

EAST LYME COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES
ZOOM MEETING OF AUGUST 12, 2020

Present: Penny Heller, Host
Don Danila
Harvey Beeman, Alternate
Ron Nichols, Alternate

Also Present: Ray Heller

Absent: Art Carlson, Chairman
Mark Christensen
Laura Ashburn

FILED

Aug 18, 2020 AT 12:10 AM/PM
Brooke Hansen ATC
EAST LYME TOWN CLERK

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Heller called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

MOTION (1): Ms. Heller moved to seat Harvey Beeman and Ron Nichols for Laura Ashburn and Mark Christensen. Seconded by Mr. Danila. (4-0) Unanimous.

I. PUBLIC DELEGATIONS

There were no public delegations.

II. MINUTES

A. Minutes of March 11, 2020. Ms. Heller asked for additions, deletions or corrections to the March 11, 2020 Conservation of Natural Resources Regular Meeting Minutes. The following corrections were noted: On page 1, Motion 2 was seconded by Mr. Danila; on page 2, item E. Mr. Danila reported on the Solar Farm; on page 3, the motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Danila.

MOTION (2): Ms. Heller moved to accept the March 11, 2020 East Lyme Conservation of Natural Resources Minutes, as amended. Seconded by Mr. Nichols. (4-0) Unanimous.

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. Memo submitted to IWA concerning review area. Ms. Heller received an email regarding our 2018 Water Report from the IWA that they would appreciate any updates made.

Mr. Carlson met with the IWA at East Lyme Town Hall last week to further explain the CCNR position on expanding the IWA Review Area to at least 300'.

Mr. Beeman reported he has attended several IWA meetings. The IWA discussed a text change to its regulations at the July and August meetings.

Mr. Goeschel reported that the IWA received several recommendations for expanding the IWA Review Area.

Mr. Beeman reported the IWA had a public meeting. After they closed the public meeting portion they went into deliberations. Three commissioners seemed in favor of 300' and one was in favor of 500'. Mr. Goeschel was asked to find out what the impact of 300' would be. There was a 4-3 vote not to ask his recommendation on 300' wetlands improvement.

It was noted 500' would be 90% of the Town. A meeting will be held in September.

Ms. Heller reported Mr. Carlson had discussion with Mr. Goeschel about the area where our drinking water is affected.

Mr. Beeman added another twenty items to the data package of what was collected over the last month. Ms. Heller reported our report was based on information from the Town. She suggested having discussions with Brad Kargl.

- B. **Pattagansett Lake Association.** Mr. Danila reported the Pattagansett Lake Association (PLA), which is an environmental organization in Town is concerned about conservation and environmental matters with the lake. This Association has been in existence for a number of years but more or less became an Ad Hoc group. Some members thought it should be much more of an organization. Wendy Richardson, Mr. Danila, and others met on March 4 and revised its Bylaws and increased its dues. The PLA Annual Meeting was held on July 15 on the Island Camp Ground beach. The PLA will look at herbicide use to control aquatic vegetation. The PLA is now a 501(c3) organization and might be able to apply for a DEEP Invasive Weed Control grant. Ms. Heller reported Mr. Carlson feels that Gorton Pond is almost in the same situation.

IV. **OLD BUSINESS**

- A. **Waterford Solar Farm Project.** Mr. Danila reported that Save the River-Save the Hills (STR-STH) has engaged an attorney for the CT Siting Council (CSC) proceeding on the solar project. Since March they have had several rounds of questioning between the petitioner (GRE), STR-STH, and the Town of Waterford. All groups filed testimony with the Siting Council. The first Public Hearing was held on July 14 with the petitioner presenting the project. GRE was then cross examined by the CSC, the Town of Waterford, and STR-STH. There were also public comments. The next remote session was held on August 4 to continue with cross examination of GRE as well as Town witnesses. The Siting Council decided to halt the proceedings due to the ongoing Storm Isaias. On August 25 at 2 p.m. further testimony will be given and STR-STH witnesses, including Mr. Danila, will be cross-examined. Public comments on the solar project will be accepted by the CSC until September 24. The Siting Council will issue a draft decision on October 8, but there may be a 90-day extension as a result of an executive order by Governor Lamont regarding state deadlines.
- B. **Work on Town Trails.** Mr. Carlson reported to the Recording Secretary that he is working with the Town Planner on the Open Space Plan to be included in the POCD.
- C. **SustainabilityCT Bikeway Project.** Ms. Heller exchanged emails with Mike McDowell and was told that all plans are on hold until the beach season quiets down. The next

step in the process is to have discussions with the Chief of Police to determine how two bikeways could be marked out on town roads.

Ms. Heller asked Ms. Ashburn if her students would be able to do this project out of classroom time. Her students were going to work on a pedestrian survey and will add information on where they feel it is safe to bike and walk in town.

- D. **POCD Update.** Ms. Heller reported Mr. Carlson met with Mr. Goeschel on the Open Space Plan and went over changes on which parcels were available and how they are ranked. The ranking was increased for parcels containing any part of town aquifer to distinguish them from parcels adjacent an aquifer. Some parcels were taken off and some were added. The Open Space Plan will go into the POCD update submitted in December. Mr. Nichols added he feels this Commission should review these changes. There was discussions years ago about revisiting inclusion of parcels affected by the rising sea level. Ms. Heller will have it placed on the September Agenda. She stated the Open Space Plan exists and can be changed as needed

V. Reports and Communications

- A. **Communications.** Mr. Danila reported on an article in the Lyme Times about the Connecticut Invasive Plant Symposium to be held on October 7. The fee is \$50 for those who register early.
- B. **Agribusiness Subcommittee.** Ms. Heller reported that Mr. Christensen sent an email with the Agribusiness Report. He and Mr. Kalal have been working on the Samuel Smith House community garden. They have harvested vegetables and brought them to the meal center at St. John Episcopal Church. They plan to have larger plots next year.
- C. **Chairman's Report.** Mr. Carlson was unable to be present and there was no report.
- D. **Ex-Officio Report.** Ms. Hardy was unable to be present and there was no report.

MOTION (3): Mr. Nicholas moved to adjourn the August 12, 2020 Zoom meeting of the Conservation Commission at 8:02 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Danila. (4-0) Unanimous

Respectfully submitted,

Frances Gheri, Recording Secretary