

Trumbull Conservation Commission Meeting
May 28, 2011
7:00pm

Present: Mary Ellen Lemay, chairman; Don Watson; Jim Sullivan; John Russell and William Pisani, Chairman of the Tree Ordinance Sub-Committee; Pam Georges, Director, Trumbull Nature Center

Absent: Joanne Parsons and Dale Parsons

The meeting was called to order at 7:10pm by the chairman. Motion made by Don Watson to approve the minutes of April 28, 2011 as posted. Seconded by John Russell. Approved unanimously.

Old Business

Pequonnock River Initiative – Mary Ellen stated there is a meeting on Tuesday, June 28, 2011 at the Trumbull Town Hall. It was noted the formal meetings are nearly complete and then the report will be turned over to the towns involved. Don Watson noted Fuss & O’Neil is completing its report in August which will be submitted to the state for approval. Once approved, towns will be eligible to apply for 319 grant money. These grants are to be used to improve the river water quality. Discussion of an administrator/director to oversee the initiative is being held and it was noted the Trumbull Conservation Commission would like to be involved and work closely to oversee the initiative. It was noted Monroe is currently developing its conservation commission which will be taking a broader view of their guidelines.

Don noted the application for the Ann Richardson Grant for a buffer in Old Mine Park at the river edge where they dredged has been submitted. \$35,000 was requested - \$15,000 would be for Save the Sound to do outreach education and \$20,000 would be for the parks department to put in this buffer according to the plan/specifications supplied by Dale and Joanne Parsons. We are one of the finalists and will find out in July if we will receive the grant. Money has also been received by the park department to replace the bridge in this area also.

Don also gave an update on the Bridgeport Sound Initiative which is part of the PRI noting the DEP and the Environmental Justice Division will be holding meetings to instruct groups on environment justice so they will be the watch dogs for problems along the Pequonnock River.

In response to John Russell’s question regarding the 319 grant money, Don noted it is federal money going through the state DEP for review. This money will still be available despite the current economic environment.

IWWC Activities – No report.

Single Stream Recycling – Mary Ellen noted our current contract with CRRA expires on June 30. RFQs have been sent out to the recycling centers. There has also been an RFP sent out for a recycling coordinator. The position requirements have been expanded. No updates.

GIS Update – A presentation to the Trumbull Town Council will be made on July 7, 2011. After this meeting, the system will be released on the Town website. A new position within the Public Works Department for a part-time GIS coordinator is being filled. Training on the system will be offered at no charge. This initiative came out of this Commission which would like to continue working on the system by creating a platform to review data with all the information received from the state of the town's natural resources, open spaces, etc.

Ad Hoc Committee – Landscape Preservation Ordinance -- Mary Ellen welcomed Bill Pisano as chairman of this ad hoc committee. He noted needs were discussed and other tree ordinances were reviewed. A draft was developed and presented to the Conservation Commission. Mr. Pisano has an extensive background in zoning, code enforcement and environmental areas through his work in White Plains. He stated the approach was to create an ordinance that was fair and reasonable but did note it would place some restrictions on the arborists and developers working within the town. Lengthy discussion was held regarding the draft ordinance. Several suggestions were made including that the tree preservation ordinance compliment existing ordinances. Discussion also included wetland requirements/ordinances and how they would mesh with this plan. Exceptions to the ordinance, permit fees, tree preservation plans from contractors, and all other suggestions will be taken back to the committee for review. Don Watson noted the Commission should use their legal counsel from the town to resolve any questions. Presentation of the plan to the Town Council may result in questions regarding other ordinances of this nature within the state. The PRI should be cited for its tree preservation/planting components which could be helpful.

Trumbull Nature Center -- Pam Georges, Director of the Nature Center, gave an update on the proposed relocation of the center. The center has been at its current location for five years and has been providing nature/environmental programs to the community. Discussions have been held to move the center and sell the property. A subcommittee for relocation has been reviewing possible sites, an architectural design has been completed and the center has become a 501(c)(3) organization with the establishment of a six member board to oversee the center. Several projects at the center were discussed. With the current economy, the sale of the property is not recommended at this time, however relocation of the center may still be considered.

Review of Action Items

Single Stream Recycling – not much involvement of the Conservation Commission in this initiative.

Website construction – Jim Sullivan discussed the Shelton Conservation Commission website and encouraged members to review the site. Jim also requested additional data elements for his research.

Discussion of climate action plans was held. Don Watson noted that at some point, the Commission should undertake this initiative. Don also noted he emailed Commission members a communication from Rivers Alliance regarding environmental proposals.

Discussion of the Charter revision with regard to the Conservation Commission was held. The Commission has requested an additional member.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:35pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Crandall
Clerk