

Minutes of Conservation Commission Meeting

4:30 PM, July 2, 2020

Members: (Meeting was held on Zoom): Rick Holloway, Sandy Prisloe, Peggy Wilson, Margot Burns, Ted Taigen, Lisa Wahle
(* = not in attendance)

Guests: Grant Russell-Walsh, Katherine Rowies, Donna Moore, Carol Lewitt

Meeting called to order at 4:30 pm

Minutes: Minutes of the June 2nd regular meeting were revised and unanimously approved. The revised version will be filed with the Town Clerk.

Correspondence: None, since access to Town Hall is closed.

Old Business

a. **EnviroTips:** Suggestions for future tips. On composting: include list of items you may not think of as compostable, accompanied by a list of items not to add to compost pile. **Margot** will find out where RiverCOG takes shredded paper.

b. **EnviroTips Publication:** **Ted** will send the digital file of previous tips to all members. He mentioned a possible source for self-publishing.

c. **Cedar Lake Watershed Commission (CLWC).** The spread of *hydrilla* to the lake is a major concern. Proposed control measures include informing the public and eliminating carriers which could inadvertently introduce *hydrilla* fragments to the lake. **Margot** will send a copy of the notice proposed to be posted at the state boat launch to Tom Brelsford. The CLWC has drafted, and sent to the town lawyer for review, a town ordinance to ban trailers and any watercraft using mechanical propulsion. **Ted** will distribute a digital copy of the proposed ordinance to all CCC members. Members of the CCC agreed that we would support such an ordinance. **Ted** will ask Tom to attend the next regular meeting of the CCC.

d. **Laurel Hill Cemetery** Several members of the CCC as well as Grant met there with Al Cuneo, chair of the town's Cemetery Board. Discussion included the difficulty of more extensive maintenance given the limited operating budget. Grant has proposed applying for certification as a Level I Arboretum. The cemetery meets almost all of the requirements, but qualification would involve establishment of an independent Arboretum Board. Consensus was that this was desirable since it would enable funding from private and non-profit sources. **Grant** will continue to explore with town officials how such an arrangement can be structured.

New Business

a. **UConn Master Composter Program.** Attendance at this program would cost \$100. The program would require the applicant to complete 2 community outreach projects. Many opportunities were discussed. Katherine Rowies, a guest at this meeting, expressed interest in taking the course. Sandy will investigate possible funding from our budget.

b. **SustainableCT:** Two summer interns will start at RiverCOG next week. They can work on this project. An advantage is that qualifying under the program will allow Chester to receive grant funding.

c. Regional Plan of Conservation and Development. This project, being developed by RiverCOG, will fill the gap between PoCDs on the state and on the town level. The on-line kickoff of this program garnered extensive interest; the meeting was limited to 100 attendees, so a second session will be held next week. Michael Sanders is Chester's representative for this program. RiverCOG Representatives will be meeting with Chester's Planning and Zoning Commission on August 13th at 7:30 PM. Further information is available at RiverCOGRegionalPlan.org. CCC review of Chester's PoCD will be included on next month's agenda.

d. Management of Chester's Open Spaces: Carol Lewitt, a guest at this meeting, advocated support for a more extensive plan to coordinate management of these resources. She expressed particular concern about the plantings intended for Main Street. Last year the CCC had obtained approval from the Main Street Committee as well as the project's landscape architect to specify only native species of trees and shrubs. The town's tree warden was in agreement. **Lisa and Grant** will follow up on this to make sure that these recommendations will be implemented. Furthermore, this is an opportunity to coordinate plans for Laurel Hill Cemetery, North Quarter Park, and Main Street. This item will be included on future agendas.

e. Marking Storm Drains. **Sandy** will assemble the supplies for this project, and will set a time when **Rick, Ted, and he** can continue the marking, consistent with social distancing guidelines.

f.. Pat Woomer has had to resign from the CCC. His presence today was sorely missed, as we remembered his extensive contributions to this committee, providing thoughtful insights, energy, and more than a touch of good humor.

Adjournment: 6:00 PM

Next meeting August 6, 2020 at 4:30 PM

Respectfully Submitted, Richard Holloway