

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

*****SPECIAL MEETING*****

MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, December 11, 2024

Branford Community Center, 30-48 Church St., Bonus Room

7:30 p.m.

or via Zoom with the link below if unable to attend in person.

Commissioners Present: Heather Wells Sweeney, Patrick Sweeney, Neil Goodlad, Lauren Ruotolo, Carol Kaminsky, Joshua Greenberg

Commissioners Absent: Karyl Lee Hall, Karen Hannon, Christie Day

1. Correspondence and Announcements:

A. Anonymous letter regarding pollution

Chairperson Wells Sweeney noted that after the last meeting, she received an anonymous letter at home regarding a company in North Branford dumping trash near the Branford River and also animal waste going into the river which flows into Branford. The clerk for the commission (M. Martin) asked her to email the letter to her and she would distribute it to the necessary departments.

B. We've received a gift of 5 high bush blueberry shrubs and 5 groundsel trees. I need volunteers to help me plant them.

Chairperson Wells Sweeney said all the bushes and trees were planted and she thanked the people who helped with that.

2. New Business:

A. Memorial Tree

Carol Kaminsky and Karyl Lee Hall met with the First Selectman to see if the public works dept could clean up the area by Anderson Lookout (between the parking lot and the marsh). He was going to speak with public works about that. Also, she asked if a memorial tree would be planted in that area for Chet Bloomquist since that was one of the areas that he was always cleaning up. She also noted he was on the Conservation Commission for several years, even before she was.

Chairperson Wells Sweeney made a motion to plant a tree in memory of Chet Bloomquist at Anderson Lookout.

Lauren Ruotolo seconded the motion which passed unanimously. The group then discussed which type of tree should be planted there.

Then there was a brief discussion of the cleanup at Anderson Point.

Karyl Lee Hall joined the meeting at 7:44 pm.

3. Budget:

A. Fiscal year 2024 - year to date

Chairperson Wells Sweeney noted that there was nothing new to discuss regarding the budget.

Neil Goodlad asked about using some funds for invasive removal and perhaps using the local company that Patrick mentioned. The group discussed this briefly and Neil volunteered to call the company for more information.

4. Continuing Business:

A. Permits for coastal projects- none

B. Proposed developments and other building projects- none

C. Invasive plant control- Nothing was discussed

D. Pollinator Pathway

--update on initiative

Chairperson Wells Sweeney noted that Ken spoke with Agway, and they were enthusiastic. It is on hold now but can be discussed at a future meeting on how to move forward to inspire residents to plant natives in their gardens.

E. Natural Resource Inventory- Nothing was discussed (C. Day was absent) .

Lauren Ruotolo noted she attended the November CACIWC conference and found it to be very interesting. She gave a brief overview of some of the topics.

Carol Kaminsky then asked the clerk about an application that was on the agenda for the zoning board of appeals on 25 South Montowese St. Michelle said she would email the application to her and the commission the next day.

The commission inquired how to send in a letter with questions and concerns to the zba. Michelle said to send the letter to her and she would forward it to the zba.

Carol Kaminsky made a motion to send in a letter to the zba regarding this application.

Patrick Sweeney seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

F. Branford Festival- Nothing was discussed.

G. Crabbing Bridge (Guilford)

Nothing was discussed.

H. Farm River coalition

Chairperson Wells Sweeney noted that this group is governed by the Friends of the Farm River Estuary, and they had their annual meeting last week and there was a discussion about oystering which was very informative.

She then mentioned that we submitted a grant for aquatic invasive removal of water chestnut, and we should hear back either in January or February.

I. Pilot Forest Stewardship Plan

Patrick Sweeney gave a brief review of the progress of this and noted that the final plans won't be ready until January 25.

He went into a little detail of each of the three parcels they are studying.

5. Reports:

- A. Select Committee for Open Space Acquisition- Nothing was discussed
- B. Library books donations- Carol Kaminsky gave a brief update and Karyl Lee Hall thanked Carol for her work all these years in ordering and distributing the books to the schools.
- C. Spill reports--none
- D. Contaminated sites--none
- E. Coastal Resiliency Plan- Nothing was discussed
- F. Cross-commission meeting- Nothing was discussed.
- G. Highlights from the SALT conference from Carol and Karen

Chairperson Wells Sweeney said this was an error. It should be highlights from the CACIWC conference which was discussed earlier in the meeting

6. Other:

- A. Tweed Airport Expansion- Nothing was discussed.

7. Adjournment- the meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm