

**TOWN OF TRUMBULL
CONNECTICUT**



Trumbull Conservation Commission Virtual Meeting
Wednesday, February 23, 2022
7:00 pm

Present: Chairman Mary Ellen Lemay, Commissioners Matthew Sulzicki, Sara Sterling, Pam Roman, Richard Post and Tim Coughlin

Absent: John Massari

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Lemay at 7:00 pm.

Past Minutes

Motion was made by Mrs. Roman to approve the minutes of January 26, 2022 as written. Seconded by Mrs. Sterling and approved with one abstention from Mr. Coughlin.

New Business

1. Sustainable Trumbull Update – Mrs. Roman noted she met with the First Selectman regarding future goals and will be following up on any developments.
2. Native Plant Ordinance Update – Mrs. Roman reviewed her draft of the document. Using literature from the Pollinator Pathway, she added information entitled Top Ten Trees for Our Eco-Region. This was a list of the Keystone Species. Discussion was held regarding the benefits of these trees to caterpillars and birds to the area. Mr. Coughlin recommended changing out the silver maple with a red or swamp maple as the silver variety is not recommended for residential landscapes and not readily available. Mrs. Roman noted Sustainable Trumbull has information on what not to plant.

Distribution of information was discussed. The information, designed for land use boards, could be distributed electronically. Brochure form was discussed for residents.

Mrs. Lemay shared a brochure from Norwalk that was sent to her by Dave Verespy from IWWC regarding native plants with a focus on wetland species. This document would be beneficial when applications come before the town as they would be familiar with the information to help make decisions. It would be more beneficial to have a pre-accepted list so that developers do not have to come back several times for approval of their landscape plans. Mrs. Lemay will meet and review this document with Mr. Verespy to get his ideas on how he views this

document in relation to IWWC applications. Mrs. Roman will make changes to the document as discussed and work with IWWC on the ordinance development.

3. Document update with regard to golden rod – update has been put on hold at this time.
4. Riparian Protection Ordinance PA 21-29 Update – Mr. Sulzicki reviewed his draft noting the goal is to provide simple guidelines to the Town regarding the riparian zone for adaptation in commercial and industrial use. He will be working with Tony Silber on the content. He noted there is no question – it is already in the regulations that the setback is 100 feet. Discussion was held on whether the regulation should include information on what to plant beyond the 100 feet. Recommendations were made including using the Old Mine Park buffer as the focus of the document and including a visual of a riparian buffer zone.

Mrs. Lemay discussed portions of the Pequonnock River Watershed Plan of 2014 which gives a background of what has been going on in the town for nearly a decade. The Town revised IWWC regulations in 2010 for consistency with the CT DEP model regulations. Also revised were the Zoning regulations in 2008 and 2010. Sub-division regulations were revised in 2000. The POCD was revised in 2006, was revised again in 2014 and needs to be updated currently. Stormwater Policy was adopted in 2007 and revised in 2009. The policy outlines stormwater management and its standards are consistent with stormwater management requirements in the town Zoning regulations. It designates a net zero runoff. This is not being done in all development instances. They also recommended use of LID practices and approaches.

Mrs. Lemay read four recommendations from the Pequonnock River Watershed Plan of 2014 that need to be addressed in the new regulations.

- a. Work with IWWC to adopt a local riparian buffer regulation including application process, management practices, enforcement mechanisms, recommend element of riparian buffer regulations as described.
- b. Retain and maintain a maximum amount of natural vegetation on slopes over 15%.
- c. Prevent clear cutting or tree removal beyond the established limits of disturbance.
- d. Establish a no-build setback area for IWWC for new developments, structures, pools, septic systems, etc.

These recommendations have been out since, at least, 2014 and now the State is requiring these in Zoning regulations. Steep slope and clear cut regulations have been written by the Conservation Commission but have not moved forward with the update of the Zoning regulations. A meeting with Mr. Silber is important because he understands that these will be important to have in the Zoning regulations. Currently, Zoning does not have the tools to regulate these topics.

