

**Conservation Commission Meeting
Town Hall Meeting Room
April 2, 2009**

Minutes

Attendance:

Members present: William Rutherford, Sue Baker, Nancy Dickinson, Gulletta Fargion, Nancy Chapin, and Gary Silberberg

Staff: Denise Savageau and Aleksandra Moch

Audience present: n/a

Commission Discussion Session – 7:00 p.m.

Called to order at 7:14 p.m. by Rutherford

- 1) **Seating of Alternates:** Silberberg was seated for Brash, Fargion was seated for Henrey and Chapin was seated for Brower.
- 2) **Review and approval of draft minutes of March 5, 2009 monthly meeting:** A motion was made by Baker and seconded by Silberberg to accept the minutes as presented. The motion carried.
- 3) **Review of Correspondence:**
 - a) The Conservation Commission received a card from Renee Seblatnigg. She was thankful for this unique opportunity to be a part of the board and an active advocate for environmental preservation. Renee resigned in March after many years of service.
 - b) The Conservation Commission received an invitation from the Shellfish Committee to join them in *Experience the Sound* event.
- 4) **Chairman's Report**
 - a) POCD update: P&Z will be holding a public hearing on the revised draft 4/6/09 Conservation has already submitted final comments.
 - b) Selectman's Nominating Advisory Committee – held training meeting for all volunteer boards. Alex Brash attended for the Commission and will brief at next meeting.
 - c) Rutherford discussed need to review mission and goals of the Commission. This should take place over the next couple of months. The current Operational Plan and Annual report were distributed and should be reviewed in preparation for the work ahead.

5) Staff Report

a) Watershed Management

- i) Byram River flood gauge: The gauge was reviewed and approved by FEMA. Details on installation for this Spring are being worked out with DPW and USGS.

b) Wildlife Management

i) Deer Management:

- (1) CT Agricultural Station Study: The study will involve deer collaring in the areas of Boy Scouts Preserve and Babcock Preserve. The goal of the survey is to determine the local deer movement, especially along the Merritt Parkway Corridor.
- (2) FCDMA: Fairfield County Deer Management Alliance was established several years ago to facilitate communication and joint efforts of municipalities in deer management. Savageau has been asked to serve as co-chairman along with Wilton's Conservation staff, Pat Sesto.

ii) Critical Habitat/Conservation Areas

(1) Fishway:

- (a) Monitoring volunteers: The Conservation Commission Staff completed taking on and training volunteers for the upcoming season.
- (b) Open house schedule: The Mianus Pond Fishway will be open for public viewing on Saturday, April 4, 2009 from 10:00 a.m. – 12 p.m., April 25, 2009 from 9 a.m. – 11 a.m., and May 16, 2009 from 2 p.m. – 4 p.m. Conservation Commission Staff and volunteers will provide tours with brief history of the site.
- (c) Underwater camera: The Conservation Commission Staff is planning to install the camera and the monitoring software next week. Thanks to the GADC cooperation in terms of computer use and wiring. Once the camera is set, we hope to have it on the web within the month.

(2) IBAs

- (a) GCI: The external work on the Light House was completed just before the birds arrival to the island. The internal renovation will continue through the summer.
- (b) Greenwich Point: The draft of the proposed management plan is still in a review phase. Audubon is working on a new statistical model for the site management. The proposal was presented at the last meeting of Friends of Greenwich Point. Audubon had designated \$10,000.00 towards the project and hopes to raise additional funds.

c) Town Properties

- i) Historical Landscape Report: Martha Lyon, Landscape Architecture, LLC was retained by the Department of Parks and Recreation to prepare a historic landscape report and master plan for Binney, Bruce, Byram Shore and Montgomery and Pinetum Parks. The final draft of the report will be presented on May 13th.

- ii) Greenwich Point:
 - (1) Signage: on hold
 - (2) Archeology: Ernest A. Wiegand, professor of archeology at Norwalk Community College performed a field survey. The work didn't result in major findings. A copy of the report will be available in the near future.

- d) Energy
 - i) Energy Management Team: A preliminary energy audit has revealed that the Town maintains a significant number of electric energy accounts. The accounts appear to be billed at varying rates. An audit of this is taking place to ensure that proper rates are charged.
 - ii) The team is also looking to work with school building committees and is planning to start with Glennville.

- e) Education/Outreach
 - i) Go Green Greenwich: Starting this month Baker and Chapin will represent the Conservation Commission in coordination of the Go Green campaign. The campaign will be initiated by the month of April being a recycling month and continue through the year with education and events supporting the energy efficiency and environmental protection. The Conservation Commission will be in charge of water theme campaign in June and July.
 - ii) Earth Day Month: The wastewater treatment plant on Grass Island was the place where The First Selectman, Peter Tesei, declared the Town's Earth Day Month proclamation on Thursday April 2nd. This event initiated over a month-long celebration of the Town's natural resources and ways to protect them. A calendar of events is on the Town website.
 - iii) GCTV: on hold

6) **Committee/Liaison Reports**

- a) Parks and Recreation Board: Baker reported that new safety signs will be installed at Greenwich Point. The Board is considering an establishment of the community gardens. One of the first gardens may be installed at Armstrong Court. The Old Greenwich Civic Center is in need of major renovation. The Board is looking to establish private partnership to finance the renovation. Chapin expressed interest in working with Parks. Baker and Chapin will continue as liaison to the Parks and Recreation Board.
- b) Land Acquisition: was not discussed
- c) GRAB
 - i) Telephone directory: Silberberg presented a resolution to the Conservation Commission for Consideration. He stated that the telephone directories very often are being delivered to the property owners who don't need them. The unwanted directories are being handled by the Town through the recycling program at considerable expense. In addition, dropped at the curb directories are littering the streets and may create a safety issue. By limiting the delivery to the customers and property owners who request them could save paper and

lower the recycling cost. After discussion, it was the consensus that Dickinson, on behalf of the Conservation Commission, will present the telephone directories issue at the next GRAB meeting.

- d) Environmental Task Force
 - i) Artificial Turf: The resolution presented by the Task Force is expected to be passed at the next BOS meeting on April 16.
 - ii) Green Buildings: The resolution presented by the Task Force passed.
 - iii) A final report including all of the resolutions passed will be developed as a wrap for the group.
- e) Coastal Resources Advisory Committee: Discussion ensued about the newly established CRAC and the role of Conservation. Silberberg was appointed as a Conservation Commission liaison and non-voting member. The focus of the group is primarily on moorings etc, but a report is being generated that includes all coastal resources. Rutherford will review the role of the Commission with the First Selectmen.
- f) Other: Silberberg stated that the Tree Conservancy group was very upset with the proposal of taking down a street tree at 410 Greenwich Avenue. He stated that the main problem with this proposal was a lack of interdepartmental communication as the tree warden was not in the loop. Savageau indicated usually P&Z does refer all matters to the Tree Warden. To help facilitate Conservation will include in its comments that any project with public trees be referred to the tree warden for review.

7) **Old Business**

- a) Cos Cob Power Plant: no updates
- b) Shemin's Nursery: no updates

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

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

Meeting was adjourned at 10:40 p.m.

Submitted by,

Aleksandra Moch