

**TOWN OF TRUMBULL
CONNECTICUT**



Trumbull Conservation Commission Virtual Meeting
Wednesday, February 1, 2023
7:00 pm

Present: Chairman, Mary Ellen Lemay, Tim Coughlin, Richard Post, Matthew Sulzicki, Pam Roman and John Massari (entered at 7:04 pm)

Absent: Sara Sterling

Also Present: William Maurer, Chief Engineer, Town of Trumbull

Mrs. Lemay called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

Past Minutes

Motion was made by Mr. Post to approve the minutes of November 30, 2022 as written. Seconded by Mrs. Roman and approved unanimously.

Mr. Massari entered the meeting at 7:04 pm.

Guest Presentation

William Maurer presented an overview of the Twin Brooks Park Project that is currently underway.

Highlights of the presentation included:

1. Approval from DEP was received in 2019 but the design of the project started around 2015.
2. It is a challenging project because the area is in a flood zone.
3. The goal was to move the road away from the stream and create a pedestrian walkway.
4. Preservation of trees was important. A design plan was developed to integrate new and existing plants and trees.
5. Ponds were reconnected with water control devices installed to help with the flooding. Overview map was present depicting the flow of water from the ponds into the main waterway.
6. Plans are being developed to dredge Pond #6 and #1. Currently working on permitting.
7. Planting plan was presented. Grading has been done and invasives were removed. The planting plan is very extensive with native trees and shrubs.
8. The area was originally a quarry.
9. The pedestrian walkway will stretch from the bridge off White Plains Road through the park.
10. Flooding in the area was discussed.

11. Most of the structural work in the project has been completed. Paving and planting remains to be done which should be completed in the Spring.
12. Minimal changes were made to parking areas.
13. An ice skating rink is being considered using diverted water from one of the ponds.

Resident Comments

1. Janelle Smith, 55 Larkspur – noted her property sits on the lowest portion of the wall and flooding is quite frequent. Questioned when the dredging would be done. Mr. Maurer noted it is still in the permitting phase; the project is in the Town's Five Year Capital Plan but no funding has been approved at this time. Ms. Smith spoke on the flood insurance that she purchases and the extent of flooding on her property.
2. Robert Long, 24 Greenwood Drive – Had the same question regarding the dredging of the pond. He spoke of an easement with a storm drain where the flooding has eroded the stairwell and it is falling into the lake. Mr. Maurer will look into this. Mr. Long also questioned if the project would address the overflow into the river out of Pond 1 so that the area doesn't back up. Mr. Maurer noted this will be addressed with the dredging but currently nothing is done annually to clear the area but he would look into it. Mr. Long spoke on the flooding experienced on his property and the possibility of using the Pinewood Lake control system to prevent future flooding. Mr. Maurer noted hydraulic studies have been conducted along the stream. Replacement of certain control devices cannot be reinstated because of the wetlands. Mrs. Lemay spoke with Mr. Paris who noted the log jam discussed would be addressed every couple of years.

Mrs. Lemay thanked Mr. Maurer for his presentation. Mr. Maurer noted residents can reach out to him directly with any questions regarding the project. (left the meeting at 7:40 pm)

New Business

2022 Review of Accomplishments, Plans for 2023 – Mrs. Lemay noted the following was presented to the First Selectman with her budget requests.

Accomplishments -

1. Completion of the survey in April by Mrs. Sterling. Survey showed strong support from residents for tree replacement and open space protection. Presented results to town land use staff and Economic Development.
2. Started outreach for A Thousand Trees for Trumbull.
3. No progress on the Trumbull Community Garden.
4. Created a number of advisory letters for applications that had major impact on regulated areas.
5. Native plant list was developed and sent to land use boards.

Goals

1. Launch A Thousand Trees in Trumbull - \$12,000 was approved this year. Project intent is to plant 100 trees annually for the next 10 years. The same funding was requested in the next budget.
2. Approval was received from the Long Hill Market to replant the rain gardens along the side of the property. A relandscaping plan was submitted and costs are being calculated.
3. Continue to support waterside native buffer demo project at Kaatz Pond/Veterans Center. Mrs. Lemay and Mrs. Roman developed a landscaping plan, as requested by the planning committee, that will be presented to IWWC at its next meeting. Actual planting is still 2-3 years out pending completion of the building.
4. New brochure on waterside plants was adapted for distribution to Trumbull residents who live in lake communities in town.

5. Tree Management Plan for Tree City status will be mailed next week. If approved by the Arbor Day Foundation, it will open up additional opportunities for grant funding. The Twin Brooks project will help with this designation.

Old Business

A Thousand Trees for Trumbull – Mr. Coughlin and Mrs. Roman met with Mr. Paris and Mrs. Isaac and walked the initial tree planting area in Twin Brooks Park. Mr. Coughlin has a supplier, used by Greenwich, that is being contacted by Mr. Paris for purchase of the trees. The Parks Department will plant the trees and provide aftercare for the first year as required. Mr. Coughlin noted the initial plantings will provide a step for good systems being set in place for future plantings. Everyone felt the Park was a good location for the first planting in the program. All plantings in the plan are native keystone species, will be planted in a layered effect and should have a strong visual impact. Planting is planned for the Spring.

Veterans Memorial Pollinator Garden – A ten-foot wide buffer is being designed with pollinator plants. This will be a Pollinator Pathway project and should have a visual impact along the property.

Arbor Day – April 28 – hoping to have the trees planted in the Twin Brooks Park by that date so the Town could kick off with a celebration for the start of the project. Signage was discussed. Mrs. Bakalar, Economic Development Director, likes the plan and expects grants would be available to help with funding for the signage. Ideas for Earth Week programs were discussed. (April 22)

Landscape Plan at Veterans Center – George Wiles, the architect for the project, requested recommendations from the Commission for plantings. Mrs. Roman developed a list of riparian shrubs and trees. The idea is to keep the trees on the property and remove invasives. Mr. Wiles is looking for community engagement with the project. Ground cover will also be used to clean the water and hold the soil.

Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) – Currently requesting funding to complete an update of the plan in the Fall of 2023. Current POCD was completed in 2014.

Status of P&Z Regulation Upgrades – Ms. Bakalar will be taking the request for a Steep Slope Regulation change back to the planner for consideration as no major changes to the regulations are planned at this time.

Community Garden – Mrs. Roman is still interested in revitalizing the Community Garden as a future project. Will be added to the Goals for 2023. Involvement with the Nichols Improvement Association could be considered as the garden is located in that area of town.

Joint Meeting – It was suggested to have a joint meeting with Sustainable CT quarterly for collaboration on initiatives. Will be added to the Goals for 2023.

Trumbull Waterside Buffers – This initiative would qualify for 319 funding.

New Business

Commissioner Terms – Mrs. Lemay discussed the terms for all the Commissioners.

Litter Awareness Campaign – Mrs. Roman noted she would like to initiate a litter awareness campaign to

address the litter problem in town and make residents aware they are responsible to keep public areas clean by removing their own trash.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:42 pm by unanimous consent.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Crandall
Clerk