

Minutes of Conservation Commission Meeting

4:30 PM, January 7, 2021

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

Guests: Kip DiVito, Kate Hair

Meeting called to order at 4:35 pm

Minutes: The minutes of the December 2020 regular meeting were approved unanimously.

Correspondence: None

Old Business

a. EnviroTips: A suggestion was made to write about the potential for spreading seeds from invasive plants via shoe soles. The issue of whether vines should be removed from trees was discussed. Lisa pointed out that many of these are native species, and that it can be difficult to distinguish the different species. Further, vine thickets formed by any of these can offer protective habitat for many birds and animals. This is a topic which merits future discussions.

Suggestions for further EnviroTips are always welcome.

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

c. Invasive plant educational outreach. Lisa, Kate, and Felise Cressman have been putting together articles for Chester Events dealing with black swallow-wort and Knotweed. They are providing information on identification and control as well as what can be planted instead.

d. Open Space map. **Sandy** will dress up the map which was circulated last month with titles and other information, and forward it to Jenny Kitsen of the Chester Land Trust for review so that it can be included in the Sustainable Chester application.

e. Cedar Lake Watershed Commission (CLWC). The CLWC did not meet last month. Public education about the *hydrilla* threat is needed. It was suggested that the CLWC write an article for Chester Events, and produce a postcard mailing similar to the effective ones which they have distributed in the past.

Ted will notify the chair of the CLWC of this suggestion.

f. Laurel Hill Cemetery arboretum. This desirable project needs an enthusiastic coordinator.

g. SustainableCT. The *Actions* sections of SustainableCT has been considerably revised as of January first; for example, the numbering system has changed and three new required categories have been added. Although we have evidence of good progress on matters of energy, environmental planning, and local economic promotion, there are a number of required categories that need to be tackled by knowledgeable persons. **Rick** will be speaking with Lauren next week to determine who these may be. Both Kate and Felise have been added to the Town's

“contributors” list so that they can enter information for the areas in which they have been active. Their enthusiasm is very much appreciated.

g. SustainableCT. (cont'd)

There are a number of actions for which inter-town cooperation would be valuable. The sustainability team in Essex has been both welcoming and helpful. It would be useful to find interested individuals in Deep River. Because of their dual roles, the Conservation Commission has to spend most of their time acting as the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency. **Rick** will try to contact environmental activists there.

New Business

a. Election of officers. Sandy feels it would be desirable to have someone else act as chair of this commission in order to ensure variety and innovation. **Sandy** will speak with Ted as a possible next chairman.

b. Committee to write Commission by-laws. **Sandy** will assemble a possible set of by-laws based on those of CC's in other towns, and circulate this for comment.

c. Discussion: Commission goals for 2021. **Sandy** will circulate these for comment.

Carryover items:

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

Adjournment: 5:54 PM

Next meeting February 4, 2021 at 4:30 PM

Respectfully Submitted, Richard Holloway