



**TOWN OF WINCHESTER
CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

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

May 12, 2022 – 5:00PM

Meeting Minutes

1. CALL TO ORDER:

Amanda Hill called the meeting to order at 5:00PM.

2. ROLL CALL:

The following individuals were present: Leeane Marvin, Jen Perga, Willard Platt, Renata Waldron (5:04PM), and John Wiarda. Additionally, staff members Ted Schaffer, Mike Stankov, and Pam Colombie were present.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: MARCH 10, 2022.

MOTION: Ms. Hill, Mr. Wiarda second, to approve the March 10, 2022 Minutes as amended; unanimously approved.

4. RAIN GARDEN AT RESHA BEACH.

Ms. Perga indicated that she would be gathering more information. She noted that the Highland Lake Watershed Association had been provided a report with suggestions on likely locations where phosphorus is entering the lake. She noted that despite there being forty areas, the HLWA was exploring good starting points where improvements might begin. Mr. Platt noted that Town of Winchester Project Manager Bart Clark had suggested a rain garden at Resha Beach, and Town Manager Josh Kelly fully supported it. Mr. Platt indicated that there had been discussion about seeking a grant for this from the Farmington River Coordinating Committee. He confirmed the location being reviewed at Resha Beach was to the southerly side, along East Wakefield Boulevard.

The agenda was modified to take up *River Smart* ahead of *Photo Contest*.

5. RIVER SMART.

Ms. Marvin reported that she was no longer working at Northwest Conservation District. She indicated that she had met with Town of Winchester Budget Analyst/Grants Manager Alison Pierce on this date. Ms. Marvin noted that she did not want to give up on the River Smart grant project. A 25% matching grant was necessary for the grant that she had been pursuing and had received letters of support on, according to Ms. Marvin. As that match was previously going to be delivered in the form of her time, as an employee of the Northwest Conservation District, she indicated that it still may just make better sense to have them function as the applicant.

Ms. Marvin noted that she would reach out to Environmental Associate Kelsey Sudol at Northwest Conservation District to share with her the information she had received from Ms. Pierce.

Mr. Stankov updated this commission on the status of the Environmental Land Use Restriction (ELUR) that encumbers both the former Lambert Kay parcel/current brewery building and the area on the opposite site of Meadow Street. He noted that there was a demonstration garden, referring to a pollinator garden installed by Farmington River Watershed Association, on the Meadow Street town-owned parcel. He noted that the brewery is located on a contaminated site and part of the redevelopment conditions was that the site is supposed to be maintained in certain restricted ways, such as being completely capped. The garden that was installed should not have been put in that location, which is also encumbered by the ELUR, according to Mr. Stankov.

Mr. Stankov confirmed that he would be following up on the ELUR in terms of compliance on that Meadow Street property. Ms. Perga had questioned whether some form of a plastic barrier could be installed under it.

Mr. Stankov indicated that he would consult with the town's attorney and Department of Public Works Director Jim Rollins on how to get these sites into compliance with the ELUR. He noted that ultimately it is up to the Town Manager and the Board of Selectmen to uphold the self-imposed terms of the ELUR.

The agenda was modified to take up discussion of the *Charging Stations – Move Forward Plan* ahead of *Photo Contest*.

6. CHARGING STATIONS – MOVE FORWARD PLAN.

Mr. Wiarda reported that he was still looking for more spots to suggest for electrical vehicle (EV) charging stations. He indicated that he was also still waiting for a response from Paul Young of Juice Bar, in Oxford. Ms. Perga reported that there was a JuiceBar in Norfolk. Mr. Stankov indicated that he had still not heard back from Mr. Rollins regarding a quote for a station on the library. He noted that he would be following up with Mr. Rollins on the day following this meeting on that.

Ms. Perga recalled that the Town was going to retrofit the ones at the former Bank of America building. It was noted that this had not been done yet.

7. PHOTO CONTEST.

The photo contest was an initiative suggested by Mr. Kelly as part of the Economic Development Commission's marketing campaign, according to Mr. Schaffer. Ms. Waldron questioned whether judges had been selected. It was noted that more information would be sought from Mr. Kelly, with staff noting the deadline for submissions was some time in June.

8. NEW TOPIC/INITIATIVES.

As the new Economic Development Director, Mr. Schaffer shared his background with Sustainable CT. He explained that he has been part of this group since its inception in Connecticut in 2016. Mr. Schaffer noted that he is on the Board of Directors and explained that Sustainable CT is for towns, by towns, as a non-profit grassroots group. The original thought was that rather another directive being handed down from the state legislature, it would be more in the spirit of what was being considered for sustainable energy.

Mr. Schaffer indicated that private donations fund a lot of this work so as to not burden the budgets of municipalities. He noted the following groups contribute to the formation of Sustainable CT: Tremain Foundation, Commonsense Fund, CT Greenbank, and all the Community foundations. He reported having guided Burlington through the process in 2019. Mr. Schaffer stressed the importance of volunteers for gaining certification with Sustainable CT.

Mr. Schaffer shared how the process unfolded in Burlington. He explained that he would put out two-minute overviews on different tasks, followed with a question, "are you interested in this?" Responses would come in with this approach, according to Mr. Schaffer. He explained that the volunteers should take up what is of interest to them.

Mr. Schaffer noted the availability of interns with putting together the documentation. Mr. Schaffer offered to be a point person and would work with the intern who would function as a scribe.

9. ADJOURN:

MOTION: Ms. Waldron, Mr. Platt second, to adjourn at 6:20PM; unanimously approved.

**Respectfully submitted,
Pamela A. Colombie
Recording Clerk**