

**Conservation Commission Meeting
Town Hall Meeting Room
June 6, 2019**

Minutes

Attendance:

Members present: Urling Searle, Eric Brower, Nancy Dickinson, Gary Silberberg, Theodore Walworth, and Laura Di Bonaventura (at 7:15 pm).

Staff present: Patricia Sesto, Sarah Coccaro, and Aleksandra Moch

Audience Present: Nicolas Orellana; GHS; Steve Hall, Energy Committee; Robert Brady, Energy Committee; Heidi Matonis, Waste Free Greenwich; Julie DesChamps, Waste Free Greenwich; and Ali Ghiorse, Waste Free Greenwich.

Commission Discussion Session – 7:00 p.m.

Meeting called to order at 7:02 pm by Brower

1) Seating of Alternates: Walworth was seated for Henrey.

Brower preceded with Food Scrap Recycling out of order as the next discussion item.

2) Food Scrap Recycling – Waste Free Greenwich presentation

The presentation was initiated by DesChamps who introduced Waste Free Greenwich group and made an argument for the need of a voluntary food scrap collection in Town. Matonis summarized Scarsdale program as the most successful in the area and preferred for Greenwich. Ghiorse walked the Commission through the Darien's program and concluded with the list of goals for group which included community outreach, demonstrate the demand, partnering with DPW, working on support from the town officials, and research.

The group requested a letter of support from the Conservation Commission and open themselves to questions.

The presentation was received with enthusiasm and support. Motion was made by Walworth and seconded by Searle to support the efforts. The motion was carried unanimously.

Brower took the Energy Committee Report out of order to be next (7:45pm).

3) New Business

a) Energy Committee Report, Request for Approval

In her entry statement, Sesto touched upon the history and people involved in energy program. Among them were Denise Savageau, former director of Conservation Commission, Skip Parker, and Urling Searle both current Conservation Commission members. Sesto asked the Commission for their support and approval to present this report to the Board of Selectmen. Continuing about the program she noticed the lack of cohesiveness throughout the various departments and the lack of technical knowledge to take the energy program to the next level. She emphasized the need to form a new commission which would focus on energy and consist of professionals with experience in energy field. Sesto argued, 28 towns committed to C-PACE program, each of them except Greenwich has their energy commission. Greenwich is a large town with so many opportunities, some of them were recognized by the brief audits of a few of the Town owned buildings. Simple steps with little coordination can be taken to achieve the goal of 20% reduction. Recommendation for these steps are provided in the report. One of the most important ones is the need to changes the current procurement process. In addition, BET is looking for the short term savings without a long-term investment vision or planning which hurts efficiency. Sesto believed the reduction in energy consumption has to start in municipal buildings. The Town has to lead by example so the property owners will follow.

Di Bonaventura shared her energy saving experience at Greenwich Country Day School. She pointed out the importance of working with *Eversource* as an energy partner.

Silberberg supported the proposal alluding to the Stamford experience where Mayor Martin had to go over many departmental jurisdictions to achieve energy goals.

Hall emphasized the importance of incorporating new standards to the building code and changing the way the town considers purchasing contracts. One of the reasons the plans for the new Eastern Civic Center are not finalized is because the lack of and advice from an energy expert.

Silberberg noticed the need for energy guidelines for residents.

Di Bonaventure made a motion seconded by Walworth to move the proposal to the Board of Selectmen. The motion was carried unanimously.

Sesto announced, the ban on plastic bags was approved with CT budget. This would not trigger any changes to the ban in Greenwich. Westport will have to adjust their thickness requirement. The state regulations include only retails while in Greenwich all businesses are counted in.

4) Review and approval of draft minutes of May 2, 2019 regular meeting: A motion was made by Silberberg and seconded by Searle to approve the minutes as corrected.

5) Review of Correspondence: no correspondence

6) Chairman's Report: no report

7) Staff Reports

A detailed report for the topics below was prepared by Moch/Coccaro and forwarded to the Conservation Commission members. The report included:

a) Conference/Program reminders:

- Horseshoe crab monitoring dates: June 1,3,5,15,17,19,30, July 2,4.
- Climate Change Workshop, Part 2, on June 6th 8 am – 1:30 pm at Westchester County Center, White Plains.

Moch brought up to the attention of the Commission members an upcoming invasive weed pull event at 381 North Street on Saturday June 15th, 9 am – 12 pm. This event is organized by the *Pollinator Pathway* and *Greenwich Grown* groups.

b) Fisheries/Wildlife

- Fish ladder
- Resident Canada Geese egg oiling
- Purple Martins
- Horseshoe crab tagging and monitoring

c) Education/ Outreach:

- Pollinator Pathway initiatives
- Green School Committee
- UConn/Greenwich Partnership
- Waste Reduction Program

8) New initiatives:

a) SLR RFP – update: Sesto stated we are down to one interview. It appears, public outreach will be the strong team.

9) Committee and Liaison Reports

a) Parks and Recreation Board: Baker was not present to report.

b) Greenwich Recycling Advisory Board (GRAB): Dickinson was pleased with Des Champse's presentation on the food scraps recycling. The new guidelines for recycling were mailed with the tax bill to the property owners. Dickinson was concerned about recent breakdowns or backups at the energy plants in Peekskill and Bridgeport in which case the wastes had to be shipped to a landfill in

Pennsylvania. The Green School Committee is working to replace *Styrofoam* trays with reusable stainless steel trays in public schools. This change not only will save money, but it would also significantly reduce the waste stream and address the health and environmental concerns.

- c) Harbor Management Commission: Silberberg reported, an accident in waters off Old Greenwich. A boat operated by Old Greenwich Marine, which installs moorings, was sunk during an operation Monday morning, May 24th. This activity was conducted without proper permits.

10) Old Business

- a) High Water Marker at the Holly Grove, Greenwich Point: Brower reported working with Cocco on signs. The office of Tony D'Andrea has been helping with elevations. Holly Grove and Cos Cob signs were modified. The missing Byram marker has been found behind a wooded building. They worked with the Dock Master to find a new location for the marker. To complete the project D'Andrea has to check the elevations so the descriptions could be attached at the proper heights.
- b) Mylar balloon – status: work in progress

11) New business – continues

- a) The Blue Plan: Sesto explained, the plan is an inventory of all the uses (ecological, commercial, and others). The uses were mapped which lead to identification of some sensitive areas. The goal for this mapping is to provide useful information for the review process of new projects by the municipal and state decision makers.

Sesto announced the next meeting will be held at the Innis Arden Cottage at 6:00 pm.

12) Adjournment: Motion was made by Dickinson and seconded by Walworth to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Submitted by,

Aleksandra Moch
Environmental Analyst