

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
MINUTES  
LINCOLN CENTER DIRECTORS ROOM  
FEBRUARY 19, 2018**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Pat Clancy (Chair), Frank Belknap, Laura Edwards, and Bonnie Potocki

**ALSO PRESENT:** David Laiuppa, Environmental Planner/Wetlands Agent  
Amberlee Clark and Bryon Billings

Mr. Clancy convened the meeting at 7:03 p.m.

Approval of Minutes

The January 15, 2019 meeting minutes were approved with a minor correction.

Introductions

Ms. Clark and Mr. Billings were in attendance at this meeting in order to gauge their interest in joining the Commission.

Ms. Clark introduced herself and described her background and work experience. She described herself as a geologist working for a private consulting firm. She has a Master's of Science in Geoscience from UConn and a Bachelor's of Science in Environmental Earth Science from Eastern Connecticut State University. She has interests in site remediation, fluvial geomorphology, and sediment, groundwater, and soil analysis.

Mr. Billings introduced himself and described his background and work experience. He said that he has a background in surveying and construction and is currently involved with construction inspection.

Presentations

Mr. Belknap gave a "pre-application" presentation of some in-stream work that the Hockanum River Linear Park Committee is planning in an effort to prevent the Hockanum River from undercutting an existing walk bridge in the vicinity of the East Catholic High School athletic fields. Mr. Belknap explained that the proposed plans are to armor the bank of the river, at the point of greatest scour, with a gabion approximately 6ft x 4ft x 3ft. He described gabions as wire box cages that are filled with rocks.

- Ms. Potocki said that she thought this presentation was premature because the application process was not complete.
  - Mr. Belknap explained that this presentation was for the benefit of the Conservation Commission and was intended to make sure that the Commission

was aware of the proposed work that the Hockanum River Committee was proposing. This was not intended to be a presentation looking for the endorsement of the Conservation Commission at this time.

- Ms. Potocki asked Mr. Laiuppa what regulated resources would be potentially impacted by this project.
  - Mr. Laiuppa said that the proposed project is potentially affecting a watercourse, a floodway, a floodplain, and wetlands. Additionally, the project falls within an area that has been identified by the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) as a Natural Diversity Database (NDDB) area of concern. Mr. Laiuppa also stated that, as Mr. Belknap and Mr. Mercier have been informed, it will be required that official coordination efforts be made to DEEP regarding the NDDB area.
- Ms. Potocki asked what requirements must be met for a proposed project within a floodway.
  - Mr. Laiuppa explained that the Town Zoning Regulations regarding floodplains (and floodways) require certification by a registered professional engineer demonstrating, with supporting hydrologic and hydraulic analyses, that such encroachments shall not result in any (0.00 feet) increase in flood levels base flood elevation.
- Ms. Potocki asked if this is considered to be a “priority trail”.
  - Mr. Belknap and Mr. Clancy said that it is and that many people use this section of the trail.
    - Ms. Potocki suggested that language be added to the application that this proposed activity is in the public interest.
- Ms. Potocki asked if Mr. Belknap had river dimensions (width, depth).
  - Mr. Belknap said that they did not have dimensions at this time but that they would be easy to get.
- Mr. Clancy asked if there was a schedule for this application to be submitted.
  - Mr. Belknap said that they are working on the application now but that there is no schedule to get the application in.

#### Application Presentations

Mr. Laiuppa discussed a permit application from Woodbridge Mills LLC for an historic mill conversion at 501 Middle Turnpike East. This application included daylighting a portion of an existing watercourse that is currently flowing under a building, which is proposed to be demolished. Mr. Laiuppa explained that there was very little concern about the overall impacts to resources by this project.

#### Wetlands Permit Status

There were no reports regarding wetland permits.

## Communications

- Mr. Laiuppa said that CT Audubon is sponsoring *Mountainfilm on Tour* at Smith Middle School in Glastonbury on Friday, February 22, 7-9:30 PM.
- Mr. Laiuppa shared a handout with the Commission from the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station that described the current status of the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid. The handout explained that the recent winters, which have included “polar vortexes”, have negatively affected the invasive insect. This impact has had a temporarily positive affect on the health of the Canadian Hemlocks in the state.
- Ms. Edwards shared a handout with the Commission from the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT). CTDOT has plans to repair or replace the I-384 Bridge over Folly Brook.
  - Mr. Laiuppa explained that this project does not require a town permit because it is covered under a General Permit with DEEP. This was done in an effort to streamline and expedite all of the bridges around the state that, for safety reasons, need to be replaced or repaired.

