

Branford Conservation and Environment Commission
P.O. Box 150
Branford Town Hall
Branford, Connecticut

MEETING

Minutes

WEDNESDAY, December 7, 2022

7:30 P.M.

It was held by remote technology as authorized by Executive Orders 7B and 7I.

Commissioners Present: Chairperson Heather Wells-Sweeney, Carol Kaminsky, Karyl Lee Hall, Adrian Bonenberger, Karen Hannon, Patrick Sweeney, Cyndi Jasek, Neil Goodlad, Joshua Greenberg

Commissioners Absent: Christie Day

Chairperson Heather Wells Sweeney announced that there are two new Commissioners present at the meeting; Joshua Greenberg is retired from the University of Alaska and has recently moved to Branford. He spoke briefly saying he is excited to be on the commission and he gave a summary of his background.

The commissioners then introduced themselves and welcomed him to the group.

1. Approval of Minutes:

A. November 2, 2022

Carol Kaminsky made a motion to approve the minutes.

Cynde Jasek seconded the motion which was approved unanimously.

Karyl Lee Hall asked the commission to move item #7 to the beginning of the meeting since she had to leave the meeting early. The commission agreed.

2. Other:

A. Tweed Airport Expansion

Karyl Lee gave a brief summary of the "Save the Shoreline" meeting.

She noted that Shirley McCarthy spoke of pollution and its effects.

She will keep the commission informed of any updates.

Karyl Lee Hall then gave a brief update on the Crabbing Bridge item.

She received an email invitation to a meeting on December 13 at the Fire Station. She will attend the meeting and report back.

3. Correspondence and Announcements

Chairperson Heather Wells Sweeney said the Branford Land Trust contacted her because they are thinking of constructing a new trail and they are asking for a letter of support from this commission. The Land Trust has hired a company to perform a phase 1 assessment. She noted that most of the trail will not be in wetlands. The assessment company will advise them the best way to proceed.

Heather asked if the commission agreed to her sending a letter of support.

The commission gave their consent to her sending the letter.

Chairperson Heather Wells Sweeney also noted that Bill Horne of the Branford Land Trust contacted her regarding property owned by the town on hillside Ave. The Branford Land Trust has an easement there. Chairperson Heather Wells Sweeney said she walked the property with Bill Horne and Shawn Callahan (new Land Steward). Shawn will arrange a day in February for invasive plant removal. She said she will report back to the commission when she gets more information.

Chairperson noted she spoke with Jim Finch in the Finance Dept. with a budget question.

She mentioned that she will be attending a meeting to discuss the upcoming Earth Day celebration. She will report back with more information.

Chairperson Heather Wells Sweeney then noted that the CT sustainable application that was submitted was received but we did not get certified. Some of the material was not readable.

She then spoke of the high school students that are interested in the upcoming photo contest. Her idea was to get young people interested in conservation efforts. She spoke with them on projects that they may be able to assist with.

4. New Business: Nothing was discussed

5. Budget:

A. Fiscal year 2019 - year to date

Chairperson Heather Wells Sweeney displayed the excel sheet and reviewed the expenditures.

She then talked of purchasing a tablecloth overlay instead of a tablecloth and how to display the name of the commission.

Cynde Jasek volunteered to research this and discuss it at the next meeting.

The Chairperson then talked about the Greenway Trail and Foot Memorial Park and mentioned that the deer and rabbits are eating the bark on the trees. She suggested putting wire around the trees to prevent that.

Carol Kaminsky made a motion to purchase wire to help with the problem.

Cynde Jasek seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

The Chairperson noted she would like to purchase medallions from the Pollinator Pathway Group and perhaps add some signage at Foote Memorial Park.

The commission discussed this briefly.

Neil Goodlad asked a few budget questions.

6. Continuing Business:

A. Permits for coastal projects- Nothing was discussed

B. Proposed developments and other building projects-

Clerk (M. Martin) mentioned an application that is currently before the Planning & Zoning Commission for a 11 Lot Resubdivision at 175 Cherry Hill Road. The Public Hearing on this will be held January 5 via zoom.

C. Invasive plant control –

Patrick Sweeney gave a brief update.

D. Natural Resource Inventory (next publication 2023)
Chairman Heather Wells Sweeney noted that Christie Day had an upcoming zoom meeting with a contact at UConn. More info will follow.

E. Branford Festival- Nothing was discussed

F. Pollinator Pathway

The Chairperson noted that she would like to continue this. She talked of locations that she would like to work on. Gary Zelinsky from the Public Works Dept. suggested working at Chet's Pond and the commission agreed. The Chairperson will speak with the Inland Wetlands Dept. for advice on how to proceed.

G. Earth Day

The Chair asked the commission –should they give away trees on Earth Day? If so, maybe less than last year and maybe a different type of tree. Maybe a smaller tree would be a better choice.

The commissioners discussed this and thought giving information out with the tree on how to care for it might be helpful.

The Chair suggested the lights at the library be green in honor of Earth Day.

H. Crabbing Bridge (Guilford) –This was discussed at the start of the meeting.

7. Reports:

A. Select Committee for Open Space Acquisition-Nothing was discussed

B. Library books donations

Carol Kaminsky gave a brief update

C. Spill reports- None

D. Contaminated sites - None

E. Coastal Resiliency Plan- Nothing was discussed.

F. Website

Carol Kaminsky asked the commissioners to review the website for any errors or items that should be included.

The Chairperson then noted that an annual report should be compiled.

She listed the items on the agenda that should be included in this and assigned topics to the commissioners.

8. Adjournment - The meeting adjourned at 8:37 pm

Submitted by : M. Martin (clerk)