

**Conservation Commission Meeting
Town Hall Meeting Room
January 8, 2009**

Minutes

Attendance:

Members present: William Rutherford (7:15p.m.), Lisette Henrey, Renee Seblatnigg, Sue Baker, Nancy Dickinson, Alexander Brash, Eric Brower, and Gary Silberberg

Staff: Denise Savageau and Aleksandra Moch

Audience present: Connie Figgie, 80 Club Road; Nancy Chapin, 190 Bible Street; Gabriella Circosta Cohee, Town of Greenwich, DPW; Amy Siebert, Town of Greenwich, DPW; David Thompson, Town of Greenwich, DPW; Michael Doherty, Metcalf & Eddy/AECOM; Thomas and Ariadna Wood, 37 Miltiades Avenue; Dan Fredland, 8 Newton Street; Alexis Abernethy, 23 Glen Avon Drive; Paul Pugliese, 27 Shore Acre Drive; David Lynn, 41 Glen Avon Drive; Virginia Melvin, 41 Glen Avon Drive; Ann Simpson, 17 Glen Avon Drive; Lucy Guillet, 8 Newton Street; Janice Calkin, 48 Frontier Road; Lynn Sawyer, 22 Gerry Street; Renie Schmidt, 266 Cognewaugh Road; Polly Memhard, 90 Club Road; Sherry Wernicke, 55 Summit Road; Natalie Jarnstedt, 250 Stanwich Road; Richard and Marie Zeller, 18 Stonehedge Drive; Peter Tesei, Town of Greenwich; Jim O'Brian, 273 Valley Road; Dan Faryniarz, 16 Crescent Road; John Montgomery, 9 Chapel Lane; Dan Donahue, 95 Club Road; Matthew Popp, 54 Mead Avenue; Joseph Siciliano, Town of Greenwich, Parks & Recreation; David Dall, 21 Cat Rock Road

Commission Discussion Session – 7:00 p.m.

Called to order at 7:09 p.m. by Brower

- 1) **Seating of Alternates:** Silberberg was seated for Rutherford during the first 15 minutes of the meeting wherein Rutherford took over to chair the meeting.
- 2) **Review and approval of draft minutes of December 4, 2008 monthly meeting:** A motion was made by Baker and seconded by Dickinson to accept the minutes with the following corrections. Page 1 under Audience, correct spelling from Residence to Resident, and add School after Stanwich. Page 3 under deer management should state collaring instead of coloring and inclusion should be included. The motion carried.

3) **Review of Correspondence:**

- a) Letter from Meredith Sampson re: Dogs Unleashed at Greenwich Point and their impact on wildlife. Discussion ensued and reference was made to the recent article in Greenwich Times that focused on public safety. Savageau indicated she had started communications with the First Selectman and the various departments involved including P&R, Health, and Police. Consensus that the Commission should mail a letter to the First Selectman sharing their concerns and seeking information on how this will be addressed.
- b) *Connecticut Wildlife* Nov/Dec 2008 issue was distributed

4) **Chairman's Report**

- a) POCD – Rutherford indicated that Savageau and he would be meeting with P&Z next week to provide comments on a revised draft that P&Z is hoping to release January 20th. He also invited Brower to join them.
- b) The Land Use Chairmen and Directors met to discuss the 174 Account that is being shared between the three departments. The Conservation Commission Director's job description will be revised to reflect her share of responsibility for this account. Rutherford appointed Brower and Brash to join him as a subcommittee to update the job description.

5) **Staff Report**

- a) Watershed Management
 - i) Byram River Watershed Coalition: The group will organize a forum on Byram River Watershed. All municipalities included in the watershed are part of the coalition. As a part of the Byram River Watershed management initiatives, a local Boy Scout troop is looking into stenciling storm drains within the Byram watershed area.
 - ii) Mianus River SWRPA application: was not discussed
- b) Wildlife Management
 - i) Deer Management: The Conservation Director continues working with the Connecticut Experimental Station on their deer radio-collaring project at the Babcock Preserve. The program may be extended over the Boys Scout Preserve.
 - ii) Critical Habitat/Conservation Areas: were not discussed

At 7:30 meeting jumped to Old Business as per scheduled agenda.

7) Old Business

- a) Cos Cob Power Plant – Final Site Plan review – 7:30 p.m.

