



**TOWN OF WINCHESTER
CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

Town Hall, 338 Main Street, 2nd Floor – Lee Ann LaClaire Room

July 14, 2022 – 5:00PM

Meeting Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Amanda Hill called the meeting to order at 5:07PM.

2. ROLL CALL:

The following individuals were present: Jen Perga, Willard Platt, Renata Waldron, and John Wiarda.

Additionally, Economic Development Director Ted Schaffer, Zoning Enforcement Officer/Wetlands Agent/Blight Officer Mike Stankov, and Town Manager Josh Kelly (5:12PM).

Leanne Marvin was absent.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: JUNE 9, 2022.

MOTION: Ms. Hill, Ms. Waldron second, to continue the approval of the June 9, 2022 Minutes; unanimously approved.

4. SUSTAINABLE CT.

Mr. Schaffer reported that he and Mr. Stankov had been meeting with Town Manager Josh Kelly for the past few weeks regarding Sustainable CT. He noted that they had gotten started on establishing a framework to get the Sustainable CT certification. Mr. Stankov noted that a lot of work has been done in terms of writing down what the Town has already done and will be done. Some of the work is contained within the ordinances and regulations, according to Mr. Stankov. He noted that Mr. Kelly has suggestions that this commission may want to undertake. Mr. Schaffer noted some of those including providing pollinator gardens on Meadow Street. Ms. Perga noted that the pollinator gardens are done but the signs were at the Department of Public Works. Mr. Stankov assured the commission he would look into getting the signs installed. Once those are installed, Mr. Schaffer indicated a gathering of this group at the location, with some pictures taken of that, would satisfy that goal, 3.12.2.

The discussion with Juice Bar that this commission participated with would likely satisfy 6.4.1, according to Mr. Stankov. He questioned whether any commissioners had every participated with any type of training on electric vehicles of municipalities or electric public transit. Mr. Wiarda volunteered to participate. Mr. Schaffer noted that he had grabbed documentation from the Juice Bar presentation which should help to substantiate this goal. Ms. Perga recalled the commission discussing a plan to visit Norbrook Brewery to see the charging stations there. A determination of where electric vehicle charging stations on town-owned property is a part of this initiative. Mr. Stankov reported the different town-owned properties that are being explored. Mr. Wiarda volunteered to be part of that committee.

The Conservation Commission may want to consider hosting or sponsoring “sustainability events” which are community outreach events. Mr. Platt noted that the Highland Lake Watershed Association had just held an event the past weekend with a speaker from UCONN who chatted about invasive events. Ms. Perga noted that the Winchester Land Trust sponsors an environmental event for kids every April, too. The 2020 Water Quality Study may also be used for points towards the certification, according to Mr. Stankov. It was noted that any of the commissioners can begin to poke around the Sustainable CT account and begin to upload documents.

Mr. Stankov questioned whether Ms. Waldron knew of any sustainable activities at the schools. She was unsure of any. Ms. Perga suggested the children’s programs at the American Mural Project(AMP). Mr. Kelly noted that AMP may be utilized for 4.1.1., noting that 20 points can likely be derived from that. He noted that

the more events that this commission holds, the better and should be included as a goal over the next few months.

The commission was polled about individual interests related to conservation. Ms. Hill noted her interests to include forests, plants, and understanding invasive species. Mr. Stankov noted that Department of Public Works Director Jim Rollins was the tree warden. Mr. Schaffer suggested that Mr. Rollins could develop a plan related to the trees in town. Ms. Hill noted that she had a forest management plan and how interesting it was. Mr. Schaffer noted that he had a friend who was a professor emeritus at UCONN School of Agriculture and that he may be willing to team up with Mr. Rollins for a public discussion on forestry. Ms. Perga noted that the Land Trust would be willing to sponsor that. Mr. Kelly referred the commission to 3.5. concerning creating natural resource and wildlife inventories and 3.9 concerning woodlands and forests. Ms. Perga noted that the maps were updated for the Plan of Conservation and Development.

Ms. Waldron indicated her interests stem from the observations of trash and littering and the environment generally. She noted that the education part of this would be the best fit for her. Ms. Waldron offered to attend workshops or trainings if there is an opportunity to gain points from that. Mr. Kelly noted the Town's participation with Connecticut Conference of Municipalities (CCM) and explained that webinars are free to anyone who would like to take them. Ms. Waldron was interested in the one on *Equity*. Ms. Hill advised commissioners that registration must be at least 72 hours ahead of the training.

An update was provided to the commission regarding the recycling efforts at Town Hall.

Mr. Kelly updated the commission about the hosting of murals on buildings such as the Winsted Childcare and Alan Nero's Gilson building. He noted a \$25K has been received for this. Mr. Platt questioned whether that would need to be reviewed by the Planning and Zoning Commission. Mr. Kelly thought it might be possible.

Parking on Main Street was discussed.

Ms. Perga shared her 5-year plan goal of making a food-compost plant for the northwest corner. She noted that Litchfield has already started one and that Salisbury has some programs. She explained how local trash had been going to Hartford to be burned but with that plant slated to close soon, it will be trucked to Pennsylvania. Ms. Perga reported some towns are starting their own composts.

Mr. Kelly noted how the Town of Windsor had explored residential pickup for textiles, for old shirts to be recycled. Mr. Schaffer noted that he had done this in Burlington, too. Noting that the initiative was part of an international program, Mr. Kelly reported that he had an inquiry out to the company to explore this for Winchester. He noted that Blue Earth Compost, out of Hartford, is doing a door-to-door organic collections and once a week will drop compost.

Mr. Platt indicated his interests lay with anything pertaining to Highland Lake and the general progressive forward direction of Winchester.

It was noted that there was a push, or a movement, to open up the reservoir for bass fishing.

Another consideration discussed was hosting a forum on bears with a local resident expert who is employed by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection.

5. ADJOURN:

MOTION: Ms. Waldron, Mr. Platt second, to adjourn at 6:13PM; unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela A. Colombie, Recording Clerk