to oppose the cell phone tower, the effort evolved into a committee to work with the town.

Andy Chapin described the nature of the park, its interesting features and trail network. Silberberg was pleased with the map being posted in park pointing out its need to help visitors better navigate through the area. He suggested more details be added such as bathrooms, points of interests and the existing structures.

Baker stated the park, containing about 200 acres, is an important section of the green way.

Brower recommend making the map available electronically with narratives able to be viewed on a cellphone. QR codes could be placed next to the point of interest revealing more information about each site. In addition, there could be an app to help visitors locate

themselves in the park. He believed the park has a lot of room for improvement. One improvement is handicapped access over the paved areas. The existing bridge over the ravine has attractive stone pillars which could be restored as an interesting feature. The dog-on-leash law should be better enforced. The reconstruction of the dam was done without considering a fish ladder. This lost opportunity should be reconsidered.

Andy responded there are many competing projects planned for the park. The committee will be working with all stakeholders to take them on as allowed.

Brower offered to make available old photographs and documents regarding the history of the site which are in his possession.

Nancy Chapin added, not only dogs are root of the problems. Erosion of some sections of trails and visitors trespassing onto the private property are issues to be dealt with.

Nancy Chapin summarized, stating the site is rich in geology, history and the natural biodiversity; therefore, important to be protected and properly preserved.

7) Conference/Program Reminders

- a) Long Island Sound Blue Plan: Updates and Next Steps virtual meetings:
Thursday, February 18th
10:00 am and 7:00 pm.
To register for 10:00 am please use this link:
https://tnc.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJIodeyurjMtHtVIUZJ7W1_4s5ASI4kXNO3v
To register for 7:00 pm please use this link:
<https://tnc.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJAtcOqsqj0pH92f3jRg4WhFzlsOUGBnG0w2>
- b) Sustainable CT webinars, ongoing: <https://sustainablect.org/trainings-events/trainings-eventscalendar/>

8) Ongoing projects

A written report was provided by staff and forwarded to the CC members on the topics below.

- a) Pollinator Pathway: Moch reported seeds were planted for the edible landscape pilot program.
- b) Flood elevation posts: not discussed
- c) Transportation and Air Quality subcommittee: Moch reported on the BET Budget Committee meetings and the efforts Pedal Greenwich had made on community outreach.
- d) Sustainable CT application
- e) Bruce Park Phragmites removal grant opportunity

9) Fisheries/Wildlife

A written report was provided by staff and forwarded to the CC members on the topics below.

- a) Fishway
- b) Purple Martins

- c) Osprey platform at Greenwich Point: Coccaro stated two new osprey nesting platforms will be constructed. One of them will support the nest relocated from the eagle statue located in the center of Eagle Pond. This project is done with collaboration of Friends of Greenwich Point and Parks and Recreations staff.

10) Education/Outreach

A written report was provided by staff and forwarded to the CC members on the topics below.

- a) Environmental Lecture Series with Cos Cob Library
- b) Earth Week of Action 2021

11) Committee and Liaison Reports

- a) Greenscapes Committee: Coccaro stated comments regarding the bridge replacement were send to CT DOT

- c) Parks and Rec Board: Baker stated the Town Party is planned for the Labor Day. Siciliano unveiled conceptual plans for the town's parks. They will be reviewed and prioritized over time. Greenwich Free Press published the full report. Baker was concerned that the plan may result in the loss of open space. Brower would like to see some coordination between Parks and Recreation, Planning and Zoning, and Conservation Commission regarding this proposal. He felt the commission should be more proactive.

Baker stated the chestnut alley will receive more plantings this year.

- d) GRAB: Dickinson reported the Hazardous Waste Collection Day was scheduled for May 1st. There is also going to be one in Westport on April 24th.

Due to COVID 19, the paper shredding event will be postponed until fall.

Waste Wizard app will be up and running at the end of spring or early summer.

Dickinson recommended reading the most recent Waste Free Greenwich newsletter which is very informative.

- e) Harbor Management Commission: Baker reported the last meeting took place on February 17th. The dock approved for Perkely Lane is being challenged in court. There are new docks on the list for review, including 708 Steamboat Road. Baker felt there is a strong need for revising the current regulations to prevent environmental damage to the tidal areas by excessive docks.

Members then discussed the floating lobster pods underneath I-95 and the possible obstruction to navigation.

12) Old Business

10) New Business

- a) I-95 project update
- b) Bike study funding request

11) Adjourn at 9:10 pm

Next meeting is April 1, 2021