



STATE OF CONNECTICUT – COUNTY OF TOLLAND
INCORPORATED 1786

TOWN OF ELLINGTON

55 MAIN STREET – PO BOX 187
ELLINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06029-0187

www.ellington-ct.gov

TEL. (860) 870-3120 TOWN PLANNER'S OFFICE FAX (860) 870-3122

ELLINGTON CONSERVATION COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES JANUARY 5, 2016

MEMBERS

PRESENT: Chairman-Rebecca Quarno, Vice Chairman-David Bidwell, Sean Dwyer, James Gage, and Robert Zielfelder, Jr.

ABSENT: George Nickerson, Alternate-Walter Moody, and Alternate-Ann Harford

STAFF: Lisa M. Houlihan, Town Planner

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Rebecca Quarno called the Conservation Commission meeting to order at 7:04 PM.

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS: NONE

III. NEW BUSINESS: Chairman Quarno welcomed new commissioner Robert Zielfelder. Commissioners took turns introducing themselves and providing brief summaries about their work and personal experiences related to conservation.

1. Discussion – Energize Connecticut Initiative: Dave Bidwell – Lead

BY CONSENSUS, THE COMMISSION DISCUSSED ITEM B. OF CORRESPONDENCE UNDER ITEM #1 OF NEW BUSINESS.

- b. Email from Alison Jackman, Eversource to Lisa Houlihan, Town Planner dated December 4, 2015. (Ellington's path to becoming a Silver (maybe gold?) Town)

Lisa M. Houlihan, Town Planner, directed the Commission's attention to an email sent by Alison Jackson, Eversource, dated December 4, 2015, regarding Ellington's path to becoming a Silver or Gold Town. The Commission discussed contents of the email. Ms. Houlihan asked the Commission how they felt about taking on the role of Energy Task Force. The Commission discussed the option of becoming the Energy Task Force or whether a separate Energy Task Force Commission should be created.

Ms. Houlihan stated that Tim Webb, Public Works Director, has benchmarked the energy usage at town facilities, and noted that Mr. Webb supports the Conservation Commission becoming the Clean Energy Task Force.

Ms. Houlihan explained that approval is needed from the Board of Selectmen to expand the authority of the Commission or to establish a new commission to serve as the Energy Task Force.

The Commission discussed assuming the tasks to advance to becoming a Silver Town while the establishment of an Energy Task Force Commission is considered.

Ms. Houlihan will speak with other communities that have created an Energy Task Force. She will inquire how they were established and how it is working out for them. The Commission agreed they should learn more about what is involved with the program before making any decisions.

NO MOTIONS OR DECISIONS

2. Discussion – Open Space Ongoing Education: Rebecca Quarno/Sean Dwyer - Leads
 - a. Open Space Brochure

Ms. Houlihan distributed copies of the updated Farmland Preservation brochure and the Commission reviewed it. Ms. Houlihan suggested an addition to the cost of community services. The Commission agreed and thought the brochure looked great with the addition suggested by Ms. Houlihan.

BY CONSENSUS, THE COMMISSION APPROVED THE FARMLAND PRESERVATION BROCHURE WITH AN ADDITION TO THE COST OF COMMUNITY SERVICES SECTION.

Ms. Houlihan distributed draft copies of the Open Space Brochure so that the Commission could review the design and layout before content is added. Ms. Houlihan encouraged commissioners to provide suggestions. Due to staffing levels for the remainder of January, it is likely that the brochure will not be ready for review until the March meeting.

The Commission decided to review the brochure and discuss it at the next regular meeting.

3. Update – Hockanum River Trail Association: Ann Harford – Lead

Ms. Houlihan read an email from Ann Harford, dated 12/31/15, updating the Commission on trail activities and directing attention to the land behind CarStar. The property owner currently has the property for sale and is considering giving the town a right of way over their land for connection to the Hockanum trail. Currently, Christine Fluckinger is checking with legal counsel to see what can be done. The email also pointed out that the owner of CarStar is willing to provide monies to erect a sign for the trail if it turns out it can be extended.

The Commission discussed the area around CarStar and where there are possibilities to link to trails.

NO MOTIONS OR DECISIONS

4. Report: Working Farmland Preservation Program: James Gage/Staff - Leads

Ms. Houlihan stated that she and Commissioner Gage recently attended a Department of Agriculture & National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) training session to

review changes in the requirements for NRCS reimbursement. She will assist the Jobs Hill Road property owners with completing application forms.

Ms. Houlihan received interest from Fred Spielman, owner of property on Middle Road that abuts East Windsor. Mr. Spielman's property is in close proximity to the preserved Bahler property, and is adjacent to another farm that is 20+/- acres in East Windsor. Mr. Spielman is currently speaking with the East Windsor land owner about the farmland program. Ms. Houlihan stated that even though East Windsor does not have a Farmland Preservation Program (FPP) the State may still consider preserving it, drawing attention to how the Charter Farms program was processed. Ms. Houlihan also acknowledged that the property in East Windsor currently has a 20 lot subdivision approval but has not been able to sell. She is waiting to hear back from Mr. Spielman. Commissioner Gage drove the property today and noted it is good quality. Ms. Houlihan wanted the Commission to know that Mr. Spielman came forward as a result of the mailing sent to farm owners earlier in the year regarding the FPP.

NO MOTIONS OR DECISIONS

5. Report: Open Space Preservation Program
 - a. Discussion – Progress of 16 Penfield Ave, APN 010-020-0000.

Commissioner Gage stated there was no new progress with the Penfield Avenue property, announcing that the owners would like to obtain their own appraisal to make sure the amount offered by the town is fair.

Commissioner Gage also stated that Northern Connecticut Land Trust was negotiating with the Arens but the owner declined the offer.

NO MOTIONS OR DECISIONS

III. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:

1. FY 14-15 and FY15-16 Budget Expenditure Update – Town Staff.

Ms. Houlihan stated there were no new expenditures and pointed out she is working with Commissioner Harford on auditing the expenses for the new bridge project that it is now complete. Final reporting will be sent to the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) along with a request for reimbursement of funds that the Town paid up front through the Commission's contracted services account.

NO MOTIONS OR DECISIONS

2. Approval of December 1, 2015, Regular Meeting Minutes.

MOVED (GAGE), SECONDED (DWYER) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE DECEMBER 1, 2015 MEETING MINUTES.

3. Correspondence:

- a. **INVITATION:** Please join the Ellington and Tolland Economic Development Commissions for a free workshop; Fundamentals of Municipal Economic Development – A Transformational Approach, Wednesday, January 13, 2016, 6PM – 8PM, Town Hall Annex, 57 Main Street, Ellington.

SO NOTED

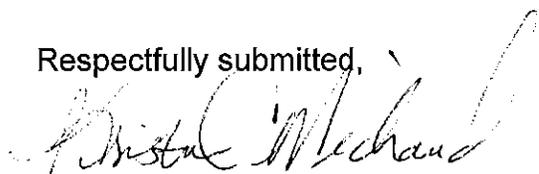
Ms. Houlihan stated that as part of the Healthy Communities Initiative a fundraiser was held to collect money for bike racks in town. They were able to raise enough money to purchase 2 new bike racks, one will be placed at Arbor Park and the other will replace an old one at the library.

Discussion ensued.

IV. ADJOURNMENT:

**MOVED (BIDWELL), SECONDED (DWYER) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO
ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:02 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,



Kristin Michaud
Recording Secretary