



Branford Select Committee on Open Space Acquisition

AGENDA

Special meeting

Monday, April 2, 2018; 7:00 pm

Canoe Brook Senior Center

- I Call to Order
- II Minutes
- III Presentations & projects
- IV Plan of Conservation and Development
 - Update
- V Unfinished/new business
 - Revision/review of committee guidelines
- VI Announcements and adjourn

Present: Peter Basserman, Bill Horne, Joan Merrick, Judy Miller, Sam Saulys, Richard Shanahan. Guest: Jacey Wyatt.

Bill Horne called the meeting to order at 7:09.

II. Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes of the December 4, 2017 meeting was made by Richard Shanahan, second by Sam Saulys; minutes approved unanimously, Peter Bassermann abstaining.

III. Presentations and projects

Bill explained that the First Selectman had requested that the Select Committee on Open Space Acquisition advise him about the possible town acquisition of parcel #43 on the committee's list of properties with open space values. Bill also reported that the First Selectman had presented the proposed acquisition to the Planning and Zoning Commission as required by Section 8-24 of the Connecticut General Statutes governing municipal improvements and that the Planning and Zoning Commission had issued a positive report. At that time, the First Selectman indicated that a specific use of the property had not been identified.

Discussion followed, during which the following points were made:

- The property is zoned residential.**
- The old landfill that operated prior to the opening of the landfill that is now Ecology Park is located at the south end of the property.**
- A portion of the property is in the FEMA flood zone; this part of the property was probably flooded during the 2011 and 2012 hurricanes. Although it currently floods only when there is a strong storm surge, vulnerability will increase as sea level rises.**
- The property abuts open space (Ecology Park and Town and land trust properties east and south of Ecology Park).**
- Maintaining the current undeveloped nature of the property would provide a buffer to Ecology Park and the old landfill and protect the view from Ecology Park.**

- acquisition by the town would protect the town from potential future liability if it were to be developed for residential use.

Bill made the motion to advise the First Selectman that SCOSA recommended approval of the town's acquisition of the property for the reasons described above. Peter seconded, and the motion was passed unanimously.

IV. Open Space Plan Update

Bill noted the suggestion to change the name to "Advisory Committee on Open Space Acquisition." This was in line with previous discussions we have had about clarifying our role, and all were in agreement.

The following points were made during the discussion that followed.

- We need to define what we mean by the term "open space."
- How much of the waterscape, including the portion of Long Island Sound within the town boundary, should be included?
- The open space plan for Branford needs to be updated.
- We need a procedure for the updating process
- funding mechanisms need to be identified
- we might look at the State Green Plan and the Connecticut Land Conservation Council for recommendations and information

V. Unfinished/new business

- Revision/Review of committee guidelines. Reserved discussion for a future date.
- Guest attendee Jaycee Wyatt asked if plans to develop the nine-acre parcel at 251 North Main Street were of concern to SCOSA. While sympathetic to the concerns of neighbors abutting this parcel, the committee agreed that it had not been

included as possible dedicated open space in the town, since it was in a developed area and had no special open space value.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 on a motion by Judy Miller seconded by Peter Basserman, with all approving.

Recorded by Judy Miller