

Minutes of Conservation Commission Meeting

4:30PM, December 7, 2017

Members: Rick Holloway, Sandy Prisloe, Peggy Wilson, Pat Woome*, Margot Burns, Ted Taigen, Lisa Wahle

(* = not in attendance)

Meeting called to order at 4:35 PM

Minutes: of the November 2017 meeting were approved.

Audience of citizens: None

Correspondence: Copies of The Habitat were distributed

A copy of the CT Audubon State of the Birds Report was discussed

The CT River Coastal Conservation District Annual Report was received

CTDEEP's Wildlife Highlights is available on line. Margot will distribute the website's URL .

Old Business

a. CACIWC annual meeting : CCC members Holloway and Wahle attended sessions on:

1. Effects of Climate Change on public health and native wildlife
2. Benefits of wet meadows
3. MS4 - Municipal Separate Storm Sewers program
4. Effects of climate change on migratory birds

b. E-Team report:

1. Streetlight modification to LEDs is complete.
2. It appears that the Home Energy Solutions program for multifamily housing may be cut from the state budget.

c. Envirotips:

1. Discussion of how the Conservation Commission can help with the public education and outreach aspects of the MS4 program. A packet containing 8 informational brochures, developed by CT NEMO, was received from Jacobson Engineering which is implementing the program for Chester. **Sandy and Peggy** will work with Jenny Watrous on making these part of Envirotips by linking them to the weekly tips.

d. Recycling outreach: nothing new.

e. Cedar Lake Watershed Advisory Committee report: The Committee is proposing a plan for hydroraking key areas (swimming beaches) every three years to be included in town budgeting.

f. Phragmites Eradication: Nothing new to report.

g. Stormwater Catch basin Marking:

1. Margot presented a graphic layout of proposed basin marking. The lettering and graphics could be stenciled onto pavement next to catchbasins in key areas. It was suggested that this be an effort over a five-year period. **Margot** will talk to John Divis about how best to accomplish this. It is a possible boy scout project, though supervision and liability must be considered. **Rick** will look into having stencils made. (Stencils of squirrels for the July 4th Road Race were implemented by Ron Woodward, a member of Chester Rotary).
2. Wade Thomas of Jacobson Engrg has offered to attend our next meeting to discuss the MS4 program.

h. Sustainability/ChesterGoGreen

1. Extensive discussion about possible topics for workshops. **Rick** will contact the Chester Garden Club to see if they would be interested in a collaborative effort for a program in April.
 - Preserving habitat diversity (difficult on a homeowner level)
 - Pollinators -- avoiding use of broadband insecticides

Topics for future workshops (continued)

- Planting native species, and local landscape architects who might help.
- Wildflower meadows . Margot to explore who planted wildflowers near the Middlesex Clinic in Westbrook, and whether this can be maintained long-term.
- NCIS reportedly offers grants for preserving specific habitats. Margot to explore.

i. **Updates to the Conservation Commission website.** **Sandy** has drafted information on both the Rain Barrel project and the Bluebird house project and will work with Jenny Watrous to get these onto the CCC website.

New Business

- a. Sandy reported on the PoCD Task Force meeting held on Monday, Dec. 4th. He urged **all members** to complete the online PoCD Survey at <http://weknowwhereitis.com>.
- b. It was agreed that we would maintain the same meeting schedule (first Thursdays at 4:30) in 2018.
- c. Discussion of the success of the new Rotary Club provided aquarium at the Elementary School.
- d. Rechargeable battery recycling. Killingworth hardware has a collection bin. Could bins be established at Town Hall or the Library?

OPEN ITEMS (To be discussed for clearance at the next CCC meeting - Jan 2018)

(1) **Recycling** It was agreed that the information provided on the Town's website is superior to that from AllWaste. **Ted** will contact Recycle Connecticut (who supplied the Town's information) for permission to create poster-size versions to place at Town Hall, the library, the Elementary School and downtown.

(2) **Composting**

Ted has spoken with Selectman Charlene Janecek about the materials (mostly leaves, wood chips and animal waste from the Chester Fair) which has been dumped on a steep slope above Chester Creek. Nutrient-rich runoff from this pile is a problem because it runs directly into the Creek. **The CCC** will work towards solving this problem.

(3) # **Margot** will ask the Natural Resources Conservation Group to advise as to whether glyphosphates pose a threat to trees in the area to be treated for Phragmites.

(4) # **Sandy** will contact Dick Harald of Chester Land Trust to see if he has a copy of the management plan for Chester Creek which was prepared by the Fish and Wildlife Service.

(5) # **Margot** to speak with the Town Crew about what they find in catchbasins during cleanouts.

(6) # **Margot** will talk to Jenny Dixon (DEEP) about having another bat program, similar to the one hosted by the Chester Land Trust a few years ago.

Meeting adjourned at 6:15 PM.

Next meeting January 4, 2018 at 4:30 PM

Respectfully Submitted,
R. P. Holloway