



# TOWN OF ELLINGTON

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[www.ellington-ct.gov](http://www.ellington-ct.gov)

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2017, 7:00 P.M.  
TOWN HALL ANNEX, 57 MAIN STREET, ELLINGTON, CT**

**PRESENT:** Vice Chairman David Bidwell, James Gage, Sean Dwyer, George Nickerson, and Robert Ziefelder, Jr.

**ABSENT:** Chairman Rebecca Quarno and Alternates Ann Harford and Walter Moody

**STAFF**

**PRESENT:** Lisa Houlihan, Town Planner, and Savannah Blantz, Recording Clerk.

**I. CALL TO ORDER:**

Vice Chairman David Bidwell called the Conservation Commission meeting to order at 7:03 PM at the Ellington Town Hall Annex, 57 Main Street, Ellington, CT.

**II. PUBLIC COMMENTS (On Non-Agenda Items): None**

**III. ACTIVE BUSINESS:**

1. Presentation by Chamae Mejias of SmartPower regarding Solarize Connecticut

Chamae Mejias came before the Conservation Commission to explain the Solarize Connecticut Program. Ms. Mejias explained that the Solarize Connecticut program allows residents to solarize their homes through a preselected contractor and SmartPower works with towns to select a contractor. An Installer Review Session will be held for towns to learn more about installers next week; this event only occurs twice a year. The town will be required to participate in an 18-week education and outreach campaign for residents to be eligible for reduced pricing. A bi-weekly check-in call between SmartPower and the town will be used to monitor progress. Ms. Mejias stated that there is no cost to the community for the program.

Vice Chairman Bidwell asked Ms. Mejias what the town of Ellington would need to do to support this program. Ms. Mejias stated that contacting community leaders and spreading the word about the program are two ways that the community can support the program. Commissioner Sean Dwyer asked about the ways in which local Ellington solar installation businesses could become involved. Ms. Mejias responded by stating that any installers who are declared eligible by the Connecticut Green Bank are invited to participate.

The commission received and reviewed a copy of the Solarize Connecticut Memorandum of Understanding provided by SmartPower. The commission made a motion to ask the Ellington Board of Selectmen for support.

**MOVED (BIDWELL) SECONDED (GAGE) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO RECOMMEND THE SUPPORT OF THE SOLARIZE CONNECTICUT MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING TO THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN.**

2. Discussion - Energize Connecticut Initiative: Dave Bidwell/Staff – Leads

Town Planner, Lisa Houlihan, stated that she spoke with Eversource about another outreach campaign. Two campaign ideas are to hold a farmer's market event and a program at the senior center in Ellington. Ms. Houlihan contacted the Program Coordinator at the senior center who suggested having a program in June. Ms. Houlihan stated that she believes this program would be an opportunity for seniors to receive home energy audits before the warmest months of the year and to learn more ways to reduce cooling costs through the Energize Connecticut initiative. The program could be advertised in the senior center newsletter.

Ms. Houlihan also contacted Rob Butler to inquire the ways in which the Board of Education could become involved in this initiative. Currently, there is no formalized group organized by the Board of Education designated to clean energy initiatives. Ms. Houlihan introduced to the commission a green energy initiative targeted at Grades K-12 known as ee-smarts. She is going to inquire further with Mr. Butler about this particular initiative.

a. Donation ceremony regarding Home Energy Solutions Outreach Campaign 2016

Ms. Houlihan was excited to announce that the campaign that ran from July 2016-December 2016 raised \$1,000 for the Ellington Fuel Bank. She invited the commission to attend a donation ceremony that will take place at the onset of the Board of Selectmen meeting on March 13, 2017, 7 PM, Town Hall Meeting Room.

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

Commissioner Nickerson suggested that the handrails on the new bridge be replaced and pressure treated to prevent weather damage.

Ms. Houlihan will meet with Bruce Dinnie, George Arthur, and Rebecca of MapGeo to finalize trail mapping. The commission discussed having physical maps in boxes at the trail site in addition to online maps.

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

Ellington has been chosen to receive a \$7,200 Farm Viability Grant to pay for consultant services to conduct a Cost of Community Services Study.

5. Report - Open Space Preservation Program: James Gage – Lead

Nothing to report.

**IV. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:**

1. FY16-17 Budget Expenditure Update: Staff – Lead

The remaining balance of the \$2,000 budget is \$1,400.

2. Approval of the January 3, 2017 regular meeting minutes.

**MOVED (ZIEFELDER) SECONDED (DWYER) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE JANUARY 3, 2017 MEETING MINUTES AS WRITTEN.**

3. Election of officers

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS WAS TABLED BY CONSENSUS TO THE NEXT CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING ON MARCH 7, 2017.**

4. Correspondence:

- a. Connecticut Land Conservation Council correspondence – membership

Ms. Houlihan informed the commission that the cost to renew the Connecticut Land Conservation Council membership is \$250. The commission supported renewal of this membership.

**MOVED (DWYER) SECONDED (GAGE) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO RENEW THE CONNECTICUT LAND CONSERVATION COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP.**

**V. ADJOURNMENT:**

**MOVED (BIDWELL) SECONDED (ZIEFELDER) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 7:58 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

Savannah Blantz, Recording Clerk