

TOWN OF NEWINGTON

131 Cedar Street Newington, Connecticut 06111

Town Planner

Memorandum

To: Town Plan and Zoning Commission
From: Town Planner Craig Minor, AICP
Date: October 5, 2020
Subject: Petition #33-20: Referral of Proposed Amendment to the Conservation Commission (Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency) Regulations. Newington Conservation Commission, applicant.

Description of Petition #33-20:

Section 427-4 of the Newington Code of Ordinances states that all proposed amendments to the regulations of the Conservation Commission (the board that functions as the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency for the Town of Newington) are to be referred to TPZ “for review and comment”. The Conservation Commission wants to amend their regulations to provide additional protection for the ecological formations that are known as “vernal pools”.

Staff Comments:

Vernal pools are small, rain-fed ponds, usually in the woods, that dry up every summer. Because they dry up they don’t support a fish population, and for many years they were therefore assumed to be an unimportant part of the natural environment. But in fact, it’s the opposite. Because vernal pools contain no fish to eat amphibian eggs, vernal pools are the breeding area for amphibians such as frogs and turtles.

Technically a vernal pool is a type of watercourse and therefore already subject to the protection of the Conservation Commission’s regulations. But having a definition and specific regulations will provide them with additional protection.

The Conservation Commission has been working on this amendment for some time. I recommend TPZ support the Conservation Commission’s efforts to adopt this amendment.

cc:
Conservation Commission
file

Phone: (860) 665-8575 Fax: (860) 665-8577
cminor@newingtonct.gov
www.newingtonct.gov