

**Conservation Commission Meeting
Town Hall Meeting Room
June 2, 2016**

Minutes

Attendance:

Members present: Eric Brower, Gary Silberberg, Nancy Dickinson and Theodore Walworth III.

Staff present: Denise Savageau and Aleksandra Moch

Audience Present: Alexandra Bergstein

Commission Discussion Session – 7:00 p.m.

Meeting called to order at 7:06 p.m. by Brower.

1. **Seating of Alternates:** Walworth was seated for Franco.
2. **Review and approval of minutes** for the May 5, 2016 regular meeting: A motion was made by Dickinson and seconded by Silberberg to approve the minutes with the following correction: item 6 (b) should read “Four hundred eighty eight cars were counted at the Paper Shredding”. Motion carried unanimously.
3. **Review of Correspondence:** no correspondence
4. **Chairman’s Report:** none
5. **Staff Report**
 - a. **Administration**
 - i. **FY2016-2017 Budget:** Savageau stated that the RTM meeting regarding the budget was unusual. A motion was passed to make cuts across all the departments without any contacting departments ahead of time. \$1,400 was made from the 172 account. This will be cut from the consulting funds. A bigger concern was the RTM not understanding the impacts of holding all departments to a 2% increase instead of spreading this across all departments. The challenge for small departments is the contractual salaries that comprise most of the budget and therefore balancing those increases means cuts in implementation funds.
 - ii. **Land Use Staffing – Application Coordinator:** Savageau stated that the position should be filled by mid-June.
 - b. **Emergency Operations/Climate Change Adaptations**

- i. **Hazard Mitigation Grant Program:** Savageau reported that there are still several applications pending. Several of the approved ones are now at or near the completion.
 - ii. **Community Resiliency Planning**
 - 1. **Capitol Hill Ocean Week Panel on Community Action for Resiliency:** Savageau announced that she was invited to attend Capitol Hill Ocean Week in Washington DC on June 9, 2016. She will serve on a panel with UConn Sea Grant on Community Action for Resilient Coasts.
- c. Coastal Resources**
- i. **Shellfish Commission with University of Connecticut (UConn) and National Oceanic Atmospheric Association (NOAA):** Savageau presented a cooperative working agreement between the Conservation Commission, Shellfish Commission and UConn. As part of the agreement the Town will facilitate access to coastal areas in Greenwich and the Shellfish Commission will make their boat available for water sampling. The Innis Arden Cottage will be used to provide a space for scientific research. UConn researcher(s) provide research data to the Town and will offer educational programs and outreach to local schools. Motion made by Silberberg and seconded by Walworth to approve the cooperative agreement. Motion carried. Rutherford will sign on behalf of the Commission.
 - ii. **Long Island Sound Watershed Planning**
 - 1. Harbor Watch: none
 - iii. Greenwich Point IBA Report: none
- d. Sustainability (moved up on agenda to accommodate presenter)**
- i. **Pesticide Use**
 - 1. **Greening Our Children:** Alex Bergstein presented on their “Safe Lawn” program which focuses on reducing the overuse of pesticides and the concern about their impact on children playing outdoors. She met with the First Selectmen who had endorsed the program. The group advocates for the healthy and pesticide free landscapes in Town. Savageau stated that this Commission has a long record of supporting organic lawns. In 2004 the Commission passed a resolution on limiting the use of pesticides and endorsed Parks & Recreation pesticide free program at schools. A motion as made by Silberberg and seconded by Walworth to support “The Safe Lawn” program. Motion carried.
 - ii. **Artificial Turf** – the pesticide discussion led to a discussion on artificial turf. Savageau indicated that this a complex issue and recommended that the commission continue discussions on any proposed policy on AT. For Conservation the issue is not just about the potential chemicals in the materials but increase in impervious cover on our open space lands.
 - iii. **Clean Energy** - none

e. Habitat Management

- i. **Mianus River Fishway:** Savageau stated that the fish count is down for the second year in a row. This appears as a trend across the state which is very concerning.
- ii. **Canada Geese Program:** Savageau stated that the new contract for geese control will be initiated in July. Control will be expanded over the Cos Cob Library grounds.
- iii. **Horseshoe Crab Count:** Savageau recommended scheduling the annual count during the full moon in July.

f. Status Reports

- i. **Eversource – Application to CT Siting Council:** Savageau reviewed the decision by the CT Siting Council to deny the application. The decision, which was very favorable to the Town, did state the Town needed to focus on energy conservation or the Council would have to revisit the demand issue in the future. She stressed that the work of the Energy Committee was extremely important given this directive from the Council.
- ii. **P&Z applications:** Savageau reported that the staff has remained very busy. In addition, there are several municipal improvements (MI) and violations of open space to deal with. She stated that there is a need to document the open space areas to make sure that they are properly maintained.
- iii. **Open Space Plan:** Savageau indicated that a meeting would be set soon.
- iv. **POCD - Scenic Roads:** was not discussed

6. Committee/Liaison Reports

- a. **Parks and Recreation Board:** no report.
- b. **GRAB (Greenwich Recycling Advisory Board):** Dickinson reported that 10.68 tons of paper was processed during the last paper shredding event on April 30th.
- c. **Education/Outreach**
 - i. **Leaf Recycling:** Moch stated that the schools are continuing with their composting activities. New compost bins will be built over the summer.
 - ii. **Experience the Sound:** Savageau stated that the event is scheduled for June 26, 2016 from 1 to 4pm. Conservation staff will provide educational activities.
- d. **Harbor Management Commission – Draft Harbor Management Plan:** Savageau stated that DeLuca and she met with the commission regarding the proposed plan. The discussion focused on tasks that will be assigned to different departments. Baker also met with the new Chair. The message was that the plan is not yet ready for approval.

7. Old Business:

- a. **Byram Cemetery Acquisition:** Savageau stated that the proposed acquisition passed the Board of Selectmen and now it is heading to Planning and Zoning Commission for MI. Once approved as a municipal improvement, Conservation will work with the Probate Court to coordinate the due diligence that is needed per state statute on towns acquiring abandoned cemeteries. Once all due diligence is completed, this will go to

the RTM for final approval.

8. **New Business:** none

9. **Executive Session** – Land Acquisition: no need for executive session

10. **Other/ Announcements:**

Silberberg offered his sailboat, the Silver Eagle, for the site of the July 7 meeting. Each year the Commission has one meeting for a social gathering with members. Savageau will coordinate with Rutherford and Silberberg.

Silberberg encouraged the members to attend the upcoming blood drive on July 11 run by The Red Cross.

11. **Adjournment**

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:54 p.m.

Submitted by,

Aleksandra Moch