

Minutes of Conservation Commission Meeting

4:30 PM May 4, 2023

Members: (Meeting was held on Zoom): Lisa Wahle, Rick Holloway, Sandy Prisloe, Margot Burns, Ted Taigen, Kate Hair*, Lisa Hayward* (* = not in attendance)

Meeting called to order at 4:35 pm.

1. Minutes: The minutes of April 2023 regular meeting were approved unanimously.

2. Audience of citizens: None

3. Correspondence: None

4. Old Business

a. Envirotips. Request to support Region 4 Food Scraps program. Conservation Commission is in favor of this.

Rick will develop a tip to let people know that Deep River Library is collecting thin film plastics. **Rick** will ask if the new Chester Market could be a collection point.

b. Open Space mapping.

The map **Margot** made looks great. **Sandy** has a 2012 open space parcel inventory provided by DEEP - Sandy and Lisa W will review this in May. **Lisa W** is working on open space requirements for SustainableCT– will check map for conformity with SustainableCT requirements and map in 2019 Chester POCD.

c. SustainableChester (SuChest).

Discussion of next steps to increase recovery of organics town-wide. No conclusions reached. Discussion of possible alternate haulers of compostables.

EV charging station - Nothing new to add.

No discussion this time of a possible community garden.

d. Invasive/native plant education/action: All existing invasive plant fact sheets have been loaded onto the CCC website. Need to add info about pollinators and pollinator garden, and create new invasive plant fact sheets. Attendance was low for Judy Preston's talk on April 16th about native landscaping.

e. Pollinator garden / Earth Day.

Earth Day program was very successful and should be scheduled again next year.

Lisa W will write an article about the garden/event for next issue of Chester Events.

Chester Garden Club is becoming more active and interested in expanding programs.

The new sign explaining the pollinator garden looks great.

CLT roadside cleanup was very successful.

f. Cedar Lake. The Cedar Lake Watershed Committee (CLWC) met last month. There is a clear need for better education on the risks of introducing invasive aquatic plants to

the lake. **Rick** will be drafting a possible press release or input to a Valley Courier article. The CLWC is discussing signage with more educational and motivational content. Margot said there are larger signs available from DEEP that can be requested.

g. The Laurel Hill Cemetery to N Quarter Park Trail .

No members of the CCC were able to attend the April 17 site walk. Ted talked with John Ivimey. Neighbors seem to be enthusiastic about the proposed trail. Perhaps DEEP has trail money that can be applied.

Lisa W sent John Ivimey's email with a map showing the most recent suggested trail location to CCC for review – best option is shortest wetland crossing. Lisa W forwarded CCC concerns to John I: need for a long-term trail maintenance plan; keep abutting property owners informed during planning; if vegetative screening is planned, plants need to be native or at least non-invasive. **Rick** will investigate whether any Eagle Scouts might be interested in improving the small stream crossing at N Qtr Park.

h. Great Cedar Swamp Walk with Emery Gluck May 1 . **Sandy to write up an Envirotip about the Cedar Swamp. Emery has offered a trip to the Pine Ledges in the Fall.**

i. Native plantings for town cemeteries . No one was able to attend the tour of the cemetery on Cedar Lake Road. Nevertheless, this item will be continued in future CCC meetings.

5. New Business.

a. Turtle crossing signs to be posted on Straits Road – thank you to Cindy Lignar.

Ted will explore getting a turtle crossing sign for Ferry Road. This would make a good envirotip during the season when turtles are most likely to be crossing roads for egg laying. The tip should mention that If you move a turtle across a road, move it in the direction it was headed.

b. Arbor Day (April 28) 2024

Bekah Wright had expressed interest in planting a native memorial tree next year.

c. Landscaping of town properties

Garden around Dr's office in Water Street parking lot - Lisa W and Felise Cressman will recommend suitable plants.

Lisa H will be asked to find out what tree species are intended for replacing many of the mature trees taken down for powerline safety (e.g., along Kings Highway).

Adjournment at 5:50 pm.

Next meeting June 1, 2023

Respectfully submitted by Richard Holloway & Lisa Wahle