Conservation Commission Meeting  
Cone Room  
October 3, 2019

Minutes

Attendance:

Members present: William Rutherford, Nancy Dickinson, Laura di Bonaventura, Ur ling Searle, Sue Baker (arrived 7:25pm), and Theodore Walworth.

Staff present: Patricia Sesto and Aleksandra Moch

Audience Present: n/a

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm by Rutherford

1) Seating of Alternates
   Walworth was seated for Brower and di Bonaventura was seated for Henrey.

2) Review and approve of draft minutes of September 5, 2019 meeting
   Motion was made by di Bonaventura and seconded by Walworth to approve the minutes as presented. The motion carried.

3) Review of Correspondence:
   A copy of CT Wildlife magazine and staff’s comments to P&Z on 6 Windrose Way was handed out to the Conservation Commission members

4) Chairman’s Report:

   Rutherford discussed the prejudgment issue regarding pending or expected applications before the regulatory boards. It is not appropriate to expressed personal views in public on these projects and will jeopardize the commissioner’s ability to participate with this commission and their review. When in official capacity for reviewed project, the decision of the commission should be presented, not a personal opinion on the matter. When asked by Walworth about a case when a commission member is involved in an association’s vote on a project, Rutherford advised such member should recuse him/herself from the commission proceedings regarding the project. Commissioners who are on multiple boards will have to choose which one they wish to represent and recuse themselves from the others. Likewise, if professional responsibilities are involved, members need to recuse themselves.

   Rutherford reported on the progress of planting at Binney Park, pointing out the areas enhanced with new vegetation and number of trees replaced.
5) **Plan of Conservation and Development**

Di Bonaventure is using the new draft POCD in her science class to walk her students through the governmental planning process. Coccaro provided support and answers over the phone to the students while exploring the plan.

Sesto reported P&Z was very receptive to the commission’s comments. Rutherford was pleased with the last meeting and felt the plan contains a lot of conservation tasks, which will be attended to after plan adoption. He pointed out the broader approach of the document will allow wider interpretation, benefiting its future application.

Dickinson was concerned about historic preservation not getting enough attention. The topic was included in the old document, but only referenced in the new one. The old version needs more work.

Sesto noted the plan will serve as a foundation for the future regulations. The commission may be one of the drivers for the change.

6) **Staff Reports**

a) **Conference/Program reminders**

- Environmental Lecture Series – Wednesday, October 2 through November 20
- CACIWC Annual Conference – Saturday, November 23, 2019
- Sustainable CT webinars and events - ongoing [https://sustainablect.org/resources-news-events/upcoming-events/](https://sustainablect.org/resources-news-events/upcoming-events/)
- December 1, 2019 – Conservation Commission hosting lecture at First Sunday Science Series on animal tracks.

b) **Conservation Caboodle**: Sesto reported this second event will bring together representatives of all the environmental groups in Greenwich. Each of them will provide a report on recent collaboration and point out the areas needing help.

c) **Fisheries/Wildlife**: Coccaro provided a written staff report on the following topics:

- Environmental Forum hosted by Senators Alex Bergstein, Christine Cohen and Julie Kushner
- Mile-a-Minute and weevils
- Neighbor Magazine article
- International Coastal Cleanup Day, Saturday September 21, 2019

d) **Education/Outreach** - Moch provided a written staff report on the following topics:
• Pollinator Pathway initiatives
• Waste Reduction Program
• Environmental Lecture Series – every Wednesday (October 2 - November 20)

e) New initiatives
• Beach Leaf Disease Study

7) Committee and Liaison Reports

a) Parks and Rec Board: Baker stated the master plan for Greenwich Point, prepared by Stantec, was discussed to decide how to designate $100K approved for the site improvements. Mr. Johnson requested an analysis of areas that are environmentally/historically significant. A committee was formed to prioritize and execute the projects included in the plan. Among the board members, the committee will include Conservation and other interested Town agencies.

b) GRAB: Dickinson reported the volume of yard wastes in the waste stream has gone down. Due to the decreased number of recyclables, there is less material coming in single-stream recycling. Nine percent of home owners bring their wastes directly to the transfer station. Both the number of books and batteries have increased. Turn of River will not take paint cans anymore.

c) Harbor Management Commission: Baker reported the commission discussed an illegally installed dock located at 17 Bryon Road and dredging project.

Baker expressed her concerns about the New Jersey marine company’s, Weeks Marine, proposal to have a new mooring placed in Stamford waters, less than a mile away from Greenwich Point. The storage could be used for 150-foot-long barges holding sand and gravel. She worried about environmental and safety impacts of this mooring.

She will meet on October 4, 2019 with representatives of the Shellfish Commission and Harbor Management as well as First Selectman, Peter Tesei to discuss the issue.

Rutherford made a motion, seconded by Walworth, to oppose the project. Motion was carried unanimously.

10) Old Business

a) Sea Level Rise Study – update: Sesto stated a kickoff meeting with department heads took place. Rutherford and Brower participated. Rutherford covered issues in Old Greenwich, while Brower focused on Mill Pond. The study will run over a period of fourteen months. The internal review and approval process took a long time, resulting in delays.
b) **Phragmites removal plan for Bruce Park ponds** – Moch stated the application is in the process of being completed. Conservation Commission staff worked with Engineering Division and Parks and Recreation Department to put all the information together.

c) **Energy Committee Report, status update** – Sesto reported the Law Department worked on the language. The meeting, however, did not finalize the efforts because Bob Brady provided new information that had not been previously considered.

d) **Mylar balloon** – status: n/a

11) **New Business**: The members discussed potential candidates to fill the vacancy after Skip Parker’s resignation.

12) **Executive Session** – negotiations

Motion as made by Rutherford and seconded by Baker to move to the executive session at 8:21pm.

13) **Adjournment**: Motion was made by Walworth and seconded by Searle to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Submitted by,

Aleksandra Moch
Environmental Analyst