

NEWINGTON OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE

Regular Meeting

April 14, 2016

Chairman Bernadette Conway called the regular meeting of the Newington Open Space Committee to order at 6:35 p.m. in Room L101 in the Newington Town Hall, 131 Cedar Street, Newington, CT.

I. ROLL CALL

Commissioners Present:

Commissioner Gail Budrejko
Commissioner Bernadette Conway
Commissioner Sharon Dunning
Commissioner Carol Wojtowicz
Commissioner Carol Anest

Town Staff Present:

Craig Minor, Town Planner

II. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved as submitted.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. March 10, 2016:

Commissioner Sharon Dunning made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Commissioner Carol Wojtowicz. All were in favor (Carol Anest abstained).

IV. NEW BUSINESS

a. Status of revision to Provision #3 of the Town Council Resolution:

Commissioner Anest reported that the Town Council has not taken this up yet. She anticipates that it will be on the April 26, 2016 agenda for discussion.

b. Review work done by Previous Open Space Committee:

The Committee reviewed the PowerPoint slide show that was presented to the previous Open Space Committee on February 22, 2011 which is in this month's agenda packet, and the minutes from August 19, 2010 through June 16, 2011. Chairman Conway said that the vision of the old committee and the current committee are the same; the only major difference between then and now is the Marcap Parcel had not yet been acquired by the Town. The status of the Town's efforts to acquire the Toll Brothers parcel (which belongs to Balf) was questioned, but Commissioner Anest said that it's confidential. It

was suggested that the Committee recommend the Town Council adopt a resolution similar to the one on Page 3 of the PowerPoint slide show:

“To determine the means to acquire, preserve and protect the Cedar Mountain parcel and various other open space parcels within the town of Newington.”

Commissioner Budrejko said that this was not a good time to do that. The Town Planner was asked to bring a map of this parcel to the next meeting.

Chairman Conway addressed the Mission Statement on Page 4:

- To explore all avenues available to preserve Cedar Mountain as open space for all future generations;
- To present to Council all potential sites to be acquired, preserved and/or protected for open space;
- To seek out all potential funding sources to include but not limited to private grants, local state and federal programs;
- To research and consider establishing a private non-profit land trust for the benefit of preserving open space.

Commissioner Wojtowicz suggested reaffirming this. It was agreed to discuss it more.

c. Open Space Inventory and Map:

Chairman Conway asked the Town Planner for the status of the CT Greenways grant application. The Town Planner replied that his understanding was that the Allyson Clark was researching the Committee's questions about what types of land is eligible, and if the Town can apply for more than one. Chairman Conway said she would contact Allyson Clark about that, and said this should be on the agenda next month.

The Committee then reviewed the various maps from the 2020 POCD and the color map of open space parcels prepared by the IT department in 2009. Commissioner Budrejko asked if there is a map of hiking trails in Newington. The Town Planner said that the Parks and Recreation Department got a small grant from the Central CT Health District a couple of years ago to produce one. Commissioner Budrejko so she was familiar with that map, but she meant a map of contiguous trails in town. The need for such a map was discussed. The Town Planner said he would contact the Parks and Rec Director to see if such a map exists. Commissioner Dunning asked if the CT Greenway trails in Newington are marked or blazed as such. Chairman Conway said no. The benefit of designating the arc of land where the creation of Route 291 had been proposed was discussed. The Town Planner was asked to put that on the next agenda.

The Committee then reviewed the list of open space parcels in town and their assessed values. Chairman Conway asked the Town Planner to explain the proposed TPZ “Open Space Zone”. He replied that this is a new land use category (zone) that TPZ is working on, to provide more protection for public-owned as well as privately-owned open space.

Chairman Conway mentioned that the previous Open Space Committee had considered acquiring the Balf Quarry when Tilcon Tomaso is done with it, and asked the Town Planner if there is a "close out plan" for it. The Town Planner replied that he asked a representative of Balf a couple of years ago what their close out plan is, and he was told that they intend to continue mining for many years and therefore have not yet prepared a close out plan. He also reported that he is still working on plans for a parking area on Mountain Road for people who want to walk the Old Highway across Cedar Mountain.

Commissioner Wojtowicz asked about the abandoned house on Patricia M. Genova Drive, and suggested that this land might be a potential open space corridor.

4 x 4 table of different categories of open space prepared by the Town Planner ("Private" vs. "Public" and "Protected" vs. Not Protected") was discussed.

d. Status of Open Space Management Strategy:

The Committee agreed that it was only concerned with "passive" open space, as opposed to "active" open space that is maintained by the Parks and Rec Department. Commissioner Budrejko suggested the Committee walk all of these parcels to get a better feel for them; what kinds of activities should be allowed (e.g. picnicking, non-team sports, etc.) and what level of oversight they need. Commissioner Anest reported that the Town Council is looking into a permanent name for the "Marcap Parcel".

V. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Mayor Roy Zartarian: There will be a "butterfly walk" at the Cedar Hill Cemetery on the former Jordan Lane on June 18. The Newington Parks and Rec Department will conduct a "trail walk" on Old Highway, on June 4, beginning on Russell Road.

David Goodale, 1741 Main Street: Mr. Goodale reported that the barn is now official off limits, now that the Town has put plywood over the windows and locked the garage doors. He invited the Committee members on a tour of the farmhouse. It was agreed to do it on Saturday, April 30 starting at 11 am.

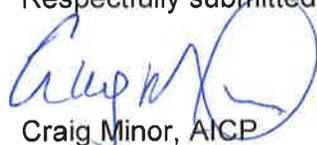
VI. COMMITTEE MEMBERS COMMENTS

None.

VII. ADJOURN

Commissioner Dunning moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Wojtowicz. All were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Craig Minor, AICP
Recording Secretary