

Conservation Commission Meeting

June 10, 2014

The Conservation Commission conducted a regularly scheduled meeting on June 10, 2014 in Room 111 of the Birdseye Complex, 468 Birdseye Street, Stratford, Connecticut.

Members Present: K. Rodia, J. DiMenno, W. McCann, R. Heiden

Members Absent: M. Stewart, Chairman Dancho

Also Present: B. Carey, Conservation Administrator

Call to Order: In the absence of Chairman Dancho, Mr. DiMenno called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: Ms. Rodia made a motion to approve the minutes of May 13, 2014. The motion was seconded by Mr. Heiden. The motion carried unanimously.

Open Space Committee Report: Mr. Carey informed the Commissioners of the plan to put a soccer field on the north property at Pirhala Farm. Currently approximately forth (40) plots at the farm, orchard, learning garden, and bee hives. Received grant for rain garden. Mr. McCann feels a balance needs to be struck between sports and agriculture at the farm.

The Commissioners discussed draft letter presented at the Open Space meeting to entice prospective property owners – Mr. Carey would be happy with five responses. See Open Space meeting of June 10, 2014.

Conservation Administrators Report: Mr. Carey distributed and reviewed draft “Chapter 200-trees, shrubs and woody vegetation”. Noted that after meeting with UI, Administration wanted a “Public Tree Policy”. Commissioners discussed changes to 200-18 Penalties, appraised value of trees and tree roots invading sewer lines. This policy will force the UI to deal with the Town on a case by case basis. Mr. Carey will email complete Public Tree Policy Manual to members. Mr. Carey discussed page 9 “Right Tree, Right Place”. He also noted there is a GBRC Grant of \$25K which would be the first step in developing a regional planting plan.

It should take approximately 1-2 years to have the program in place at which time 50-100 trees will be planted. Also noted there has been an epic battle between trees and sidewalks – sidewalks seem to be winning.

Mr. Carey updated the Commissioners on brownfield properties – received a \$240K grant for Mercer Towers. There is a meeting scheduled for June 16th with the EPA. He is working on a grant for Contract Plating which is available for up to four (4) million dollars. Noted to knock down building is approximately 1.2 million dollars. There has been extensive negotiations to reach this point - he assumes some money will be allocated to the Town. Meeting on Thursday with DEEP.

Commissioners discussed makeup of the Inland/Wetland Commission. Noted charter states there should be two members of the Conservation Commission sitting on the Inland/Wetland Commission.

Mr. Heiden discussed kite boarders and DEEP involvement with permits.

Old Business:

Mr. Heiden brought the Commissioners up to date on the Rooney Drive sub-division. Noted the Board of Zoning Appeals heard a revised proposal reducing the number of houses to two (2) on wetland. After approval, a legal appeal had to be filed by May 29th – court appearance after Labor Day. They are trying to raise monies for attorney fees. The legal appeal fund is accepting contributions for pending court action.

Websiteaddress:

www.crowdrise.com/protecttidalwetlandsinconnecticut/fundraiser/protectwetlands.com

New Business:

Mr. DiMenno noted this Commission has been without Council representation for a long time.

Ms. Rodia discussed the Pumpkin Festival in reference to the booth set up for the Conservation Commission. Pumpkin seeds will be distributed encouraging the planting of these seeds at home or at Pirhala Farms. Discussed whether a grant can be obtained for seeds or does the Conservation Commission have monies in the upcoming budget.

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

Respectfully Submitted,

Gail De Cilio