

MCC

Milford Conservation Commission Regular Meeting

Tuesday Nov. 19, 2013. 6:00 PM

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

Call to Order/Roll Call/Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Johnson called the meeting to order at 6:00.

Members attending: Steve Johnson (v-ch), Claire Casey, Keith Dunn, Jerry Loiselle, Maureen Mauro-DeSantie

Absent: Dan Drago, William Blotney, William Poutray (ch), Oden Seaholm

Staff attending: Meg Greene (sec)

Public comment

None.

Previous meeting minutes

September and October minutes were each motioned and seconded to be approved, they were accepted unanimously.

Unfinished Business

WRWA Grant and Education Outreach Review

Mr. Johnson reported that the fourth and final walk had been completed. Timing was such that the Lisman Landing dredging was occurring during the walk.

Attendance averaged 25 persons per session for a total of about 100 participants that included citizens of Orange. Water quality training sessions will follow and be scheduled soon.

OS Baseline inventory

Mr. Johnson reported that he would forward a summary of his report to all commissioners.

Beaver Brook Boardwalk

Mr. Johnson reported that he was still awaiting grant application results from Hartford.

86 Pond Point Ave. - 23 unit 8-30g Affordable Housing Proposed Development

Mr. Johnson said a site visit had been proposed, but the time of the visit had to be changed at the last minute, such that only Mr. Poutray and Mr. Johnson were able to attend. The two made comments on the site, but not on behalf of the whole commission.

Mr. Johnson noted that the development was on the Planning and Zoning Board's agenda this evening. There was some discussion about the statutory nature of 8-30g projects. Mr. Johnson clarified that the current OS inventory did not encompass private spaces or "perceived open spaces," as they can also be called unless they are protected by a Conservation Easement or Restriction. He said the reaction of the community toward the affordable housing project points to a need for the Conservation Commission to identify potential properties that might be subject to development. That way if grant or other funding becomes available, it is easier for the Commission to recommend open space purchasing options. This would also provide an opportunity to dialog with landowners about potential dedication of space. He reviewed several examples of open space properties that do not have any special protection from development.

New Business

Connecticut Association of Conservation & Inland Wetlands Commissions

36th Annual Meeting & Environmental Conference – Comments on Breakout sessions

Mr. Poutray, Mr. Johnson, Ms. Casey, and Ms. Mauro-DeSantie all attended and found the conference very instructive.

Ms. Mauro-DeSantie brought home a CONNPirg petition for an extension of the bottle bill. She attended a session on buffer gardens with a possible eye toward creating such areas near the Wepawaug. She learned about invasive species in local lakes. She noted that waterways should be included in Plans of Conservation and Development (POCDs); Mr. Johnson said they were well documented in the Milford's POCD. She and Mr. Johnson discussed possible funds available through the Clean Water Act. She reviewed other programs and possible sources of funding through boat tax refunds. She discussed monitoring of water level rises during storms. Mr. Johnson noted that there is a gauge near Calf Pen Meadow and a second near the Walnut Street Bridge, although the latter has not been working in some time. It would cost about \$20,000 to put in a solar-powered new gauge, but it costs \$5000 per year for maintenance, so future funding presents an impediment to installing a gauge.

Ms. Mauro-DeSantie asked that Mr. Johnson's role as Natural Resource and Open Space Agent be recognized in the recorded minutes of the meeting. She stated that she hopes funding for his position will be continued, as he provides a great deal of value with his knowledge of these issues.

She provided the following excerpt from her report:

I recommended that we research these funding opportunities:

Section 319 Federal Clean Water Act

Section 604B 60/40 match

CT Boat Gas Tax - refundable if you apply for it

Steve noted the above and is following through on each source.

The other items I had learned:1. The 100 year flood zone will rise a foot and a half by the year 2100

2. Who is monitoring the sea level rise

3. How do we educate CC and IW about gauges and mapping to monitor sea levels during storms?

She noted that Mr. Johnson was aware of the monitoring equipment and working on repairing it but we don't have anyone assigned to do it.

Mr. Johnson spoke about organizing another ECO Collaboration. Ms. Mauro-DeSantie agreed to organize it and Ms. Casey agreed to help her.

The group discussed the CT Recovery outreach activities and the CERTT program; CERTT standing for CT Emergency Response Team Training. The idea is to train citizen volunteers to provide support to first responders. **Mr. Johnson** noted that if Open Spaces should be subject to emergency activity, the MCC could possibly provide access information or other helpful information to first responders.

Ms. Casey agreed that the sessions were excellent. She described two sessions on climate change and involvement in Land Use processes. She also described a helpful way of illustrating invasive species on trails.

The group discussed the issue of bamboo. The running bamboo such as Yellow Groove, is very aggressive with spreading into unwanted areas. The clumping varieties are not a concern. Despite the problems it can cause, the Running Bamboo varieties do not meet the CT Criteria to be declared invasive.

189 Seaside Avenue, Site Visit, 12 Noon, Sunday, Nov. 24th

The OS and MCC have been asked to visit and comment on this proposal by the developer. The rear of the property has 2.4 acres near Beard's Creek (aka Torrey Brook) proposed for OS dedication. The meeting has been noticed and if members of the public join the group, the session will run like a public meeting. There was a discussion of pressures for development. Mr. Johnson encouraged participation.

Adjournment was at 7:00.

Respectfully submitted,