

Conservation Commission Meeting

December 8, 2015

The Conservation Commission conducted a scheduled meeting on December 8, 2015 in Room 111 of the Birdseye Complex, 468 Birdseye Street, Stratford, Connecticut.

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

Members Absent: R. Heiden

Also Present: Conservation Administrator, Mrs. Batoh, J.E. Martin

Call to Order: Chairman Dancho called the meeting to order at 7:36 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: MS. RODIA MADE A MOTION TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 8, 2015. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY MR. DIMENNO. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Conservation Administrators Report:

a. Mrs. Batoh gave an update on the beaver dam situation. A piping insulation system was installed to fix the problem. It will have to be maintained yearly. The cost for this would be \$750.00; hoping to get public works to sustain it to save the cost. Chairman Dancho questioned whether volunteers could maintain it or is it a complex system. Mr. McCann said he thinks the only required maintenance would be after a storm event, because of clogging. Something we could look into. Mrs. Batoh said she will get in contact with someone from Public Works Department.

Mrs. Batoh mentioned a group from Fairfield Prep (Bob Ford's science class) combined with Laurelton Hall went on a field trip to the dam. They learned about beaver ecology. The group did a water quality study and determined the presence of how a dam does impact stream water quality. She will email the members the article of the study.

Mrs. Batoh received complaints from residents about the rising water levels at Cranberry Pond near Stratford/Shelton line. She checked out the area and it looks inundated with debris. She is not sure who's responsible for the removal. Ms. Rodia suggested making it a cooperative effort, and knows a couple of people on Shelton conservation that might be willing to help.

b. Youth Conservation: none

c. James Farm Road:

The application is currently ready to be voted on. Public hearing is closed. Still there are a lot of concerns: Is it under affordable housing? Any basements? Underground Galleys-not adequate. The agency also states no feasible or prudent alternative. Mrs.

Batoh also commented on the original application and the disparity since the last public hearing. Final vote is set for Wednesday, December 16th. The previous public hearings could be viewed on the town's website.

d. Neighborhood Assistance Act Program:

Amy Knorr (Economic Development) forwarded an email to Mrs. Batoh from a gentleman (NAAP) about a tax exempt program. It's designed to grant funding, and in return it provides tax credit to corporations. The town would have to be approved and the project itself would have to be accepted. The program is closed for now, but definitely worth considering when it reopens for applications.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MR. McCANN, SECONDED BY MS. RODIA TO PUT NAAP PROGRAM ON THE NEXT AGENDA. THE MOTION PASSED 4-0 IN FAVOR.

Old Business: Mrs. Batoh mentioned commissioners visiting Ms. Stewart at Lord Chamberlin.

Mr. McCann shared a letter he had written with the commission expressing the hard work and dedication that Ms. Stewart devoted to this town. He suggested having a plaque named in her honor and perhaps the road from Oak Bluff Road to Long Beach parking area named Marcia's Way! Members concurred with this idea. Ms. Rodia made an addendum to the letter, also making Earth Day in her honor. Mrs. Batoh will move forward with the letter and will ask the Council Chair to put it on the agenda for January.

Mrs. Batoh emailed Ms. Florek (Eli Whitney's principal) about pursuing the possibility of growing ivy on the school. It would be a nice science project for the students.

Ms. Rodia mentioned putting together next year's calendar. In regards to the money the commission has (approximately \$3,000), she stressed on the importance of using it before the fiscal year. A suggestion was made to have Conservation Commission banners made.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY MS. RODIA, SECONDED BY MR. McCANN TO CREATE TWO CONSERVATION COMMISSION SIGNS (1 BIG, 1 SMALL.) THE MOTION PASSED 4-0 IN FAVOR.

Mr. McCann also added having bags with the Conservation Commission Logo on them would reinstate the plastic bag program. Chairman Dancho agreed it would resurrect the ban on plastic bags, which would be an asset to the town's environment.

Ms. Rodia mentioned having the meeting place somewhere locally for easier accessibility. Mrs. Batoh will look into this before the new calendar is set, but she did indicate the possibility of conflicting dates with other committees.

Chairman Dancho briefed once again on desperately needing new members. There were a couple of candidates mentioned. They would have to go on line and fill out an application and send it in with their resume.

New Business: Mr. DiMenno suggested talking with other park commissions about having park-police patrolling the parks throughout the town. It would make for a safer environment and also, reduce the amount of vandalism. Although it seems logical the cost of this would be an issue. Mr. McCann suggested at the next meeting putting together a letter and sending it to the town council manager, and the park commissions, sighting the circumstances and damage that are made at these areas. Chairman Dancho agreed by being active, hopefully something will come out of this.

Adjournment: There being no further items to discuss. Ms. Rodia made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was seconded by Mr. DiMenno. The meeting adjourned at 8:53 p.m.

Respectively Submitted,

Laurell Barr