

CONSERVATION COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING MARCH 4, 2014
CONFERENCE ROOM L 101

These minutes are not verbatim, but represent a summary of major statements and comments. For minutes verbatim, refer to audiotape on file in the Office of the Town Clerk. Audiotapes are retained for the minimum period required under the retention schedule as provided under Connecticut Law.

Chairman Block called the roll call at 7:00 p.m. and noted Commissioners Casasanta, Clark, Igielski, Sadil and Zelek were present. Also present was Alternate Krawiec and Town Engineer Chris Greenlaw, Town Engineer.

NOTE: Chairman Block designated that Alternate Krawiec would vote for Commissioner Ancona.

ITEM III

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS: NONE

ITEM IV

Environmental Quality Commission---Michael Fox Proposal to the Commission

Alternate Krawiec passed out a copy of an outline for a joint initiative sponsored by the Environmental Quality Commission (EQC) and Conservation/Inland Wetland Commission called "Think before you toss! Keep Newington litter free" to Commission members.

Chairman Block noted that that this Commission would be sitting as the Conservation Commission and would act in an advisory and recommend role in the matter before the Commission.

Mr. Michael Fox (Chairman, EQC), 1901 Main Street introduced Mr. Edward Horn, 35 Crestview Drive, who has been working him on the initiative.

Mr. Fox noted that last September/October he received a communication from Commissioner Zelek noting that a couple of people (Commissioner Clark and Alternate Krawiec) would like to work with the EQC on an anti-litter initiative.

Mr. Fox noted that there has not been an anti-litter initiative since Mr. Robert Cosgrove, former Town Sanitarian, retired.

Mr. Fox noted that it is our intent in this initiative to outline on how we plan to achieve our intended goals. One of the main goals would be to open a line of communication with businesses and the school system through an education process.

Mr. Fox noted that the kickoff event would be the "Earth Day" initiative that would be held on Saturday, April 26, 2014 and proceeded to enter the following remarks into the record:

- A. The time period of the event would be between 9:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon.
- B. The goal of the event would be to pick up litter on Cedar Mountain, Churchill Park and Mill Pond Park.
- C. Volunteers would assemble in the Municipal Parking Lot (Constitution Plaza) where they would be broken down into three (3) groups. Each group would have a team leader. Gloves and garbage bags would be made available to the teams. Trucks would be available for garbage removal to the dump.
- D. Supermarkets would be encourage to offer an alternative to plastic bags for groceries such as paper or reusable/recyclable bags.
- E. Encourage businesses to participate in a cleanup effort around their establishments.

Mr. Horn noted that he is making arrangements to have posters made that would be placed in windows promoting "Earth Day".

Mr. Fox noted that an effort would be made to have businesses pick up litter at their locations on a steady basis.

Mr. Fox noted that there would be an acknowledgement when a successful endeavor is done.

Chairman Block noted that the Town Attorney has advised Commission members that due to the current litigation not to go up to Cedar Mountain. You (Mr. Fox) may want to check with him.

Mr. Fox noted that the Mayor has talked to the Town Manager and the Town Attorney who is preparing a waiver for volunteers to sign where the Town would have no liability.

Chairman Block suggested an exchange of ten (10) plastic for one paper. He also suggested that that the school art department be contacted to draw the posters. Some minor prizes could be given to the best posters.

Commissioner Clark noted that Cedar Mountain could be a draw.

Chairman Block suggested that you (Mr. Fox) check with the Town Attorney to see if any presence of people on the mountain (Cedar Mountain) would be a problem.

Chairman Block asked what can the Commission do to show its support? Commissioner Clark noted that there are two (2) Commission members and two (2) Environmental Quality Commission members on the committee, which would manifest equal representation. It also noted that the snow date would be May 11, 2014.

Commissioner Zelek asked if the group would be prioritizing any future sites for cleaning? Mr. Fox responded yes.

Alternate Krawiec asked if there were any sites that should be looked at now? There was no response.

Commissioner Zelek noted that Ms. Rose Lyons, under public participation at several Commission meetings, noted the area behind St. Mary's Church is in need of cleaning.

Mr. Fox responded that this is an item for future discussion, not for April 26th (Earth Day).

Mr. Fox noted that the committee would be working with businesses to get a commitment to keep their areas clean and work with the schools to keep students aware that the initiative would be an ongoing program.

There was a general discussion on whether to add the Conservation Commission name to the initiative's letterhead. It was the consensus of Commission members per Chairman Block to sign our names as an endorsement to the project (the initiative).

Commissioner Igielski noted that he could not recall seeing a similar type of situation. He noted that the Commission up to this time has acted as an advisory Commission. This is beyond that (advisory). Perhaps it would be appropriate to have the Town Attorney be part of the process to insure that when the names do go on the letter, it would not be something that would be contradictory to the Commission's designated responsibilities.

Mr. Fox noted that he would adding the name of the Commission members onto the letterhead and tomorrow that he would be meeting with the Town Manager to show him the letterhead which would be forwarded to the Town Attorney.

Commissioner Igielski noted that his concern would be the format of the letter.

