



TOWN OF GREENWICH

Town Hall ~ 101 Field Point Road ~ Greenwich, CT 06830

Conservation Commission
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Patricia M.P. Sesto
Director of Environmental Affairs

Special Meeting

MINUTES

October 7, 2021

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

Staff present: Patricia Sesto, Director of Environmental Affairs; Sarah Coccaro, Conservation, Resource Manager; and Aleksandra Moch, Environmental Analyst

Audience: Renee Seblatnig

1) **Call to Order**

Rutherford called the meeting to order at 5:04 pm.

2) **Seating of Alternates:** No alternates were seated.

3) **Review and approve minutes:** September 2, 2021

A motion was made by Silberberg and seconded by Baker to approve the minutes as presented. The motion carried 7-0-0.

4) **Review of Correspondence:** no correspondence

5) **Chairman's Report:**

Rutherford recognized Searle for her significant contribution to the success of the Conservation Commission and her engagement into so many important projects, including the Strategic Energy Conservation Plan. Her leaving will be a real loss to the commission, but the members will benefit from her staying engaged with the Open Space Committee. Searle congratulated di Bonaventura on the recent report generated by the Energy Committee. Sesto agreed, di Bonaventura's report met all expectations of the old committee. Both Baker and Silberberg also lauded Searle's for her work and collaboration.

Rutherford welcomed Karen DeWahl and Leslie Petrick as new alternate members and suggested Ted Walworth be promoted to a full member to fill the vacancy left by Searle. Formal action will be taken up at the next meeting to allow Sesto the opportunity to investigate the process of elevating alternates.

Rutherford shared with the commission a cover page of the Neighbors magazine featuring Sarah Cocco and an article on the fish ladder. He emphasized the importance of the fish ladder and the excellent job Sarah has expanding the fish monitoring program.

Silberberg made a motion to commend Cocco for her work on fishway. The motion was seconded by Rutherford and carried 7-0-0.

6) **2022 meeting dates**

A motion was made by Henry and seconded by Dickinson to approve the proposed meeting dates. The motion carried 7-0-0.

7) **Conference / Program Reminders:**

a. Thursday, October 7th at 7pm via Zoom – Bruce Presents- Underwater: Coastal Flooding and Climate Change lecture with Dr. James O'Donnell, Professor at UConn and Executive Director of CT Institute for Resilience & Climate (CIRCA)

b. Saturday, November 6th – CACIWC Annual Conference

c. Wednesday, November 10th 10-11am - zoom – “Merry, Bright and Waste Free Holidays” webinar hosted by Greenwich Botanical Center. Co-presented by Sarah Cocco and Julie DesChamps

d. Saturday, December 4th 11am-2pm – In person @ Greenwich Botanical Center – “Merry, Bright and Native Holidays” event

8) **Fisheries/Wildlife:** a written staff report was provided to the members on the following topic

a. Bat monitoring with CT DEEP

Cocco reported CT DEEP was looking for volunteers to help with bat population monitoring. Silberberg was concern about tree clearing within the bat supportive habitats. Sesto responded the staff always makes recommendation to avoid unnecessary clearing when it comes to the P&Z applications. Walworth was troubled over a recent clearing done by Aquarion Water Company. Sesto responded, the Town has no jurisdiction over the utilities.

9) **Ongoing projects:** a written staff report was provided to the members on the following topic

a. Pollinator Pathway

The members praised Sesto for presenting at several RTM committees. Sesto was relived the review process was over as it was time consuming.

Both Baker and Brower were concerned about the severe erosion of the dam outer shell in Montgomery Pinetum Park caused by the tropical storm Ida. Brower offered a brief summary of the history of the dam and shared the hope the repairs will provide an opportunity to install a fish ladder.

Dickinson requested the Pollinator Pathway group be reexamined. She made references to the other chapters held by other local municipalities. She believed a better understanding of the goals and structure should be established. DeWahl defined it as a movement. Sesto recognized the group as an informal organization; a structure that came under scrutiny with the RTM in connection with the mural approval process. Dickinson agreed the program is getting more traction requires improvements to the current structure. Henry recognized Moch's leadership. Dickinson concurred and stated Moch needs help since this organization had outgrown its low key status. Moch will discuss the issues with the group during the upcoming meeting on October 13th and report back to the commission.

10) **Education/Outreach**

- a) Bruce Museum/Conservation Commission citizen science project, "Greenwich Flood Watchers"

11) **Committee and Liaison Reports**

- a) Transportation and Air Quality subcommittee: a written staff report was provided to the members.
- b) GRAB: Dickinson reported the new Waste Wizard became a real success. The app guides users in proper recycling of materials. Recent paper shredding on September 25 resulted in 8,000 lb. of paper processed through the shredding machine. This number translates into 360 cars.
- c) Parks and Rec Board: Baker stated, criteria for construction of the new ice rink were discussed. Sesto was grateful to the Tree Conservancy for their involvement in this project and their advocacy on preserving the existing trees in town. This includes them rising the issues and attending the public meetings.
- d) Harbor Management Commission: Baker reported there was a usual dissuasion on permits, docks, and moorings. Greenwich Cove dredging project was troubled by the new mandate regarding the sediment disposal in NY state which requires bio-testing of the sediment. Benefiting the project maybe some small grants opportunity offered by the CT Port Authority.
- e) Open Space Committee: Sesto reported meeting were put on hold due to the other pressing issues which needed timely attention. The next meeting is planned for October 18th.

12) **Old Business**

- a) CTDOT Corridor Study grant: Sesto reported, the results should be posted in November

13) **New Business:**

Henry expressed her concern about the leaf blowers. di Bonaventura responded the issues were raised before but did not meet the needed support. Sesto offered putting it on agenda for the next meeting for Lisette to make a proposal.

14) **Adjourn:**

A motion was made by Silberberg and seconded by Henry to adjourn at 6:38. Motion carried 7-0-0. Next meeting is November 4, 2021