Conservation Commission Meeting
Mazza Room
October 1, 2015

Minutes

Attendance:

Members present: William Rutherford, Eric Brower, Lisette Henrey, Nancy Dickinson, Gary Silberberg, Nancy Chapin, Urling Searle and Theodore Walworth III
Staff present: Denise Savageau and Aleksandra Moch
Audience Present: n/a

Commission Discussion Session – 7:00 p.m.

Meeting called to order at 7:08 p.m. by Rutherford.

1) Seating of Alternates: Searle was seated for Franco.

2) Review and approval of minutes for the September 3, 2015 regular meeting: A motion was made by Silberberg and seconded by Searle to approve the minutes as presented.

3) Review of Correspondence: none

4) Chairman’s Report: none

5) Staff Report

a) Administrative
i) Budget 2016-17: Savageau reported that she is working on the new budget which will include a request for an upgrade of the part-time position to a full-time position to reflect the Commission’s consensus on this issue. Discussion ensued about the continued workload of the Commission and importance of communicating to our elected officials throughout the budget process.
ii) Operational Plans: Savageau stated that Ben Branyan, Town Administrator, had released the new guidelines for the operation plans that accompany the budget. These have been simplified to focus on new programs each year.

b) Water Supply
i) Drought/dry weather update: Savageau stated that Aquarion has issued a press release asking for voluntary water conservation. She expressed concerns about communications with Aquarion since this was not provided to the Town on a timely basis. She is working with the Aquarion to establish clearer lines of communication. The press release was for the entire Aquarion system, not just the Greenwich system but Savageau has stressed the need to work with local communities. Savageau agreed that the current water supply situation is not looking bright and there is not much rain
in the forecast. Of special concern is the ground water level. It does not appear that recent rain was sufficient to replenish the deficiency. Savageau worked with the First Selectman’s office to get out a press release that supported Aquarion’s request and that also included ground water.

c) **Emergency Operations/Climate Change Adoptions**
   
i) **Hazard Mitigation Grant Program:** Savageau reported that three additional applications were approved for the grant which brings the total to 14. Two of the earlier approved sites are closed to completion. The grant will be released to them as soon as they obtain full or temporary Certificate of Occupancy.

ii) **Community Resiliency Planning**
   
   1. **Hazard Mitigation Planning:** no update
   2. **Coastal Storm Awareness Program (CSAP):** Savageau reminded that she is part of this tri-state program evaluating programs on communicating with the public during natural disasters.
   3. **Statewide Climate Initiatives:** Savageau stated that the group is currently focusing on mitigation of energy.

iii) **LIDAR Mapping:** Savageau reported that the mapping was instrumental in creation of the inundation maps for the coastal areas in Town. These maps will be used for future planning of emergency responses and evacuation roads during storm events.

d) **Coastal Resources**
   
i) **Important Bird Areas** (Greenwich Point and Great Captain’s Island): Savageau reported that the Purple Martin housing structures were taken down for the winter.

ii) **Shellfish Commission with University of Connecticut (UCONN) and National Oceanic Atmospheric Association (NOAA):** Savageau stated that a meeting will be arranged to discuss how Innis Arden Cottage will be utilized to fit the current and expanding needs of this cooperative program.

e) **Status Reports**
   
i) **Open Space Plan:** Savageau reported that staff is working on refining the GIS layer since it has been almost a year since the report was finalized. A meeting will be called in the next month or two to go over plan and any comments received. To date no additional written comments have been received from any RTM member.

ii) **Clean Energy:** Savageau stated that she met with Ben Branyan, Town Administrator to discuss the program. He was very familiar with this topic because when with the Board of Education, he requested and energy audit and made the building more efficient. The First Selectman supports the idea of savings through improving energy efficiency. She will be working with the staff in the First Selectman’s office to move this program forward again.
6) Committee/Liaison Reports

a) Board of Parks and Recreation: Chapin stated that the dog season extension at Greenwich Point was discussed. The proposal was turned down based on the length of the bird nesting season, the lack of obeying the leash and cleaning up feces laws, liability concern and lack of manpower to enforce the existing regulations. Byram pool project reached the final implementation stage. The funds for the pool were approved under certain conditions. The new Common on Greenwich Ave dedication is scheduled for Oct. 19th and the ribbon cutting ceremony for the Old Barn at Greenwich Point has been scheduled for October 18th at 3:30 p.m. This is dedicating the new Pavilion in honor of Sue Baker. Congrats to Sue. “Access Greenwich” is a new app which allows the residents to submit their comments and complaints. A new sub-committee was proposed to look at the Greenwich Point Beach Access Policy. It was suggested that supervision and enforcement are the best methods to enforce the policy.

b) GRAB (Greenwich Recycling Advisory Board): Dickinson stated that the paper shredding day was set for November 7th. The report, given at the meeting demonstrated that more and more is being recycled at Holly Hill. The station is now considering receiving paint cans and has been recycling mattresses since May. There was a 38% increase of single stream recycled items compared to last year. Collection of electronic waste has also increased. An anaerobic digester is being considered for installation in the future to process organic waste.

c) Education/Outreach
   i) Leaf Recycling: Moch reported that the leaf recycling/reusing program is up and running. The first step is to introduce the pilot programs to Riverside Elementary and Eastern River Schools. Several meetings with schools were conducted to discuss the details. A survey for landscape professionals and property owners will be mailed. The survey would also be available on the newly designed website. A meeting of the steering committee was scheduled for October 7th at 9:30 a.m. in Mazza Room.
   ii) School Outreach: Savageau briefly stated the staff had several school programs scheduled for the fall.

d) Harbor Management Commission: Silberberg stated that the Harbor Management Plan is being revised to address the comments coming in from the community. Savageau worked jointly with Parks & Recreation, P&Z, Shellfish Commission and IWWA to provide initial comments on the draft indicating that more time was needed to thoroughly review the plan. She pointed out that in appendices, the plan suggests that the Harbor Management Commission had reached out to all interested parties, which was not the case so the land use agency staff are just starting to review. The major concern is to ensure that the plan accurately reflects the roles and coordination of all of our boards and commissions as it relates to harbor management. She also wants to ensure that the plan gives better directive to DEEP on dock applications.

e) Cemetery Committee: Dickinson stated that the committee met twice, mainly to work on a protocol which will include the methods of evaluating cemeteries in Town. Ryan prepared documentation of the known cemeteries which were very helpful in discussion
on the long-term maintenance procedures. At this moment, the work is in the data collection stage. It is important to document every cemetery and establish their owners. The research was initiated with a list of historic cemeteries provided by the Parks & Recreation.

7) **Old Business:** none

8) **New Business:** none

9) **Executive Session** – Land Acquisition: none held

10) **Other/ Announcements:** no announcements

11) **Adjournment**

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Submitted by,

Aleksandra Moch