

Minutes of Conservation Commission Meeting

4:30 PM, November 5, 2020

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

Guests: Julie Nash (Chester resident)

Meeting called to order at 4:30 pm

Minutes: Minutes of the Oct 1st regular meeting were revised. Under New Business, the sentence should read “Lisa will be attending the Invasive Species Symposium next week and *will work on developing* an education program for Chester.” The revised minutes were approved unanimously.

Correspondence: Invoice from CT Land Conservation Council for annual membership. This was in our budget. Payment approved unanimously.

Old Business

a. EnviroTips: The next few tips will deal with birds. Subsequent tips will discuss leaf disposal (particularly important to avoid blowing them where they will clog storm drains.)

b. EnviroTips Publication: **Ted** will send the digital file of previous tips to all members for review.

c. Cedar Lake Watershed Commission (CLWC).

There was considerable discussion regarding the severity of an infestation by the invasive aquatic plant *hydrilla*. Margot mentioned a few proposals which have been made in other towns, for example installing a washing station at the boat launch or having launch monitors.

The proposal by the CLWC to ban trailers and boats from the state boat launch is “under advisement” by the BoS.

Ms Julie Nash spoke as a local boater who is concerned about restrictions on use of the lake. She demonstrated a sound understanding of the many aspects of this problem. Her input was appreciated by all.

Clearly, public awareness of the problem is of great importance. Lectures by experts at several events at the town hall this past year helped to raise public awareness, but more needs to be done. Informational posters from the DEEP have been obtained, and will be posted at the boat launch, at the new kiosk at the side beach, and at the town swimming area on West Main Street. **Margot** will provide images for use in the town email blast as well as links to informative sites on the RiverCOG, UConn Extension Service, and other services. It will be particularly important to repeat these at the beginning of boating and fishing season next Spring.

d. Laurel Hill Cemetery arboretum. Sandy discussed this with Lauren. There is considerable interest in town for this project. Sandy wrote to Grant but has not yet received a reply. This will be continue to be carried on the CCC’s agenda.

e. Regional Plan of Conservation and Development. The final document is not expected until next summer.

f. SustainableCT. Rick has circulated a proposed “kickoff” letter to be sent to all those who attended the initial meeting in August 2019, as well as to others who have been suggested as persons who are likely to be interested in providing input to the project. He would like immediate feedback about the proposed letter from **all members of the CCC**. The project will be included as a “brainstorming” session in the agenda for the December CCC meeting.

He has been attending meetings of the Sustainable Essex committee. Essex received certification at the lowest (bronze) level and the committee is well on the way to obtaining “silver” status.

g. UConn Master Composting Program. The woman who had requested CCC financial support to attend this program has moved out of town. At present, no-one else in town has expressed interest. Rick noted that this was mentioned at the most recent meeting of the Sustainable Essex committee, and may be a good opportunity for regional cooperation. Projects involving joint efforts by multiple towns get bonus points towards each town’s accreditation.

h. Catch Basin Painting. Sandy, Rick, and Tom Brelsford have stenciled a number of catch basins in town and near Cedar Lake. **Sandy** will suggest some dates to **Ted and Rick** for a final session before winter.

i. Update Chester’s Open Spaces Map. Sandy displayed the updated map which Margot provided. **Sandy** will forward this to all members of the CCC. We are looking for persons to help update the natural resources inventory.

j. UConn Invasive Plants Conference. Lisa attended and reported that this conference was valuable. Felise Cressman and Grant Russell-Walsh have mapped knotweed locations in Chester. The CCC will be collecting information on identifying invasive plants, what threat they pose, and how to manage them. This document will then be disseminated by every means possible.

New Business

The CCC is looking for one additional member to fill a vacancy on this commission.

Carryover items:

- a. from 7/03/2020: **Margot** will find out where RiverCOG takes shredded paper.

Adjournment: 5:54 PM

Next meeting December 3, 2020 at 4:30 PM

Respectfully Submitted, Richard Holloway