

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Apr. 8, 2019, 7:30 P.M.
MEETING ROOM B MADISON TOWN CAMPUS**

Subject to approval: Minutes of the Meeting of Apr. 8, 2019 - 7:30 p.m. - Meeting Room B - Madison Town Campus

Members present: Chairman Francis Brady, Vice Chairman Christine Bouchard, Secretary Alex Cushing, and Commissioners Heather Crawford and Richard Gedney.

Members absent: Rachel Klein.

Others present: Director of Planning and Economic Development David Anderson.

1. **Call meeting to order:** Chairman Francis Brady called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.
2. **Review and approve minutes for March 11, 2019 meeting as submitted.**

Commissioner Heather Crawford made the motion to approve the March 11, 2019 minutes as written; it was seconded by Vice Chairman Christine Bouchard and unanimously approved.

Vote to approve the March 11, 2019 minutes as written, passed, 5-0-0.

IN FAVOR: Chairman Brady, Vice Chairman Bouchard, Secretary Alex Cushing, and Commissioners Crawford and Richard Gedney.

OPPOSED: None.

ABSTAINED: None.

3. **Call for additional agenda items:** None.

4. **Natural Resources Inventory (NRI) ~ Discuss plans for the next parcel walk at Ox Pasture Sanctuary on April 20th. Ensure the Epicollect5 template is set up to display multiple entries. Discuss data quality and cloning for future walks:** Vice Chairman Bouchard shared the link to the data collection website and the Epicollect5 template, and she instructed the Conservation Commission into how it is used, stating that it is simple enough for anyone to collect data, and the commission would be interested in having those with a vested, authentic interest in Madison's natural resources to participate in using the application. For instance, Land Trust members, students, and teachers in the local school system would be ideal volunteers in the data collection efforts, according to Vice Chairman Bouchard. Conservation Commissioners visited the Mercy Center property and collected natural resource inventory data, which Chairman Bouchard incorporated into the Epicollect5 template, which consists of a series of questions and statements, such as, "What is your name?" "What is today's date?" "Identify the natural resource," and describe the features, such as whether the natural resource is being identified for cultural, historic, or geological purposes. Disturbances on site and invasive species may also be noted in the data collection efforts, according to Vice Chairman Bouchard. Once completed, participants have to save their entries and upload them. To continue working, participants would create a new entry. All questions, except the date and the participant's name, are optional, she stated. The Epicollect5 application would be overseen by the Conservation Commission, with editing responsibilities belonging to the Conservation Commission, according to Vice Chairman Bouchard. Commissioners are to visit Ox Pasture Sanctuary on April 20, 2019, at 9:30 a.m. to collect the natural resources data. Director of Planning and Economic Development David Anderson stated that if the Conservation Commission is interested in gathering natural resource data on private property, the commission must first receive
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permission from the property owner to do so; he also stated that if it is expected that a quorum of the Conservation Commission will be present on site, then there must be a public notice of the meeting, because a quorum constitutes a meeting.

5. **Project/Issue Updates:**

~ **Website Update:** Chairman Brady showed the Conservation Commission the website updates which have been made, and discussion centered on whether the commissioners are interested in any other updates to the site. A schedule of the Conservation Commission's upcoming natural resource inventory walks is now posted on the website. Commissioner Gedney stated that he would like to see alerts posted on the website, such as at the sighting of wildlife; Chairman Brady suggested seasonal alerts appear on the website. Alerts could also be used for educational purposes, such as when the horseshoe crabs arrive, according to Commissioner Crawford.

~ **Earth Day 2019: Planning discussion & resource needs.** The Conservation Commission is preparing for the Earth Day Festival. Commissioner Heather Crawford stated that she will look into whether live frogs and turtles will be available for display and educational purposes.

~ **Sustainable CT Silver Goal for Madison; discuss Conservation Commission focus areas such as Invasive Species Education and Management; prioritize and resource:** Chairman Brady stated that the Sustainable Connecticut Silver Certificate is extensive; Madison won the Bronze certificate last year. There are 200 possible efforts the town could be doing to reach silver status, according to Chairman Brady. Vice Chairman Bouchard suggested the Conservation Commission use the Epicollect 5 natural resource inventory data collection application as an effort being made for the Sustainable Connecticut Silver Certificate. Chairman Brady stated that innovation is also rewarded in the program. He showed the Conservation Commission a 2019 Master Action List, showing where the Conservation Commission could help in the Sustainable Connecticut effort: providing watershed education; developing an open space plan; and creating a natural resource and wildlife inventory. Commissioner Crawford stated that it would be a great idea if the Conservation Commission had an Epicollect5 for fireflies. Director of Planning and Economic Development David Anderson reminded the commission that there has to be appropriate documentation of the efforts, and the Conservation Commission should focus on taking credit for whatever it has accomplished. In terms of educational outreach, Commissioner Gedney stated that the Conservation Commission could prepare and distribute to local stores a card that details the hazards involved in using chemicals inappropriately for landscaping purposes. That would serve as an educational approach, Chairman Brady stated. To expedite the Sustainable Connecticut tasks, Chairman Brady stated that he would like to have a subcommittee of the Conservation Commission work with him to prioritize and identify where the Conservation Commission should focus its energies and resources; Commissioner Crawford agreed to meet with him to do so.

~ **Membership update:** The Conservation Commission has been without a full panel for at least one year, and discussion centered on meeting with the Democratic and Republican Town Committees annually to let them know what the commission does. Chairman Brady stated that he has met with the Republican Town Committee, and now he would like to see if he could be put on the agenda for the Democratic Town Committee.

~ **Summer Intern support: Update possible sources of talent.** It appears as though interns may not be available from colleges and universities, and Chairman Brady stated that interns could also be sought from the high school level. It would be good to have a long-term relationship with Daniel Hand High School, Chairman Brady stated, adding that Connecticut College does not appear to be interested in our opening.. There are plenty of projects available for interns, such as creating handouts, podcasts, mapping the Natural Resource Inventory, participating in the natural resource data collection efforts, and becoming involved in the "bring your own bag" to local stores, instead of using plastic bags, according to Chairman Brady. Director of Planning and Economic Development David Anderson suggested the

Conservation Commission reach out to Southern Connecticut State University for an intern.

6. **Adjournment**

Commissioner Crawford made the motion to adjourn at 8:47 p.m.; it was seconded by Vice Chairman Bouchard and unanimously approved.

Vote to adjourn at 8:49 p.m. passed, 5-0-0.

IN FAVOR: Chairman Brady, Vice Chairman Bouchard, Secretary Cushing, and Commissioners Crawford and Gedney.

OPPOSED: None.

ABSTAINED: None.

Respectfully submitted,
Marlene H. Kennedy, clerk