Dave Thompson, Deputy Commission of Public Works introduced the project. Doherty, described the proposed site improvement plan. He characterized several different uses that the park will offer and pointed out the design limitations related to the site remediation requirements. Siciliano answered questions that mostly focused on the proposed lights, site uses and future management.

Rutherford then asked for questions from the Conservation Commission, followed by comments from the public. He indicated that the Commission had received over 60 emails concerning the lights and requested that those wishing to speak not be redundant.

Residents speaking against the plan as presented were Pugliese, Dall, Lynn, Popp, Guillet, and Friedland. Comments included no lights, refined slope, no fields, and wildlife/habitat considerations. Faryniarz spoke in support of the project stating that the plan is a result of careful planning and functional design.

- a) The Conservation Commission had a long discussion, which concluded with a motion made by Baker and seconded by Henrey as follows:

Whereas, the Conservation Commission has followed and been involved in the process of ensuring that the Cos Cob Power Plant Brownfield site be remediated in a safe and timely manner with the goal of redeveloping the site for a waterfront multi-use park; and

Whereas, the final site plan has developed through a lengthy public review process and has incorporated many of the comments and recommendations of the Conservation Commission; and

Whereas, the Town has granted Municipal Improvement status to the general concept of the park that includes both active and passive recreation areas with only one playing field, which the Conservation Commission supports;

Therefore, the Conservation Commission recommends approval of the site plan and strongly recommends that the following conditions be made part such approval:

- 1. The planting plan as presented is inadequate and should be re-developed to improve both the aesthetics and the long-term maintenance requirements of the park. This should include more native species and be designed for a more naturalistic setting. The final planting plan should be developed and approved in coordination with the Superintendent of Parks and Trees working with the Conservation Commission and its Director. This will result in a better overall*

landscaping plan for the park.

2. The lighting plan should be revised to limit lighting to two areas: the parking area outside of the entrance gate and the comfort stations. With park hours limited from dawn to dusk, lighting of the interior parking area, the playing field, and the waterfront walk should not be approved.

3. The proposed rock revetment along the shoreline has been developed as a single feature. Alternatives should be explored with DEP that will soften the slope in the area where the velocity is not as great (along the inside north to south stretch of coastline where presently exists a concrete revetment). These will provide for better aesthetics and may be more cost efficient. Alternatives may include reducing the steepness of the slope and using bioengineering instead of hard armoring. This may also provide direct access to the water should this be desirable in the future. Petitioning FEMA to change the designation of the flood zones in this area from VE to AE along the inside stretch of coast may facilitate the permitting of such changes.

4. The plan should seek to maximize the use of bike racks to encourage alternative transportation to the site.

The motion carried unanimously.

5) Staff Report (continued)

- c) Town Properties – Savageau reported on the Lyon House and letter received from the Historical Society concerning the Sexton report. Savageau is working with Sue Richardson to get proper acknowledgements in the report.
- d) Energy Management Team – Savageau reported that the Energy Management Team has been named by the First Selectman and that she will be the coordinator.

6) Committee/Liaison Reports

- a) Land Acquisition: Brower reported on Aquarion negotiations
- b) GRAB: Dickinson reported that GRAB is looking at single- and dual-stream recycling. On January 12, 2009, there will be a field trip to Hartford to evaluate their new approach. With the support of the National Recycling Partnership, the City of Hartford implemented a one-year pilot program called "Go Green Use Blue" to demonstrate the positive impact of making recycling more convenient for residents and offering households incentives to recycle. The pilot program uses "single-stream recycling," a simple and environmentally friendly approach to recycling in which all recycled materials go into one large bin.
- c) Environmental Task Force
 - i) Pesticides: no report was given
 - ii) Artificial Turf: Henrey reported on the committee's work. The Board of Parks and Recreation is also looking closely at this. The final decision on the turf type should be reviewed by the Conservation Commission. Brash recommended that a group of doctors should join the review team to comment

on product toxicity and potential health concerns. Savageau indicated that the Health Department has been asked to be on the committee and stated that more data will become available after the CT DEP concludes their study.

iii) Cleaning Products: no report was given

iv) Green Buildings: no report was given

v) Transportation: no report was given

8) **New Business:** was not discussed

A motion was made by Baker and seconded by Brash to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:30 p.m.

Submitted by,

Aleksandra Moch