

**EAST LYME COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 13, 2017**

Present: Arthur Carlson, Chairman
Penny Heller, Secretary
Don Danila, Member
Laura Ashburn, Alternate

FILED

Also Present: Rose Ann Hardy, Ex officio

Dec 21 20 17 AT _____ AM/PM

Absent: Marvin Schutt, Member
Mark Christensen, Member
Ron Nichols, Alternate

Penny Heller
EAST LYME TOWN CLERK

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Carlson called the December 13, 2017 Conservation of Natural Resources Regular Meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

Ms. Ashburn was asked to be seated.

MOTION (1): Ms. Heller moved to add Day article of November 29, 2017 to New Business as item B. Seconded by Ms. Ashburn. (4-0) Unanimous.

It was felt that election of officers should be added to the January Agenda since a full commission was not present at this evening's meeting.

I. PUBLIC DELEGATIONS

There were no guests.

II. MINUTES

A. Mr. Carlson asked for additions, deletions or corrections to the November 8, 2017 Conservation of Natural Resources Regular Meeting Minutes.

MOTION (2): Mr. Danila moved to accept the November 8, 2017 East Lyme Commission for the Conservation of Natural Resources, as presented. Seconded by Ms. Heller. Mr. Danila and Ms. Heller abstained from voting. (2-0-2) Motion carried.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. **Goodwin Trail.** Mr. Carlson reported much dirt to replace what has eroded was placed on the walkway of Darrows Pond. There was discussion with a contractor on where to place the water bars.

B. Day article dated November 29, 2017. (See attached).

IV. OLD BUSINESS

A. Continuation of the Water Study. Each Commission member drafted a brief write-up. Mr. Carlson asked that Commission members review each of the write-ups and make any edits they feel are necessary. Mr. Carlson will then compile the report.

V. REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Danila reported he attended a Public Hearing in Waterford regarding Tim Londregan's project. WELSCO may suggest another location.

MOTION (3): **Ms. Ashburn moved that due to current changes, she will draft a letter supporting shellfish aquaculture in the Niantic River. Seconded by Mr. Danila. (4-0) Unanimous.**

A. Communications. Several commission members received letters from the Town Clerk reappointing them.

B. Agribusiness Subcommittee. Mr. Christensen asked that the Commission be informed that the Potluck Supper will be held on January 12, 2018. If there is inclement weather, it will be rescheduled to January 19, 2018.

C. Chairman's Report. Mr. Carlson had no other items to discuss.

D. Ex-Officio Report. Ms. Hardy reported Ms. Ashburn has agreed to become a permanent member of this Commission. There is now an alternate vacancy. She asked Commission members to notify her of any recommendations they may have.

She felt this Commission as an advisory commission should share their knowledge with the Town.

MOTION (4): **Ms. Ashburn moved to draft a cover letter with an Executive Summary to share with all related commissions. Seconded by Mr. Danila. (4-0) Unanimous.**

VI. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION (5): **Ms. Heller moved to adjourn the December 13, 2017 Conservation of Natural Resources Regular Meeting at 8:15 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Danila. (4-0) Unanimous.**

Respectfully submitted,

Frances Gheri, Recording Secretary

CCM launches sustainability program

Towns are encouraged to make environmental, other improvements

- The Day,
- November 29, 2017
- (null)

Mashantucket — Mayor John McCormac of Woodbridge Township, N.J., says he never talked about the environment when he first ran for office in 2006.

“That issue did not make any of my mailers. It didn’t come up at any of my debates,” McCormac told Connecticut town and city leaders who converged Tuesday at Foxwoods Resort Casino for the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities’ annual convention. “I never imagined what a hot-button issue it would become.”

McCormac said with the help of dedicated staff and residents and Sustainable Jersey — a nonprofit program that’s poured more than \$4 million into local projects across New Jersey the last eight years — his township is consistently recognized as the most environmentally friendly community in the state.

“That matters to our residents,” McCormac said. “It matters to our businesses who are proud to be in Woodbridge. It matters to businesses who are looking for a place to locate and choose Woodbridge.”

At Tuesday’s convention, CCM announced the launch of a statewide program, Sustainable CT, modeled after New Jersey’s efforts.

Organizers say the program offers an online framework and potentially a financial boost to towns and cities looking to implement a range of economic, environmental and cultural improvements. The initiative will provide grant opportunities and lo-

gistical support to officials taking steps to improve infrastructure and transportation, protect the environment and create efficiencies in housing, planning and a host of public services.

