

Minutes of Conservation Commission Meeting
Chester Town Hall
4:30 PM April 4, 2024

Members: Lisa Wahle, Rick Holloway, Sandy Prisloe, Ted Taigen, Kate Hair, Lisa Hayward

Meeting called to order at 4:30 pm.

1. Minutes: The minutes of the meeting on March 7 were approved unanimously.

2. Audience of citizens: None

3. Correspondence: A letter was received asking for nominations for candidates to receive the Aquarian Environmental Champion award, **Lisa W** will obtain more information, **Kate** will scan the notice and send to the Commission.

4. Old Business

- a. **EnviroTips.** Next few tips to support Earth Day projects and the RiverCOG composter and rain barrel sale. The tip on the American Woodcock ("Timberdoodle") will be published in a later edition.
- b. **Sustainable Chester Updates**
 - (1) Kim Price is awaiting approval of his plan by the Fair committee to move forward with purchase of recycling frames, etc. A business in Chester has offered to pay students who help with waste sorting and collecting.
 - (2) The EV Charging station project is moving ahead.
 - (3) Downtown recycling: The Commission felt that only one box is needed to be placed near the Little House. A local handyman has offered to build one. The design should be reviewed before construction.
 - (4) Tri-Town meeting of sustainability teams was held March 13th.
 - a. They discussed a proposal to run a regional drive (proposed by Essex) to encourage installation of solar panels. The CCC felt that because Chester had run two such drives a few years ago, that the Chester solar market was likely saturated.
 - b. Essex plans to use remaining funds from a grant to purchase an automatic dishwasher for Valley Regional HS, so that it can reuse trays rather than disposing of Styrofoam trays as is done at present.
 - c. The Deep River Sustainability Team would like to revisit the Pay-as-you-throw garbage disposal approach with new messaging and education. Chester's waste collection system does not make this practical here.
- c. **Earth Day** (April 20th) Ted has ordered 100 pollinator plants from Town and Country Nurseries. The CCC and Rotary will have a table and tent on Main Street. Jan Taigen is organizing activities for children. Ted presented samples of a flyer about pollination. **Vote** to utilize up to \$55 dollars remaining in our budget to pay for printing handouts for Earth Day for CCC and the Sustainability Team's tables: unanimously approved. Energea is contributing a composter for SuChest to raffle.
- d. **Cedar Lake Watershed Committee -**
 - a. Planning to install filter fabric fences to maintain a channel out from the boat ramp.
 - b. The Watershed Management plan is being updated.
 - c. A DEEP sign to help identification of *hydrilla* will be installed at the boat ramp.
- e. **Old County Road parcel conservation easement.** Development of this parcel would be contrary to the wishes of the family that asked that its use be restricted to agriculture and conservation. The CCC wrote a letter to the Inland Wetlands Agency asking that the donor's wishes be respected, but

it was not acknowledge in the Wetlands Agency minutes - CCC will request again that it be read into the minutes.

f. **Fire house parking lot expansion.**

Although the CCC was in unanimous agreement that this open space should not be converted to a parking lot, the Commission will continue to urge that, if converted, appropriate measures (such as use of pavers rather than asphalt) be taken to insure minimal environmental and aesthetic impact.

g. **Open space map and NRI progress.** No new meeting date was set.

New Business

a. VRHS "Warriors in the Community" will be at NQP on May 24, pulling Japanese barberry and building wildlife brush piles. **Lisa W** will help oversee... other volunteers welcome.

b. The required annual report on stormwater management (written by Jacobson Engineering) has used weekly Envirotips and the CCC website as evidence of public education on this subject.

Meeting adjourned 5:30 PM.

Next meeting May 2, 2024

Respectfully submitted by Richard Holloway and Lisa Wahle