

Conservation Commission Meeting

August 9, 2016

The Conservation Commission conducted a scheduled meeting on August 9, 2016 in Room 213 of Stratford Town Hall, 2725 Main Street, Stratford, Connecticut.

Members Present: J. Dimenno, W. McCann, K. Rodia, A. Capinera

Also Present: Conservation Administrator Ms. Batoh, Guests; Jennifer Budai

Members Absent: Chairman Dancho, J. Koripsky, Mr. Heiden, E. Martin

Call to Order: Mr. Dimenno called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.

Approval of Minutes: Mr. McCann made a motion to approve the minutes of July 12, 2016 with Mr. Dimenno's corrections: spelling of Mr. Koripsky and Mr. Dimenno. The motion was seconded by Ms. Capinera. The motion carried unanimously.

Conservation Administrator's Report:

a. 795 James Farm Road: Ms. Batoh talked with Jay Habansky, Planning and Zoning Administrator, and he said a couple of things that could happen are: 1.) formally deny it, then it would go back to the Inland/Wetland Commission, if they decide to subdivide the property, or 2.) approve conditionally with an option to send back to Inland/Wetlands. Ms. Rodia brought up a concern about the area and how it flooded during a past storm. The depth of the retaining wall isn't sufficient; it's just not thick enough. Discussion ensued. Ms. Batoh will keep members informed.

b. America the Beautiful grant: Ms. Batoh recapped the tree situation; she's been working with Kyle Kleza, UI, on the removal of the trees. She reiterated the UI and the Public Works process on the removals. She asked for an "entire" list of the trees that are tagged and any decision that will be made by either the homeowner or UI could be upheld by her. However, she stressed there are hundreds of trees on the list, it's very overwhelming. James Farm Road is the next tree cutting site and she will take a look at those trees.

Commissioners discussed the importance of the homeowners being properly notified, having a 30 day notification posted on the trees, and the entire area cleaned up before going onto the next job. Also, mentioned; further research on replacing some of these trees (size, location, funding) and possibly a UI replanting program? Discussion continued.

Re: last meeting. Ms. Capineras' letter was approved and will be sent out. Also, Ms. Batoh will be meeting with the Mayor and she will bring a copy of the letter to him.

Ms. Batoh distributed to the members handouts on "tree planting project workflow" and Planning "Right tree/Right place." She would like to hold a public meeting to get the word out on why urban forestry/canopy is very important. She is hoping to get some input from the citizens, so we can find a planting plan we can work with. Discussion ensued.

c. Ms. Batoh announced that the Rec. Department is having a Roosevelt Forest Day, on September 24, 2016, from Noon-3:00 pm. They will have a guided nature walk/hiking/etc. She was asked to get 2/3 speakers for this event. A few names were mentioned and she will get in touch with them.

Old Business:

a. Educational Program for Marsh/Environment: no report

b. Scavenger Hunt: No responses—publicize it better/hard copies to library.

New Business:

Mr. McCann questioned: State; bridge-rebuilding/permit/erosion control, also, a tree that was removed and he doesn't believe it is part of the UI project. Ms. Batoh said she will check it out.

Ms. Capinera mentioned Pirhala Farm: Soundkeeper possibly being absorbed by another group(s), she asked about the lease situation. Ms. Batoh explained that Chad Esposito, Parks Superintendent and Moe McCarthy, Director of Public Works will be meeting with the town attorney, once this happens she will be able to find out exactly what is going on with the lease and then we can move forward. Mr. Dimenno briefed her on the farm's past history; contract/lease/committees/education/agricultural-involvement/etc.

Mr. Dimenno questioned the affordable housing regulations. Ms. Rodia provided some clarification on the regulations/general statutes/municipality. He recommended getting Joe Gresko to come to a meeting.

Adjournment: There being no further items to discuss. MS. CAPINERA MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN THE MEETING. THE MOTION WAS SECONDED BY MS. RODIA. THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:56 P.M.

Respectively Submitted,

Laurell Barr