

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

MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, April 3, 2019

7:30 P.M. CANOE BROOK SENIOR CENTER

11 CHERRY STREET, BRANFORD, CT

Present: Chairman Karen Hannon, Eleanor Saulys, Mike McGuinness, Dan Fitzgerald,
Adrian Bonenberger, Karyl Lee Hall

Absent: Carol Kaminsky, James Yakimoff

1. Approval of Minutes:

A. February 6th 2019 meeting minutes

Comm. Bonenberger made a motion to approve the February 6, 2019 meeting minutes. Comm Fitzgerald seconded the motion which passed unanimously. Comm. Saulys and Comm. Hall abstained.

2. Correspondence and Announcements

Aquarion Environmental Champion Award notice was received.
DEEP notice regarding dredging & fill at Riverside Drive., (Town of Fairfield)
Comm. Hall suggested that Comm. Saulys follow up and report back to the Commission at the next meeting.

3. New Business:

A. Route 146 Bridge Project

Comm. Hall said the Scenic Roads Committee is a subcommittee of the Conservation Commission and was formed in the late 90's. She is the co-chair for Branford and Shirley Delaroni is the co-chair for Guilford. It includes Rt. 146 and Rt. 77 (both which are scenic roads). That is why we have an interest in the bridge project even though it's in Guilford. The bridge project is on the crabbing bridge. She said she and a few other people went to the DOT to discuss the project and the ramifications and they were vague. The design of the bridge is enormous, the scale is quite large. One reason for the size is to be prepared for the 100 year flood. Another reason is that DEEP has wanted to do something about Loss Lake which is on the other side of the railroad pass. It does not get enough flushing to preserve the wetlands and the marsh. She said it's environmentally questionable what they are doing. Many people at the public hearing felt the project hadn't been properly vetted. Many people also were unhappy at the scale of the project. She was looking for the permission of the Conservation Commission to give her permission to advocate for a smaller scale project and a rigorous environmental analysis before any decision pertaining to the bridge is made. She is looking for permission of the Commission to attend meetings, etc.

Also, she would like to nominate and have the Commission approve Lauren Brown as a member representing Branford on the Scenic Roads Committee.

The Commission gave Karly Lee Hall permission to attend meetings and advocate for a smaller scale bridge, etc. She will keep the Commission updated.

B. Nomination to the Scenic Roads Committee

Comm. Karyl Lee Hall nominated Lauren Brown to the Scenic Roads Committee. Comm. McGuinness seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

C. Eversource Power Line Removal Update

Comm. Saulys explained that Eversource is abandoning the power line that goes thru Westwoods in Guilford and continues on to the Stony Creek quarry, goes across Red Hill Rd over in the vicinity of School Ground Road and ends at the power station across from Vinny's drive in. The Guilford Land Trust has looked at the natural diversity database maps and located all their rare plants. Bill Horne said the Land Trust may take care of some of it. She showed the Commission where the rare plants were along the route. She explained that when Eversource abandons the lines, the areas won't be maintained. Someone needs to take responsibility and maintain it. You can maintain it as a meadow or let it become all trees. She said there are people who want the rare plants to remain.

Eversource didn't seem interested in addressing it. Comm Saulys would like the Land Trust to make a decision about maintaining the right of way.

Comm. Karyl Lee suggested the Commission speak to the Branford Land Trust and discuss it further at the next meeting.

4. Budget:

A. Fiscal year 2019 - year to date

Chairman Hannon stated there are funds available in the budget if needed. The Commission could revisit the tree idea. The Commission briefly discussed this. Comm. Fitzgerald talked about the upcoming Branford cleanup day and showed the Commission the flyers that are being distributed for that event. Comm. Karyl Lee Hall made a motion to reimburse Comm. FitzGerald for the flyers he made for the Branford cleanup day. Comm. Saulys seconded the motion that passed unanimously.

Chairman Hannon said she attended the Finance Meeting and the annual budget has been approved in the amount of \$4, 000.00. The Board Clerk fee was also approved. She also noted that she spoke to the Town Clerk and an annual report needs to be submitted.

5. Continuing Business:

A. Permits for coastal projects-no new permits

B. Proposed developments and other building projects- Burban Drive is a possible residential development. An informal discussion was held at the last PZ Meeting.

C. Invasive plant control

D. Natural Resource Inventory (next publication 2023) - Nothing to report. The Commission discussed planning ahead for projects down the road.

E. Branford Festival- This item will be discussed at the next meeting.

F. Animal Ordinance- The Chairman will attend the RTM meeting to gather more

information.

The Commission spoke of the plastic bag ordinance which is pending. The Commission supports this and the Chairman will send information to the FaceBook page.

Chairman Hannon then mentioned the animal ordinance regarding barking dogs and noted people are frustrated. Police may get called and they refer people back to Animal Control. The problem is the town has an ordinance regarding this and Animal Control has their own ordinance. They spoke of a complaint that stemmed from Alp's Road and the problem of enforcement.

6. Reports:

- A. Select Committee for Open Space Acquisition-Nothing was discussed.
 - B. Library books donations –They are awaiting book suggestions for next year.
 - C. Spill reports-249 East Main St. (Hydraulic Oil) less than 2 gallons was spilled.
 - D. Contaminated sites-Comm. Karyl Lee Hall said she will stop at the Town Hall and check with the Town Clerk.
 - E. Coastal Resiliency Plan- Did not discuss.
 - F. Website- Chairperson Hannon is going to speak with Jenn regarding the page update.
- Comm. Fitzgerald talked about upcoming events and the Facebook page.

7. Other: Comm. Saulys suggested the new Commissioners read “The Guidelines for Conservation Commissions”. It is available online.

8. Adjournment at 9:05 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Martin