

MCC

Milford Conservation Commission Regular Meeting

Tuesday Sep. 17, 2013. 6:00 PM

Parsons Government Complex, Conference Room A, 70 West River Street, Milford, Ct. 06460

Pledge of Allegiance

Call to Order/Roll Call

Mr. Poultray called the meeting to order at 6:10.

Members attending: William Poutray (ch), Steve Johnson (v-ch), Claire Casey, Maureen Mauro-Desantie, Keith Dunn, Oden Seaholm

Absent: William Blotney, Dan Drago, Jerry Loiselle,

Staff attending: Meg Greene (sec)

Public comment

None.

Previous meeting minutes

A motion was made, seconded and carried to approve the minutes from the July 23, 2013, meeting.

Unfinished Business

A. WRWA Grant and Education Outreach plans for Oct/Nov.

Mr. Johnson reported receipt of a grant of \$3825 to build capacity for water quality measurement improvement and fund a public series of talks about issues that affect water quality at several locations along the Wepawaug. The series must be completed in October/November. The grant will fund the purchase of a water quality testing meter that can assess several variables. He said 2 more grants are being pursued to supplement this test activity. He noted that raising awareness of water quality issues in harbor coincide with sessions on upcoming informational sessions on shell-fishing aquaculture. The harbor water quality is impacted by the impaired river system. Target times for the WRWA information sessions are Sunday afternoons in the fall.

B. Open Space (OS) Baseline Inventory

Status: **Mr. Johnson** said the project is about 95% done with 571 undeveloped parcels of land accounted for. The land ownership varies; some is city-owned, land trust, state, federal or privately deeded open space. He said some developers retained ownership of deeded open space. He noted that in the last Plan of Conservation and Development, schools were included as open space recreation areas. He said his inventory includes schools but that it subtracts buildings and parking lots. He said that for each property, he is capturing data variables off the city's GIS system and adding to them. His goal is to increase the city's GIS system reporting possibilities. He hopes to finish by next week. He noted that total acreage is about 3000. **Mr. Poutray** said that knowing what open space we have will allow creation of an overall open space plan and he praised Mr. Johnson's efforts.

Commissioner Adoption – OS select site reviews:

Mr. Johnson displayed maps of open space with color coding to represent ownership. He said that he was surprised by amount and diversity of the space. He hopes to identify properties close to each commissioner, develop a data sheet for each parcel, and do walkthroughs to find lot boundaries. He said the spaces often have no trails, most haven't been maintained, and most are filled with invasive species. One benefit is that if dumping or other activity is noted, it can be documented and a plan can be developed for maintenance needs. **Mr. Poutray** asked to delay making assignments until more attendees were present.

C. Beaver Brook Boardwalk

Mr. Johnson said the status of the boardwalk is currently uncertain. He noted that the property is on Kingdom Life Church property, but that the city has an easement for and authority to replace the boardwalk. He said replacement will involve significant expense. He discussed what would be entailed to rebuild and said that he is working with Joe Griffith

in the Department of Permitting and Land Use (DPLU) to come up with estimates. With the mayor's help, he is pursuing a grant from STEAP (Small Town Economic Assistance Program) for \$500,000, although the whole project will cost more than that. He said a goal would be to collaborate with the Platt Tech architectural department.

Unfinished Business

D.86 Pond Point Ave—23-unit 8-30g Affordable Housing Site Plan Review

Mr. Johnson said a 23-unit 8-30g Affordable Housing project is in Site Plan Review in DPLU and that he is helping organize a site walk to allow commissioners to provide limited comment. He shared details about the project plans with the commissioners. He noted that this is a densely populated part of town, but that there are 3 acres of property under consideration and that there are no OS requirements bound to this type of housing. He said plans include plantings and that the existing property is isolated, undeveloped, and likely to have invasives. He suggested that the commission could comment and identify these invasives as these plans often lack invasive plant management. He said the developer is Tom Collucci and the owner is Kohlberg LLC. He said that he would need to consider various factors in timing a site walk as there is a legal requirement to notice such a meeting, open it to the public, and observe guidelines for talking points. He planned to do it within the next 3 weeks after contacting the owner for permission. He said the plan is to clear-cut the whole parcel. He said it is surrounded by residential areas. **Mr. Poutray** said he will circulate some dates.

E. "Do not feed waterfowl" signs

Mr. Johnson was able to procure 16 sturdy plastic signs to post around town in hopes of educating the public about problems created by feeding the waterfowl. He said he'd spoken with several city officials and had given a sign to Public Works so their staff can decide how best to mount and stake them. He said 12 locations are being considered including the boat launch, the pedestrian bridge near the library, both sides of the duck pond, Eisenhower Park, Silver Sands state park, and the Audubon Center. The group discussed tying the signs into a media campaign and school outreach, as well as organizing a press conference.

F. Charles Island Shore clean up

Mr. Poutray said the project was finished over the weekend by 3 people in 1.5 hours. He said a DEEP ranger hauled away the trash. He noted that the outside of the island is mostly rocks, but now also has a stand of phragmites and that the island has generally been changed by recent tropical storms. The group discussed issues surrounding the deer living on the island and implications for invasives. **Mr. Johnson** said he would like to inspect the island interior after a freeze.

G. Connecticut Association of Conservation & Inland Wetlands Commissions, 36th Annual Meeting & Environmental Conference, Saturday, November 16, 2013

Mr. Poutray strongly encouraged attendance, saying the session is well run, informative, fun, and presents opportunities to exchange ideas with other Conservation Commissions.

Adjournment was at 7:14.

Respectfully submitted,

Meg Greene, Recording Secretary