## Reports

- Hockanum River Linear Park Committee (HRLPC)
  - Mr. Belknap said that, as a result of recent major rain and flood events, there is a lot of debris in the river that needs to be removed. He said that it will be a big push to have the river ready for the canoe races but he is sure that they will get the work done in time.
  - Mr. Belknap said that he is beginning to monitor bank erosion in key locations along the Hockanum River. He said that he has placed a series of stakes in the ground at known distances away from the river edge so that he can measure the bank loss.
- Case Mountain Recreation Area
  - Mr. Clancy said that the foundation area for the removed bath house has been filled in by the town.
  - Mr. Belknap said that the town has removed a tree that he had previously identified as a safety hazard.
- Manchester Land Conservation Trust (MLCT)
  - Mr. Belknap said that Malcolm Barlow has successfully submitted an application to DEEP for grant money to purchase the Lombardo Farm property. This application included two separate land appraisals.
- Rail Trails and Greenways

- Ms. Potocki asked if there will be a formal ribbon cutting ceremony in the spring for the opening of the new section of the East Coast Greenway Trail.
  - Mr. Clancy said that he believes there will be.
- Mr. Laiuppa said that there was a town meeting to discuss the southern extension of the Cheney Trail between Center Street and Forest Street. He said that there are plans to leave much of the existing rail features in place. This will, hopefully, be an asset to the historical significance of this section of the former railroad.
- Garden Club
  - Nothing to report.
- Manchester Matters Bulletin
  - Ms. Edwards asked about the Town idling regulations. She suggested that the regulations should be posted in the Manchester Matters Bulletin.
- Land Acquisition Committee
  - Mr. Clancy said that during the recent Land Acquisition meeting the Committee made a unanimous recommendation that the Board of Directors award up to \$50,000 to the Army Navy club for the construction of American with Disabilities (ADA) compliant bathrooms.
    - Ms. Edwards and Ms. Potocki both said that they thought the Army Navy club should have explored other funding options and that the town should not be so quick to financially support a group that has paying members and charges for the use of the facility.
      - Mr. Clancy suggested that any concerns could be voiced with the Board of Directors before they make a final decision.
  - Mr. Clancy said that during the recent Land Acquisition meeting the Committee made a unanimous recommendation that the Board of Directors award up to \$6,500 to the Historical Society for an engineering assessment of the Historical Museum.

### Old Business

- Mr. Laiuppa talked briefly about a meeting that he and Mr. Mercier had with the Town Attorney to discuss access and rights-of-way that were in place to access key locations along the Hockanum River trail.
- Mr. Laiuppa said that the priority list that he requested from the Hockanum River Trail group was provided to him by Mr. Mercier. This list is an older version and should be updated as needed.

- Mr. Laiuppa discussed the idea of providing an update to the Town Planning and Zoning Commission about the activities that the Conservation Commission are involved with. He said that such a list is not required but it would be a good idea to show the Planning and Zoning Commission what types of activities this group are involved with and would show that the goals of the Conservation Commission are in line with the goals of the town.
  - Ms. Potocki said that she would work on compiling a list with the input from the various committees on the Conservation Commission.

### New Business

- Ms. Edwards said that the excess soil from the Verplanck School project has been determined to be structurally unsuitable for reuse and that there is now a change order for the project that involves the removal and disposal of the soil. She said that this change order was for more than \$100,000.
  - Mr. Belknap said that the soil should be used to cap the landfill and that should reduce the cost.
- Mr. Laiuppa gave an update about the failing erosion and sedimentation controls on the backside of the soil pile at Verplanck. He said that he talked with the town inspector about ensuring that the project inspectors did not allow these failures to continue.
  - Ms. Potocki suggested that the Town should fine the contractor for failure to properly maintain E&S controls. She said that the maintenance bonds for the project should be taken back.
- Mr. Laiuppa gave an update about the failing erosion and sedimentation controls at Center Spring Park. He explained that E&S controls were not properly installed or maintained and that sediment had been redeposited in the pond after heavy rains. He also said that, after talking with the town inspector, more E&S controls had been installed but that the sediment had not been removed from the pond.
  - Ms. Potocki suggested that the Town should fine the contractor for failure to properly maintain E&S controls. She said that the maintenance bonds for the project should be taken back.
- Ms. Potocki said that the Conservation Commission should have more community involvement.
  - Ms. Edwards said that, as the SMARTR2 initiative moves forward, she would be asking for support from the Conservation Commission.
  - Ms. Clark suggested that the Conservation Commission should get involved with DEEP's "No Child Left Inside" initiative and/or the "Source to Sea" program.
    - Mr. Clancy said that they had been involved with the "Source to Sea" program.
- Mr. Clancy explained the directive of the Conservation Commission so that Amberlee and Bryon could be better informed when they decide if they are interested in joining the

Commission or not. Mr. Clancy said that the Conservation Commission makes recommendations to the Board of Directors and the Planning and Zoning Commission. He also said that the Conservation Commission members have some freedom in championing their own causes as long as they are directly related to conservation efforts in the Town of Manchester.

- After Mr. Clancy's brief discussion he asked Amberlee and Bryon if they would like to indicate their interest in joining the Commission or if they would like some time to think about it.
  - Ms. Clark (Amberlee) said that she was very interested in joining the Commission. She said that many of the things that were discussed at the meeting were of great interest to her.
  - Mr. Billings (Bryon) said that he would like to attend another meeting or two before deciding if he would like to join the Commission.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.