Enforcement of the regulations was discussed. It is ultimately up to the Town as it could negatively impact the health, welfare and safety of the public. Discussion was held regarding the update of the P&Z regulations. These new regulations should be addressed in the Pre-application Stage. The changes have not been prioritized. Mrs. Lemay noted the information for steep slope was already put into the P&Z update which, at this time, is at a standstill. We can make it simple and focus on the four areas – setback area, steep slope, tree clear cutting/restoration of vegetation and replanting of buffers. Mrs. Lemay and Mr. Sulzicki will meet on Friday with Mr. Silber regarding the regulations and the process to make it happen.

5. Tree Replacement Initiative – Mrs. Lemay shared several documents from Greenwich on this topic. Discussion was held regarding UI and their proposed tree work in Trumbull. The documents would need to be altered for the Town’s use and distribution would need to be

determined. The brochure, “You Can’t Unchop a Tree”, would be distributed to the residents who have been earmarked for tree work by UI. This information could also be placed on specific websites as a feature item. The brochure entitled “How to Save a Tree” for private property was discussed but at this time it has not been addressed by anyone in the town. Tree rights of town residents were discussed. It was felt not many residents know they have rights when it comes to cutting down trees on their property by the power company and the information disseminated should be more aggressive about the right to say no to any work. Mrs. Lemay will contact George Estrada and request the UI list for 2022.

6. Town Survey on Sustainability – Mrs. Sterling presented her updated draft of the survey questions. Mrs. Roman noted Sustainable Trumbull will coordinate with the Conservation Commission in developing this survey which, most likely, will be through Survey Monkey. Distribution of the survey was discussed which included social media, QR codes and possibly emails lists maintained by the town where residents sign up for updates. The Trumbull Nature and Arts Center will be contacted as a third entity to be included in developing this document. It was agreed the survey would be launched in early April with a two week turn around.
7. Community Gardens – no update. Report was submitted to the First Selectman and Mr. Paris.
8. ZOOM Speaker on Stormwater Management – Mrs. Lemay spoke on several opportunities for speakers on stormwater management and the value of trees. She is currently working on a list of nine lecture programs which will be published when it is completed.

Old Business

1. Sustainable Trumbull Meeting January 15 – no discussion.
2. Update on IWWC Applications – Discussion was held regarding the timing of the Conservation Commission meeting and the release of IWWC applications for review. It was noted, despite the late release of applications, there is still ample time to review and comment as appropriate. Everyone on the Commission is on the distribution list each month for applications being discussed. Mrs. Lemay will contact the IWWC clerk and request applications to IWWC be released prior to the Conservation Commission meeting for their review. She will also request the Planning & Zoning Commission release applications submitted for their review to the Conservation Commission.
3. Next Meeting – March 30, 2022.
4. Mr. Post noted he has been working with Mr. Massari with the QR codes. He stated he is on the Parks Commission agenda for March 14 to discuss this initiative. He indicated the Parks Commission will be developing the information for each park. It was suggested he contact Don Watson for additional information and photos.

Action Items

1. Native Plant Ordinance – Mrs. Roman will updated the document as discussed; Mrs. Lemay will meet with Mr. Verespy to discuss the Norwalk Native Plant document.
2. Riparian Protection Ordinance – Mr. Sulzicki will update the document as discussed; Mrs. Lemay and Mr. Sulzicki will meet with Mr. Silber to discuss regulation changes.
3. Tree Replacement Initiative – Mrs. Lemay will contact Mr. Massari to discuss changes to the document and contact Mr. Estrada regarding the UI tree removal list for 2022.
4. Town Survey on Sustainability – Mrs. Sterling with coordinate with Sustainable Trumbull and the Trumbull Nature Center to complete the document. Target release date is April 1.
5. IWWC Applications – Mrs. Lemay will contact the IWWC and P&Z clerks to request applications being discussed at their meetings be released to the Conservation Commission in a timely manner for review.

6. Park QR Codes – Mr. Post will be presenting information at the Parks Commission meeting on March 14; will contact Mr. Watson for additional information.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:02 pm by unanimous consent.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Crandall
Clerk