

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Feb. 11, 2019, 7:30 P.M.
MEETING ROOM B MADISON TOWN CAMPUS**

Subject to approval: Minutes of the Meeting of Feb. 11, 2019 - 7:30 p.m. - Meeting Room B - Madison Town Campus

Members present: Chairman Francis Brady, Vice Chairman Christine Bouchard, and Commissioner Heather Crawford.

Members absent: Secretary Alex Cushing, Rachel Klein, and Richard Gedney.

Others present: Director of Planning and Economic Development David Anderson

1. **Call meeting to order:** Chairman Francis Brady called the meeting to order at 7:33 p.m.
2. **Review and approve minutes for January 14, 2019 meeting as submitted.**

Vice Chairman Christine Bouchard made the motion to approve the Jan. 14, 2019 minutes, as amended, as follows: In Item 5, change "... Connecticut League of Conservation Builders website" to read ...Connecticut League of Conservation Voters website; in Item 7, change "...Co-Chairman Brady presented that Madison is supportive of the idea;" to read, ...Co-Chairman Brady presented that Madison's Chamber of Commerce is providing a program called, "Turn the Tide on Plastic;" in the item on *Earth Day 2019*, change, "The global theme for April's Earth Day in 2019 is protecting the species," to read: The global theme for April's Earth Day in 2019 is Protect Our Species. Commissioner Heather Crawford seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Vote to approve the Jan. 14, 2019 minutes, as amended, passed, 3-0-0.

IN FAVOR: Chairmen Brady, Vice Chairman Bouchard, and Commissioner Crawford.

OPPOSED: None.

ABSTAINED: None.

3. **Call for additional agenda items:** Items to be added to the agenda include Wall Street, Dark Sky, update on the membership of the Conservation Commission.
4. **Update on Conservation Commission membership:** Chairman Brady stated that the Conservation Commission has two openings available for membership; he stated he will speak to the Republican Town Committee, and Commissioner Crawford stated that she will speak to the Democratic Town Committee.
5. **2019 Budget Discussion ~ Review and approve spend areas for the coming year.** Director of Planning and Economic Development David Anderson stated that Chairman Brady has submitted a request for additional money in the budget. That request has been forwarded to town officials. Primarily, money is needed to pay for the summer intern—a minimum for expenses, but funds may also be needed for the intern's salary, according to Chairman Brady. Funds are also needed for the Earth Day Festival. Vice Chairman Bouchard stated that signs that identify the Conservation Commission and its mission would be valuable to have for the commission's public outreach programs, such as the Earth Day *Page 1. Conservation Commission, Feb. 11, 2019*

and Bauer Park festivals. Vice Chairman Bouchard and Commissioner Crawford are expected to get in touch with sign companies. Funding is also needed to distribute a brochure on the Dark Sky, Commissioner Crawford stated. Mr. Anderson stated that part of the Conservation Commission's charge is for public awareness, so it would be appropriate to develop educational materials. Vice Chairman Bouchard stated that she would like a larger map, and Mr. Anderson asked her to let him know what type of map or maps she would like, and he will work on providing one. Conservation and environmental memberships are also a part of the budget, according to Chairman Brady. Commissioner Crawford stated that when the Conservation Commission does invasive clearing, there is a need to have heavy-duty work gloves and industrial trash bags; tools for cutting and a wheelbarrow would also be great to have, Vice Chairman Bouchard stated. Commissioner Crawford stated that it would be nice to have a weed wrench. Discussion also centered on whether the Conservation Commission could advertise any of its efforts over Route 1 on a large banner, as other organizations in town do, and Mr. Anderson stated that he will look into who is responsible for allowing the banner use.

6. **Natural Resources Inventory: Discuss team's plan to evaluate the Long Shore Lane parcel.** Chairman Brady stated that the Natural Resources Inventory is one of the most important projects before the Conservation Commission. Commissioner Crawford stated that the Natural Resources Inventory has been half drafted, but it has not ever been formally approved; it includes water resources, wildlife resources, and it provides information to the town for planning purposes. Once completed, the inventory could be utilized to assist the town in determining what parcels could be developed for recreation or other uses, and what areas could be preserved. Director of Planning and Economic Development David Anderson reminded the Conservation Commission that if the commissioners plan to walk on private property to evaluate it as a natural resource, then the commissioners are required to seek permission to do so from the private property owner. Chairman Brady stated that the Conservation Commission will not be evaluating the Long Shore Lane parcel, and he asked the commissioners to give five recommendations to evaluate land for the Natural Resources Inventory. Commissioner Crawford stated that it is important for the Conservation Commission to walk the Land Trust parcels and places along the shoreline; the best time for walking would be April to May. She also suggested the Conservation Commission seek permission to walk the Mercy Center. Areas suggested to walk include: Salt Meadow, Mercy Center, two or three large parcels near Dream Lake, the Ox parcel, and Reddick. Chairman Brady stated that a decision and dates will be decided at the Conservation Commission's next meeting.

7. **Wall Street:** Chairman Brady stated that he received an email from the land use department about trees being removed from property on Wall Street, he went to the property to see that three large trees would be removed, and it was listed as a minor modification on the site. He then looked at the Planning and Zoning Commission minutes and discovered the tree removal was approved. Director of Planning and Economic Development David Anderson described the process for the minor modification application and why it went before the Planning and Zoning Commission, which did approve the request in the application. Mr. Anderson then took some time to explain to the Conservation Commission its charge and read a 2012 letter from the town attorney, which indicated that the Conservation Commission does not have a right to comment on a Planning and Zoning Commission application, without being requested to do so. The Conservation Commission's strength comes through in the creation of the Natural Resources Inventory, Mr. Anderson stated, but he did ask what type of applications the Conservation Commission would really want to become involved in for comment. Conservation Commissioners offered the following areas as priorities that they would like to review in applications: vernal pools, the shoreline, wetlands, and open space. Mr. Anderson stated that the Conservation Commission will continue to receive land use applications, so the commission can continue to be informed.

8. **Project/Issue Updates**

~ **Earth Day 2019: Planning discussion & resource needs.** Earth Day Festival is April 28, 2019, and the Conservation Commission plans to have educational materials on the Dark Sky and how lighting is harmful to the environment, plants, animals, insects, and human health. The Conservation Commission will also have educational materials on how to protect the species and plastics, according to Vice Chairman Bouchard. Sanna Stanley will be available to educate visitors about the Dark Sky.

~ **Conservation Commission's Web Site enhancement update:** Chairman Brady stated that he spoke to Rita Boland about the town website's Conservation Commission website, and he has several suggestions for improving it. It should have four sections, plants, water, earth, and animal/insect, and there will be links to assist the public, such as a link on what to do if a wildlife creature enters a backyard, according to Chairman Brady. There can also be information on environmental topics such as fertilizer runoff, he stated. He would like to have a photo contest, and the winning entries can be placed on the website.

~ **Summer Intern support: Update possible sources of talent.** Chairman Brady stated that he has sent a note to Connecticut College seeking a summer intern, and Commissioner Crawford stated that she will reach out to Wesleyan University, the University of New Haven, and the University of Connecticut.

9. **Adjournment**

Commissioner Crawford made the motion to adjourn at 8:59 p.m.; it was seconded by Vice Chairman Bouchard and unanimously approved.

Vote to adjourn at 8:59 p.m. passed, 3-0-0.

IN FAVOR: Chairman Brady, Vice Chairman Bouchard, and Commissioner Crawford.

OPPOSED: None.

ABSTAINED: None.

Respectfully submitted,
Marlene H. Kennedy, clerk