

EAST LYME COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES
ZOOM MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 9, 2020

Present: Art Carlson, Chairman
Penny Heller, Host
Don Danila
Harvey Beeman, Alternate
Ron Nichols, Alternate
Mark Christensen
Laura Ashburn

Also Present: Ray Heller

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Carlson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

A quorum was established.

FILED IN EAST LYME
CONNECTICUT
Sept 17, 2020 AT 6:25 AM PM
Ray Heller ATC
EAST LYME TOWN CLERK

I. PUBLIC DELEGATIONS

There were no public delegations.

II. MINUTES

A. **Minutes of August 12, 2020.** Mr. Carlson asked for additions, deletions or corrections to the August 12, 2020 Conservation of Natural Resources Regular Meeting Minutes. The following corrections were noted: The heading in III. A should be changed to **"Memo submitted to IWA concerning proposed text change to the Upland Review Area."** On page 2, the fourth paragraph, first sentence should be rewritten as follows: "Mr. Beeman indicated another twenty items had been added to the data package of what was collected over the last month"

MOTION (1): Ms. Heller moved to accept the August 12, 2020 East Lyme Conservation of Natural Resources Minutes, as amended. Seconded by Mr. Christensen. Messrs. Carlson and Christensen and Ms. Ashburn abstained from voting. (3-0-3) Motion carried..

III. NEW BUSINESS

A. **Review of Updates to the Open Space Plan land listings for the POCD.** Mr. Carlson reported he had discussions with Mr. Goeschel concerning the list of the 65 properties and rating of them and the focus on more sensitive properties. The ratings will be reviewed by the Planning Commission. There will be a public hearing in November.

Mr. Christensen suggested that the spill mitigation at Exit 74 be incorporated into the POCD. Mr. Nichols stated a strong drain run off basin was installed by the highway. Mr. Carlson agreed to check into the status of our letter regarding the spill mitigation at Exit 74.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Waterford Solar Farm Project.** Mr. Danila participated in the CT Siting Council remote evidentiary hearing on August 25 with the Save The River-Save The Hills (STR-STH) team regarding the proposed solar power development in Waterford. He answered some questions from Council members and the developer's attorney with respect to environmental matters. Also receiving questions were Deb Moshier-Dunn of STR-STH and engineering consultant Steve Trinkaus, who got the majority of them. Public comments on this project will continue to be accepted by the Council until September 24. STR-STH's attorney and the team will prepare a written brief for the Council prior to that deadline. The Council will prepare its Draft Findings of Fact, Opinion & Decision & Order and release it on October 8. There is something else on their schedule that Mr. Danila did not fully understand and will need to ask the attorney about: a further 90-day extension of the deadline for decision per the Governor's Executive Order No. 7M. He was not sure whether or not this delayed date will be used by the Council. At any rate, a decision should be forthcoming during this fall. By moving from intervener to party status, STR-STH could elect to challenge the Council's decision in state court should it be unfavorable, but this has yet to be decided upon.

Between the NRWC and the Millstone Environmental Lab Mr. Danila has enough HOBO Tidbit long-term water temperature monitors as well as associated equipment (anchors, flagging tape, etc.) to place these monitors into Oil Mill and Stony Brooks and their tributaries to look for any changes in stream water temperature resulting from the solar project, should it be built. He needs to consult with Deb Moshier-Dunn about when to get these instruments out into the waterways as she has gotten landowner permissions for this purpose. STR-STH has asked the Council that if they approve the development they require the developers to monitor both water temperature and turbidity in stormwater discharges, but whether the Council will require this or not won't be known until their decision is final.

- B. Pattagansett Lake Association Activity Update.** Mr. Danila reported tonight the Pattagansett Lake Association President and officers will attend the Rogers Lake Association Meeting. The Pattagansett Lake Association has discussed trying to raise money for aquatic weed control. Boat owners have been assessed \$5 per year in order to have the ability to give grants.
- C. Work on Town Trails.** Mr. Carlson reported he has asked the Town to mow four acres of the Darrow Pond property. The mowing should be completed within the next few weeks.
- D. SustainabilityCTProgram.** Ms. Heller reported Mr. McDowell sent an email today reporting that the Chief of Police asked him to send a copy of the Bikeway Plan that has been put together for a sustainable grant. The Plan calls for signage on a loop of all three historical houses and a loop to Black Point and McCook's Park so those roads would be marked as an official bikeway.

Ms. Heller stated grants are available but the Town needs to join in.

Mr. Nichols asked if there is an outline of the plan? Ms. Heller stated we submitted our Sustainability CT report and received bronze certification last October. The certification reviewers provided suggested actions the town could take. In addition the grant was supposed to include a pedestrian study carried out by East Lyme High School students. However, Ms. Ashburn reported her students are not able to have activities outside of school.

Ms. Heller stated the least or the first we can accomplish is to add biking routes for a hike trail map on the website.

- E. **RBV Sampling.** Mr. Danila was forwarded an email sent out by Meghan Lally of CT DEEP regarding RBV sampling this fall. Due to COVID-19 there will be no training sessions scheduled so she indicated that only experienced samplers should be involved in the sampling. Expectations are for social distancing and small parties involved with the sampling. One issue right now is the low flow in CT streams due to drought or near-drought conditions. It will only be worth going out if we get more precipitation and stream flows pick up later this fall. The U.S. Geological Survey flow gauge was recently re-installed into Latimer Brook so we have a real-time source of information on stream flow. Besides two locations in Latimer Brook, last year Mr. Danila, Ms. Heller and team also sampled Cranberry Meadow Brook and Fourmile River.

V. **Reports and Communications**

- A. **Communications.** Mr. Carlson met a month ago with Ted Koch of the Inland Wetlands Committee regarding the Water and Open Space reports.
- B. **Agribusiness Subcommittee.** Mr. Christensen reported Farm Day was held on July 19 at the Samuel Smith House. There were 75 in attendance.

The Giving Garden, established by St. John's Episcopal Church, give produce grown to the needy. It is negotiating to expand to a two-acre piece of land.

This project may also apply for Sustainable CT grants.

Mr. Christensen reported that there has been a dispute regarding the Niantic River waterways mooring space between East Lyme and Waterford. Mr. Danila agreed to check on this.

- C. **Chairman's Report.** Mr. Carlson reported this month he will circulate a Report by DEEP on the current state of forestry in Connecticut to the committee members.
- D. **Ex-Officio Report.** Ms. Hardy expressed regrets that she was unable to join tonight's meeting.

MOTION (2): Mr. Christensen moved to adjourn the September 9, 2020 Zoom meeting of the East Lyme Commission for Conservation of Natural Resources at 7:46 p.m. Seconded By Mr. Danila. (5-0) Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Frances Gheri, Recording Secretary