Conservation Commission Meeting
Mazza Room
December 3, 2015

Minutes

Attendance:

Members present: William Rutherford, Lisette Henrey, Sue Baker, Nancy Dickinson, Gary Silberberg, Urling Searle and Theodore Walworth III

Staff present: Denise Savageau and Aleksandra Moch

Audience Present: Cathy Weisenburger, Parks & Recreation Board

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 and Walworth was seated for Brower.

2) Review and approval of minutes for the November 5, 2015 regular meeting: A motion was made by Silberberg and seconded by Dickinson to approve the minutes as presented.

3) Review of Correspondence: no correspondence

4) Chairman’s Report: Rutherford reminded members with terms expiring in March 2016, to submit the information form to SNAC if they are interested in continuing. Any member who does not want to continue should let Rutherford and/or Savageau know. Savageau will send out the link to the Town website with the form. Savageau distributed the meeting schedule for the next year. She pointed out that most of the upcoming meetings will take place in the Town Hall Meeting Room.

5) Staff Report

a) Administrative
   i) Budget 2016-17: Savageau reported that the budget had been submitted with the request for a full time staff. She also presented the operational plan and discussed the most important goals for the upcoming year, which supports the staff request.

b) Water Supply
   i) Drought/dry weather update: Savageau stated that the limited precipitation received over the last month was sufficient to address the fire concern, but was not adequate to replenish the reservoir and aquifers. She continues to monitor this with water company officials.

c) Emergency Operations/Climate Change Adoptions
i) **Hazard Mitigation Grant Program**: Savageau stated that one more application has been approved this month. Several applicants withdrew their applications for various reasons. Savageau stated that the Small Business Administration (SBA) is offering low-interest loans to hurricane victims to help cover uninsured damages. The loans are being offered to individuals, businesses and non-profits alike. This is additional help provided by the state to rebuild/restore the structures which suffered a substantial damage during the hurricane. She has informed all folks involved with the HMGP

ii) **Community Resiliency Planning**
   (1) **Coastal priorities**: Savageau stated that Conservation has proposed a town-wide evaluation be done to determine what areas are the most susceptible and what the Town can do to protect its infrastructure. This is being coordinated with the First Selectman’s office. Savageau and Ryan recently attended a two-day “Living Shoreline” conference in Hartford and made good contacts implementing such a program in Greenwich.
   (2) **Grant opportunities**: Savageau reported that with Conservation staff assistance, the Town applied for a grant which will help to cover the cost of the infrastructure protection plan.

d) **Coastal Resources**
   i) **Shellfish Commission with University of Connecticut (UCONN) and National Oceanic Atmospheric Association (NOAA)**: Savageau continues to support the work of the Shellfish Commission and will be helping to draft a cooperative agreement UConn.
   ii) **Long Island Sound Watershed Planning**: Savageau stated that most of the work related to the distribution of the received grant was taken over by the newly hired staff by the Council on Soil and Water Conservation.

e) **Status Reports**
   i) **Open Space Plan**: Savageau reported that Ryan is working to revise and update the maps. A protocol governing the future updates will be developed to keep the document as current as possible.
   ii) **Clean Energy**: Savageau stated that she is now working on this program with the First Selectman’s office.
   iii) **POCD**
       (1) **Tree ordinance**: no new information

f) **Scenic Roads**: Savageau stated that this task will be targeted first. An inventory of the scenic roads will be created with the help of the Historic Commission staff.

6) **Committee/Liaison Reports**

   a) **Parks and Recreation Board**: Weisenburger gave a brief overview of Board meeting. She reported that the Board is looking at how best to enforce regulations at Greenwich Point and that they are looking at solutions. PR& Board will be discussed during the upcoming meeting. Commission discussion ensued.

   b) **GRAB** (Greenwich Recycling Advisory Board): no meeting held

   c) **Education/Outreach**
      i) **Leaf Recycling**: Moch reported that a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony at Riverside School on December 2, 2015 was the official kick-off for the compost program at public
schools. Students at Riverside School will learn about compost and recycle fruit and vegetable scraps in the cafeteria. The same program will be implemented at Eastern Middle School in January. Moch stated that a survey was mailed out to the randomly selected property owners and landscape professionals. The same survey is available on the program’s website. More than 60 responses were received. The results show that most of the respondents do not shred their leaves into the lawn when mowing, but 50% of them shred grass clippings. The new leaf management program was well received and the majority of the survey participants have decided to try leaf mulching/mowing this year. Rutherford congratulated Moch on her efforts.

ii) School Outreach: was not discussed

iii) Soil Lecture with League of Women Voters: Savageau stated that December 5th was the soil awareness day so the program timely to emphasize the importance of this natural resource. The program was well attended. This presentation gave a better understanding of soil and water conservation and the Farm Bill, which impacts every American and millions of people around the world. Savageau thanked the League for supporting this timely program.

d) Harbor Management Commission – Draft Harbor Management Plan: Savageau reported that the LU staff is working hard to respond to the draft and the HMC is somewhat overwhelmed by comments. There are many unresolved issues which have not been properly addressed by the plan. The main comments were about the complexity and length of the plan, as well as the overlapping jurisdictions and lack of focus on important issues such as docks, moorings, etc. Savageau is attending the subcommittee meetings charged with drafting the document.

e) Cemetery Committee: Dickinson stated that 57 historic cemeteries were identified. The committee is busy working on researching their ownership etc. The next meeting will be schedule after some of this research work is completed.

7) Old Business: was not discussed

8) New Business: was not discussed

9) Executive Session – Land Acquisition: none held

10) Other/ Announcements:

   Silberberg announced a blood drive at Temple Shalom, planned for January 3rd.

11) Adjournment - A motion was made by Dickinson and seconded by Henrey to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Submitted by,

Aleksandra Moch