“It’s a one-stop shop for sustainability measures,” said Michelle Knapik, president of the Emily Hall Tremain Foundation, one of the project’s financial supporters.

Municipal leaders at Tuesday’s launch spoke of efforts already underway in their towns and cities to establish watershed protection, boost recycling and solar programs, cut municipal energy bills and redevelop dilapidated or contaminated sites.

The program certifies municipalities that perform a range of actions, such as creating a

natural resource and wildlife inventory; developing a municipal energy plan; or tracking and assessing historic resources. Each action and benchmark, laid out on sustainablect.org, earns points and certification awarded by Eastern Connecticut State University's Institute for Sustainable Energy, which coordinated the program.

Deborah Jones, Groton's assistant director of Planning, Zoning and Wetlands, served as co-chair of a planning working group, one of several statewide workgroups that developed the program over the last year.

"At the beginning there were a gazillion ideas, but it got narrowed down to very specific actions that towns can take," Jones said. "A lot of towns are doing them right now."

Groton already is making headway on a few action items, including streamlining regulations and a zoning code rewrite to make development easier and clearer for businesses and municipal leaders, Jones said.

"We've also done a good deal of assessing our climate vulnerability," she said, noting Public Works has examined facilities "that might be susceptible to increased flooding and stronger storms."

Abby Piersall, Waterford's planning director, said that town has taken many vital regulatory steps on watershed protection, land use and erosion sediment control. She noted Waterford's environmental planner, Maureen Fitzgerald, served on the program's ecological land and natural resources workgroup.

The town also has benchmarked energy consumption at town buildings, Piersall added.

"We'll be tracking and looking at opportunities," she said. "A lot of the steps will end up helping towns look at their spending and get some buyin."

Beyond marketable bragging rights that Sustainable CT certification might bring, McCormac noted New Jersey's program fostered innovative plans that translated into bottom-line benefits.

"Not only did Sustainable Jersey not cost us any money, we have achieved budgetary savings as a result of many of the actions," McCormac said. "Every energy-efficient action, like an energy audit, new light fixtures, weather-proofing windows and more efficient fuel sources, goes right to the bottom line. We spend less on energy now ... and it's not just because of price fluctuations. Our energy usage is down overall because of Sustainable Jersey."

McCormac added Sustainable Jersey sparked partnerships among towns and libraries, housing authorities and school districts, where children "are a natural ally to bring their parents around to a more environmentally friendly lifestyle."

More than 200 municipal, business and nonprofit leaders partnered with Eastern Connecticut State University, the Connecticut Economic Resource Center and CCM over the last year to create Sustainable CT.

The effort is funded by three Connecticut nonprofits: the Emily Hall Tremain Foundation, Hampshire Foundation and Common Sense Fund.

Sabina Shelby, president of the Hampshire Foundation, said her organization planned to make a pool of approximately \$250,000 available for small grants to help towns and cities kickstart climate and energy-related projects.

“Sometimes all that’s needed is a small grant that gets that town going,” she said.

Following Tuesday’s launch, CCM and the Institute for Sustainable Energy plan a host of regional launch events in January, including at Connecticut College in New London on Jan. 24 at 6:30 p.m.

Liquid Assets article, Summer 2017, The Nature Conservancy Magazine. Executive Summary

The article highlighted several large cities and the problems faced with keeping and providing clean drinking water. It suggested creating a WATER FUND to help cities (and towns) save money by protecting upstream sources through conservation.

Some notable points include:

- Urban areas are home to more than ½ of the world's population, and that amount is expected to rise
- Development puts pressure on clean drinking water supplies
- By funding UPSTREAM conservation projects, cities and towns find they can protect clean drinking water supplies
- This conservation approach starts with addressing deforestation, erosion, agricultural runoff in the headwaters, with the idea that it is cheaper to stop the problem BEFORE it gets to a population center
- The Nature Conservancy helps bring together government groups, utilities, and non-profits as well as money from end users to invest in conservation efforts
- A yearly goal of 2% of a water company budget can be used to fund upstream projects. Conservation is a smart investment
- water must be managed to provide drinking water during droughts and floods, and ensure a consistent, potable supply
- Freshwater ecosystems are as integral to water systems as is infrastructure such as reservoirs, water treatment plants and piping
- money to pay for conservation could come from taxes or water fees from end users* (Note: Connecticut has the Community Investment Act (CIA) which collects money from all property sales, and can be used for land conservation. The town receives money from this fund each year. The selectman are in charge of this)
- Education of the public for acceptance of conservation efforts is important.