

Conservation Commission Meeting

April 8, 2014

The Conservation Commission conducted a regularly scheduled meeting on April 8, 2014 in Room 111 of the Birdseye Complex, 468 Birdseye Street, Stratford, Connecticut.

Members Present: K. Rodia, J. DiMenno, W. McCann, M. Stewart, Chairman Dancho

Members Absent: R. Heiden

Also Present:

Call to Order: Chairman Dancho called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: Ms. Rodia made a motion to approve the minutes of March 11, 2014. The motion was seconded by Mr. McCann. The motion carried unanimously.

Open Space Committee Report: Commissioners noted there has not been an Open Space meeting for several months. Will request that Brian Carey schedule a meeting for the month of May.

Conservation Administrators Report – Mr. Dancho noted Mr. Carey would like Commissioners to push Project Greensweep. Posters have been put up – suggested putting up posters at train station and possibly donut shop. It was also noted that volunteers are needed. Opening time – 8:00a.m. at Birdseye boat ramp.

Commissioners discussed the wetland entrance at Bunnell High School which has been used as a dumping ground for yard clippings. Discussed putting up “no dumping” signage or possibly creating a composting area at Pirhala Farms.

Old Business:

After speaking to the CEO for the Board of Education, Mr. DiMenno reported the north field of Pirhala Farms would be used as an obstacle course not a soccer field. He reiterated that Terry Backer has control of this area. He read

into record and discussed “memo of understanding” from Terry Backer drafted in 2009. Mr. McCann feels there is a lack of communication. Mr. DiMenno discussed 4-H involvement in the farm

Ms. Rodia made a motion to go into recess at 7:52 p.m. The motion was seconded by Mr. McCann. The motion carried unanimously.

Meeting resumed at 7:57 p.m.

Mr. DiMenno downloaded “School Gardening and Outdoor Education” off the internet. Ms. Rodia has information coming from the Connecticut Grange. Mr. DiMenno also reported that Pat Patusky, Stratford Recreation Department, would like to be part of activities at Pirhala Farms but would need additional staff. Also, Baldwin Center would like to have the older folks mentoring elementary age children at the farm. Commissioners discussed sponsorship, letting landscaping company use a portion of the property and in return teaching children, grant from water company for rain garden for car wash, pumpkin growing contest in conjunction with the Pumpkin Festival, etc. Chairman Dancho expressed the need for a facilitator for these programs at the farm.

Mr. DiMenno and Mr. McCann will try to meet with Terry Backer to discuss the future of the farm.

New Business:

Ms. Rodia reported a Greeway meeting was held last week – looking to expand plan to reach to Stratford Center. Discussed Greenway/bikeway concept and suggested working with people who purchased AVCO property. Commissioners agreed it would be helpful if they had a copy of the Town Plan for their use.

Chairman Dancho noted there are cameras installed at spillway at zoo which can be accessed through link: 68.197.113.56:577555/.

Ms. Rodia reported that Attorney Tim Bishop sent a letter to the homeowner who had complained suggesting a resurrection of the Cooks Pond Homeowners Association. The original association has not paid dues and is defunct unless all back dues are paid. Once the dam is repaired the association

would take over and maintain the dam. The Town of Stratford is unwilling to invest in the repair of the dam.

There being no further items to discuss, Mr. McCann made a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Mr. DiMenno. The motion carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 8:42 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Gail De Cilio