

**TOWN OF TRUMBULL
CONNECTICUT**



Trumbull Conservation Commission Virtual Meeting
Monday, April 26, 2021
7:00 pm

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

Also Present: Jim Nordgren

Absent: Matthew Silzicki

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Lemay at 7:03 pm.

Past Minutes

Motion was made by Ms. Roman to approve the minutes of March 3, 2021 as written. Seconded by Mr. Coughlin and approved unanimously.

Edits and New Format of the Natural Resource Inventory (NRI)

Mrs. Lemay noted from the March 3 meeting that a suggestion was made by Dmitri Paris to break down the information in the NRI into a multi-use document. By moving the recommendations and challenges into a separate document, it would become a working document for the land use boards in the town. The remainder of the information would be for the public to use for recreation purposes and general information.

Mr. Nordgren noted the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) required that a NRI be completed and should be used by individuals in the town to determine which parcels should be left as open space.

Mr. Nordgren recommended the NRI be broken down into three documents and suggestions to be addressed in each:

1. Citizens Guide to Town Parks
 - a. Make residents better stewards of their individual properties and encourage protection of natural resources in town
 - b. Include maps of trail locations, information on eco systems, etc.

- c. Use the parks for education - placing pictures of natives, wildflowers and plant and animal inventories on each one
- 2. Guide for Town Employees
 - a. Enhance and augment management plan already in place
 - b. Connect trails between Beaches Memorial Park to the Trumbull High School
 - c. Plant appropriate plants
 - d. Limit use of pesticides
- 3. Long Range Plan for the Town
 - a. Open space protection
 - b. Water quality improvement
 - c. Green landscaping
 - d. Land Regulation

Mr. Nordgren discussed the following with the Commission:

1. Green landscaping by the town, businesses and home owners – topics included encouraging green landscaping by limiting the use of pesticides and fertilizers, planting native plants, the EPA’s Green Streets program, using parcels as invasive demonstration sites and the Public Works brochure regarding clean water and landscaping information.
2. Preservation of Open space – Mr. Nordgren would like to work with the Land Acquisition Committee, or have a member of the Conservation Commission work with them, on the protection of the available open space in town. Also discussed was the possible involvement of outside organizations, such as the Boy Scouts, to help map trails. Trails and greenways were discussed.
3. Storm Water and Water Quality Improvement – topics included reducing impervious pavement, continued implementation of the Storm Water Management Plan, testing of catch basins, fertilizer applications and continue wetland and streambank restoration. This topic should be kept as a main focus for the town.
4. Training/Enforcement/Regulation – encourage refresher training by town officials to effectively understand erosion, wetland plants, etc. Tree Management Plan to be utilized.

Mrs. Lemay questioned how to move forward with the individual documents. Mr. Nordgren noted the easiest document would be the resident guide to the parks. The question is how to take the other information and work with the town departments and other organizations. Mr. Nordgren recommended that the original document be kept as written as a reference. Discussion was held regarding how to structure the individual documents including tailoring them to the individual users and their specific roles. All agreed that good environmental stewardship should be included in the documents.

Discussion was held regarding the town website and how these documents could be linked for the public to view. This would be an educational opportunity for the public as recommendations could be made for the residents to consider.

Discussion was held regarding the use of one park as a model to implement some of the recommendations and document improvements that can be used in other areas. The visual may generate enthusiasm from student organizations, town organizations and other volunteers to get involved in the maintenance and restoration of particular areas in town. It was felt the focus should be on key topics not necessarily long range planning as much.

Mrs. Lemay noted the town is updating the POCD and that the completion of the NRI was very timely. She is encouraging Mr. LiBrandi to use the NRI as a focus in the POCD as it was required to be completed from the last document. The data collection could influence some changes for the land use boards to consider. Communication to residents needs improvement. Sustainable CT has sparked enthusiasm with residents by providing informative programs and projects. Perhaps in the future additional organizations will want to be included to provide educational opportunities such as TNAC.

Discussion was held regarding a smaller document for the public to include the top five parks and trails and maybe some of the lesser known locations to generate some enthusiasm to venture out to see what the town has to offer. Mr. Massari noted the saying "Leave nothing but your footprints in nature" as part of the brochure to make people think more about the environment around them.

Use of the kiosks at the town parks was discussed. This could include information about the park, events being held and other related information. The use of a QR code to link to the town website for more information was suggested. Mrs. Sterling questioned if there was a welcome packet given to new residents that included general information. No one was aware of such a packet given through the town but it could include information from Planning and Zoning, Department of Public Works, links to various documents and the town website. Mr. Chin noted the First Selectman's office is working on a new resident area on the website where information such as that mentioned could be found. Ms. Roman discussed the Trumbull Guide that is published yearly where information could be documented. She will reach out to Don Eng regarding this guide. Mr. Massari also noted there are many social media contacts within the town and updates could be placed periodically with them to spread the information.

Sustainable CT and Earth Week Programs

Ms. Roman noted the Earth Week programs went well. They had programs in organic gardening, recycling, composting, Pollinator Pathway, and a local artist who presented his Field to Frame artwork. She thanked Bill Chin for his help in setting up the remote sites. Discussion was held regarding some ideas for next year.

Pollinator Pathway Resolution and Town Proclamation

The Pollinator Pathway resolution was read by the First Selectman at the Earth Day activities. Mrs. Lemay noted that on June 5, the Pollinator Pathway program will be launched at White Birch Nursery on Main Street (formerly Wakemans). This will include the sale of native plants, signing of the Pollinator Pledge by residents and selling of the Pollinator Pathway lawn signs. It was suggested that the Conservation Commission collaborate with Sustainable CT to put together an informational sheet perhaps with a QR code to link to various documents.

Park Kiosks

Mrs. Lemay will speak with Mr. Paris and the utilization of the kiosks for information. The Conservation Commission could put together information that is seasonal or pertinent to that particular point in time for each area.

Funding/Grants

Mr. Massari noted he has obtained information for one of the land use committees and he will continue to investigate what grants are available and who he should speak to regarding flood control and storm water management opportunities. He noted the Pittman-Robinson Funds are

available. Ms. Roman noted Sustainable CT may also be a source for funding. Invasive plants in Dogwood Lake were discussed as a possible future request for funding as this affects many water courses including Long Island Sound. Ms. Roman noted Rina Bakalar will be attending the next meeting of the Sustainable CT Committee to discuss the grant from UI.

Legislation

Mrs. Lemay noted the 1000 Trees for Trumbull is pending at this time. Quiet Communities legislation is pending until further information is received from other local towns.

Next meeting

May 26, 2021 at 7:00 pm.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:52 pm by unanimous consent.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Crandall
Clerk