



Town of Woodbury Conservation Commission

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WOODBURY CONSERVATION COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

TUESDAY, JULY 5, 2022

7:00 p.m., – Shove Building, 281 Main Street South

MEMBERS PRESENT:

D. Taylor, Chairman
L. Peters
J. Sherman
T. Clark
D. West (*arrived 7:03 p.m.*)

MEMBERS ABSENT:

D. Schultz
A. Musso (*on leave of absence*)

1. DETERMINATION OF QUORUM

Chairman Taylor began the meeting at 7:01 p.m. A quorum was established.

2. APPROVAL OF JUNE MEETING MINUTES

Chairman Taylor presented the minutes of the June 7, 2022, Conservation Commission meeting for consideration. He called for discussion. There was none.

MOTION:

To approve the minutes of the June 7, 2022, Conservation Commission as presented.

Made by L. Peters, Seconded by J. Sherman

Ayes: Taylor, Peters, Sherman, Clark

Nays: None

Abstain: None

3. CORRESPONDENCE

Chairman Taylor noted an email he had sent on a program entitled “Plant with a Purpose.” The program is sponsored by the Pomperaug River Watershed Coalition (PRWC) and is looking for volunteers on July 8th and 9th for buffer planting at Lake Stibbs. The PRWC is also sponsoring a program on July 19th at the Southbury library at 7:00 p.m. on the benefits of buffers. Chairman Taylor felt this information could be beneficial to the Commission if they ever go to clean up some conservation areas.

Chairman Taylor noted a memo sent from Selectman Perkinson, dated June 15, 2022. The memo is in regards to POCD action items. The Planning Commission will be providing an annual review and update of action items for each lead or partner organization that will be presented to the Board of Selectmen. This review will assess the progress and whether certain targets, strategies and actions should be adjusted. Each Commission is encouraged to prepare for the Planning Commission and review their goals, strategies and actions laid out in the Plan.

4. CURRENT BUSINESS

a) **Invasive Plants**

Chairman Taylor had spoken to a member of the Shade Tree and Sidewalk Committee about what list of native species they try to adhere to. They were not following the DEEP list necessarily. Chairman Taylor noted that if the Commission is going to pursue this seriously, then they have to choose a list that will be used for reference. The consensus was that all Commissions and Committees involved in the Town should be using the same list for consistency. The Town should also use these plants on Town properties. The Commission all agreed to pursue this initiative for commercial properties and new developments. The practice should be recommended to residential owners, but not enforced. There was a request from the Garden Club that perennials should be native; however it is not necessary for annual plants to be native.

Chairman Taylor stated how the POCD action item 3.2 is directly in line with working with the Zoning Commission on regulations to protect environmental resources. He asked the Commission to formulate answers as to why this initiative is so important; and to be able to explain what is so bad about non-native plants. T. Clark noted a statement on the UConn website that states how native species are "...attractive, sustainable since they do not pose a threat to new species...requires little maintenance and attracts beneficial wildlife." The U. S. Forestry Service states valuable points such as:

- Do not require fertilizer and need less pesticides than lawns
- Require less water than lawns, help prevent erosion
- Reduce air pollution
- Provide shelter and food for wildlife
- Provide bio-diversity and stewardship of the natural heritage

The Commission's next steps will be to organize their thoughts. T. Clark will compile a summary of "why native plants." The Commission will need to choose what list of native plants they intend to use and coordinate efforts with the Land Use Office and other Organizations. They will invite Kyle Turoczi to the next meeting to get some ideas.

b) **POCD Implementation Status Strategies and Actions**

The Commission reviewed the strategies and actions from the POCD Implementation Summary where they were listed as either a lead or partner organization.

1.1—Chairman Taylor had made a list and sent it to the Selectmen. A lot of personnel have changed so the Commission would like to revisit the list again and possibly redistribute.

1.2—This action is hard for the Commission to do since they are not a representative to NVCOG. This has been brought to the attention of the Selectman, but this needs more discussion. This led to a discussion about acquiring Open Space for natural purposes.

1.3—With the new Town Planner in place, this action has not been pursued yet.

1.4—The Commission is in full support of this strategy.

3.2—This is the action that the Commission is currently pursuing.

3.3—The Commission is happy to partner with the IWA to review the IWA regulations. It needs to be clarified if the IWA is working on their regulations.

3.4—Chairman Taylor highly recommended members to get familiar with the Watershed Plan. He believes there are areas to pursue such as culverts, aquatic life and movement and flooding. Once the Commission is more familiar with the plan, they can invite a member from the PRWC to come meet and discuss possible actions. Other departments might need to be involved. D. West suggested that the role of the Conservation Commission could be to facilitate discussions amongst any departments involved.

Chairman Taylor brought attention to a Federal program for aquatic waterways Thursday July 21, from 2:00-3:30. He will send the information out to the members.

4.1—The draft for a brochure had been done and there were funds in the budget for this item. The Commission will revisit this to finalize the draft. Discussion continued on how the town website is not staying up to date and there is a lot of inaccurate information on it. When items are submitted, they do not always get posted. Chairman Taylor will talk to the First Selectman to understand who the web master is in order to facilitate this action.

4.2—The Commission is not comfortable with this action. They do not feel they have any authority to interact and suggest changes to the Board of Education.

5.1—While the Commission likes the idea to identify possible Open Space properties, they are leery of putting together such a public list.

5.2—The Commission is not sure if this strategy is realistic for all of these groups to come together. All agree that the Town should have a strategy though.

c) Municipal Composting

L. Peters reported that there are no updates yet to the pilot program with Blue Earth. J. Sherman inquired about the changes that the new recycling program bill has made. There are some changes on deposit and returnable items. L. Peters also noted that two food businesses in Southbury are participating in a pilot program for food scrap recycling. A grant was received from New England Grass Roots Environment Fund. She will look into this program.

d) Open Space Issues

There were no open space issues discussed at this time.

5. MEMBER TIME

Chairman Taylor asked the Commission if they would like to hold next month's meeting. He will not be present. The Commission agreed to cancel since they might not even have a quorum.

D. West inquired about where the Town stands with their certification status from Sustainable CT. Chairman Taylor will look into this and maybe put it back on the agenda.

L. Peters knew someone asking about the hemlocks and predator beetles. J. Sherman stated that November / December is the time to assess. It was recommended to get on the Tree Savers email list.

6. PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

There were no comments from the floor at this time.

7. NEXT MEETING AGENDA ITEMS

The next meeting will be held on September 6, 2022.

8. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION:

To adjourn the meeting at 8:49 p.m.

Made by D. West, Seconded by J. Sherman
Consensus of the Commission in favor 5-0-0

Respectfully Submitted,

Robyn Wright

Robyn Wright
Clerk for the Conservation Commission

RECEIVED & FILED
IN WOODBURY, CT
This 11th day of July 2022
at 1:35 o'clock PM
Maria M. Mercuri
Town Clerk

Copies of documents and meeting audio are available at the Land Use Office