

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

MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, Jan 8, 2025

Branford Community Center, 30-48 Church St., Activity

Room

7:30 p.m.

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

Topic: Conservation Commission Meeting 1_8_25

Time: Dec 11, 2024 07:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Commissioners Present: Heather Wells Sweeney, Patrick Sweeney, Neil Goodlad, Lauren Ruotolo, Carol Kaminsky, C. Day

Commissioners Absent: Karyl Lee Hall, Karen Hannon, Joshua Greenberg

Approval of Minutes:

A. November 2024

P. Sweeney made a motion to approve with the edits that were discussed.

C. Kaminsky seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

B. December 2024

C. Kaminsky made a motion to approve the minutes as written.

N. Goodlad seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

2. Correspondence and Announcements: None

3. New Business:

A. Update from Lauren and Neil on Communications and Engagement

L. Ruotolo noted that prior to the holidays she met with N. Goodlad on communications & engagement, and they recommended that this portion be added back to the agenda.

B. Question of forming a subcommittee for Communications and Engagement

Also, they hope to form a subcommittee to manage some of the commission communications and report on it on a Monthly basis. The committee could also handle social media and sharing info on invasive species management, success stories covering the commission, volunteer opportunities, recommended books and events and sharing content with like-minded organizations. Also, the writing of letters to other commissions and the continued outreach and education of the Natural Resource Inventory as well.

N. Goodlad spoke of which social media outlets they would use. They agreed that Facebook is easier to manage and control. He then listed some of the different topics that could be discussed on Facebook. He noted that if there is an item that may be appropriate to be published in a newspaper, that should

be discussed and approved by the commission first. Perhaps they can vote on this topic at the next meeting and vote on it.

4. Continuing Business:

A. Permits for coastal projects- The clerk is absent so there was no discussion.

B. Proposed developments and other building projects

C.Kaminsky noted she attended the last zoning board of appeals meeting Regarding the applications on South Montowese Street and said they denied the variances mainly due to the lack of information presented at the meeting for the buildings. She also noted they had no statement regarding hooking up to the city sewer system. Also, the applicant has the right to appeal the denial or they can come back and resubmit a new application.

L.Ruotolo said she had wanted to present an update for the Beacon Hill Project but the meeting went too long. There is an Inland Wetland Meeting scheduled for the next night and she will try to attend and report back .

N. Goodlad noted at the December 10,2024 meeting Lauren spoke of Ecology Park and the upcoming work there and a possible discussion. Will that item be postponed to the Feb meeting? P. Sweeney suggested discussing this item at the next meeting so everyone has a chance to review the documents that were sent. They were sent out 12/10/24.

H. Sweeney noted that this is a resident that wants to help out and pair up With other people to get tasks done. The commission is not obligated to take any action on this.

N. Goodlad asked if we could reply to the individual and let them know the commission is considering his ideas and suggestions.

C. Invasive plant control

P. Sweeney said he had no recent updates to discuss.

N. Goodlad noted at the last meeting he asked if there were available funds, could they hire a company to do invasive plant control? He contacted a few companies and did receive a reply. The company will give him a price quote. He noted he told the company that he wanted it to be an insecticide and pesticide free process. More information will follow on this item. He initially thought this would be a simple process to get a price quote, but it is turning out to be more involved than he thought. The commission discussed this briefly and offered suggestions as well.

C.Kaminsky said she and Karyl Lee met with Jaime Cosgrove about Anderson Lookout to talk about having the public works dept. remove the invasives along the river and maybe cleaning up the property. Jaime was agreeable and said he would speak with Gary Zielinski about it.

Also, they discussed planting a tree in honor of Chet Bloomquist there but that will have to wait until the Spring. The commission then discussed whether Chet's Pond would be a better location for the tree.

D. Pollinator Pathway

N. Goodlad noted that the trees they planted at the Early Learning Center seemed to have taken well.

--update re: All
Habitats

E. Natural Resource Inventory

C. Day had nothing new to report. However, there is an ongoing question whether the commission wants to engage GZA for any other work. She suggested checking in every few months to see if there is anything else they want to add to the NRI.

F. Branford Festival

H. Sweeney said she has no updates. She noted that the Earth day Festival has grown over the last two years. It started out as a trash cleanup day but now it has become more of a festival with less trash cleanup. It was previously discussed whether to have a separate trash cleanup day from the festival. She noted she would like to have a separate day. Perhaps this can be discussed at the next meeting.
The commission discussed this briefly.

G. Crabbing Bridge (Guilford)- No updates.

H. Farm River coalition

H. Sweeney noted this a broad umbrella term, we are under the umbrella of the Friends of the Farm River. They had their annual meeting and it was fantastic and well attended.

She also noted that we recently submitted the grant application to remove invasives (Waterchestnut). Hopefully, we will hear soon whether we are awarded the grant. More info to come.

I. Pilot Forest Stewardship Plan- No updates to discuss.

5. Reports:

A. Select Committee for Open Space Acquisition- Nothing to discuss

B. Library books donations

C. Kaminsky noted that the last invoice for the books was submitted to Finance Dept.

C. Spill reports--- None

D. Contaminated sites--None

E. Coastal Resiliency Plan- Nothing new to discuss

F. Cross-commission meeting

P. Sweeney noted there was an informal meetings between the Open Space Committee and the Forest Commission a few times to discuss the Pilot Forest Stewardship Plan. More info to follow.

6. Other:

A. Tweed Airport Expansion

H. Sweeney noted there was an article in the NY Times. Karyl Lee Has been the contact person she is absent.

C. Day said she read the article and a minor comment was made
Saying there may be some environmental issues but on the whole,
The article was positive about what the airport brings to the region.

7. Adjournment---The meeting ended at 9:00 pm

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