ITEM VA

Inland Wetland Regulation Changes---Legislative Changes

Mr. Greenlaw noted this item represents a major under taking and that he has nothing to report on the matter tonight. He also noted that six (6) years of legislative changes are involved and hopes to have a proposal with changes ready for mailing next week. A copy of the proposal has been sent to the Town Attorney for review and comment.

Mr. Greenlaw noted that he would prefer that all future comments be submitted in typed form.

Commissioner Zelek noted that consideration should be given to the formation of a sub-committee to address the matter.

Chairman Block noted that he did not see the need for a sub-committee at this time.

Mr. Greenlaw noted that he agrees with Commissioner Zelek that a sub-committee would be in order.

Chairman Block noted that he could support a sub-committee if a large number of comments come in.

Commissioner Igielski noted the "DEEP Model Regulations" should be updated to include the legislative changes under discussion. He also noted that the Commission cannot make changes (that may be in conflict) to the Model Regulations even though DEEP has not updated its own "Regulations".

Commissioner Clark suggested that the Commission come up with a frame work on how to control the work,

There was a general discussion on the course that should be taken to move the item forward (listen to audio tape for the details of the discussion).

Commissioner Zelek noted that three (3) meetings have passed and nothing has been accomplished. Why not form a sub-committee tonight?

Commissioner Casasanta noted that the Commission should appoint a sub-committee next month and set a date (to report back to the Commission).

Commissioner Igielski recommended the Commission set up a one member sub-committee (Commissioner Igielski) who would work with Mr. Greenlaw and staff to achieve the goal of the Commission.

Chairman Block noted that he would be a member of the sub-committee.

Motion made by Commissioner Casasanta to appoint a sub-committee of two (2), Chairman Block and Commissioner Igielski. (that would prepare a report that would include the recommended language for inclusion into the "Regulations" relative to the legislative changes that have occurred over the past six[6] years).

Commissioner Zelek thanked Commissioner Igielski for stepping up and taking responsibility to move this matter forward.

Motion was seconded by Commissioner Zelek. There was no discussion. Vote was 7 yes, 0 no and the motion was carried.

ITEMVB

Inland Wetlands Official Map Changes

Mr. Greenlaw noted that there are twenty (20) years of wetland changes that are being addressed to bring the "Official Town Map" up to date. A number of questions have come to the surface during the review process that will require consultation with the Town Attorney. The goal would be to have

a clear understanding, including guidelines and rules to follow in development of the process that would be used in updating the "official Town Map".

Commissioner Zelek asked who in the end would conduct a public hearing? Mr. Greenlaw responded that he would be reviewing the past history on how map changes were made over the years.

Commissioner Zelek asked under what authority would the Commission hold a Public Hearing? Chairman Block responded that there could be several stumbling blocks along the way which could include:

- A. Map changes that were never recorded.
- B. Creation of a new map that may require a public hearing and public participation.
- C. In the past, how was vetting done in a proper manner?

There was a general discussion related to the need for an application versus a petition and the need to review ordinances, regulations and state statutes for possible conflicts (listen to audio tape for the details of the discussion).

Motion made by Commissioner Casasanta to table the item over to the next meeting and was seconded by Commissioner Clark. There was no discussion. Vote was 7 yes, 0 no and the motion was carried.

ITEM VC

New Initiative---Vernal Pools

Commissioner Zelek noted that he did not have the opportunity to incorporate the changes discussed at the February 18th meeting into "Proposal and Recommendation for Vernal Pool Mapping" because he has been involved on a major project at work.

Motion made by Commissioner Zelek to table the item over to the next meeting and was seconded by Commissioner Casasanta. There was no discussion. Vote was 7 yes, 0 no and the motion was carried.

ITEM VI

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS: NONE

ITEM VII

COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS

Commissioner Clark noted that a vernal pool workshop would be held in conjunction with the Northeast Natural History Conference that would be held in Springfield, Mass. on April 7, 2014.

Chairman Block noted that an expression of concern has been made on the length of time of Commission meetings. He noted that the Commission has a lot on its plate at the present time.

Commissioner Casasanta noted that the Commission is not wasting time. He also noted that the agendas are long and that there should be an open discussion on all items.

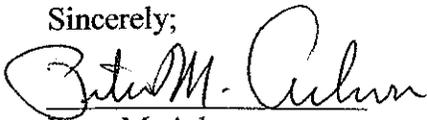
Commissioner Sadil suggested that the Commission could look to assign a no time limit to an application and assign a time limit to other matters.

Alternate Krawiec noted that Commission members do their due diligence at this time and (at a future date) set a time limit per agenda item.

Chairman Block noted that in his opinion it would not be appropriate at this time to set time limits on the agenda.

Motion made by Commissioner Sidal to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 p.m. and was seconded by Alternate Krawiec. There was no discussion. Vote was 7 yes, 0 no and the motion was carried.

Sincerely;



Peter M. Arbur
Recording Secretary

Commission members
Tanya Lane, Town Clerk
John Salomone, Town Manager
Town Planner
Councilor Myra Cohen
Councilor David Nagel
Chairperson, Town Plan and Zoning Commission
Peter M. Boorman, esquire, Town attorney
Chris Greenlaw, Town Engineer
Lucy Robbins Wells Library (2)