

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
June 10, 2019, 7:30 P.M.
MEETING ROOM B MADISON TOWN CAMPUS**

Subject to approval: Minutes of the Meeting of June 10, 2019 - 7:30 p.m. - Meeting Room B - Madison Town Campus

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

Members absent: Rachel Klein, Richard Gedney, and Scott Sandora.

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. and introduced the commission's new summer intern, 2019 Daniel Hand High School graduate Sarah Caso, who said she would be going to the University of California Berkeley in the fall to major in environmental science and policy. She is one of three interns who will be assisting the Conservation Commission throughout the summer.

2. **Review and approve minutes for May 13, 2019 meeting as submitted.**

Commissioner Heather Crawford made the motion to accept the May 13, 2019 minutes as submitted; it was seconded by Vice Chairman Christine Bouchard and unanimously approved.

Vote to accept the May 13, 2019 minutes as submitted, passed, 4-0-0.

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

OPPOSED: None.

ABSTAINED: None.

3. **Call for additional agenda items:** There were no additional agenda items requested, however Chairman Brady asked Director of Planning and Economic Development David Anderson why Planning and Zoning Commission applications were no longer being submitted to the Conservation Commission for its review, as has been past practice. Mr. Anderson explained that the applications have not been referred to the Conservation Commission as a practice, because the charge of the commission is to deliver a Natural Resources Inventory and that the Conservation Commission should focus on its charge, though it may, upon request, review applications and comment to the Planning and Zoning Commission. Mr. Anderson stated that the Conservation Commission has had the charge to deliver the Natural Resources Inventory to the town for the past 12 years, but it has not yet been completed. In addition, Mr. Anderson stated that seven years ago, before he came to Madison, the town attorney wrote a letter advising the Conservation Commission that applications of a large nature may be reviewed. Chairman Brady stated that he is concerned about the environmental quality on the town, if the Conservation Commission is not allowed to review the applications. Commissioner Crawford, a former Conservation Commission chairman, offered a historical perspective, stating that it was decided a long time ago that there would be a blanket request covering all applications; this resulted in the land use assistant forwarding all applications to Commissioner Crawford, who, as chairman at the time, would review them and decide which ones to call before the Conservation Commission to hear and comment upon. Mr. Anderson stated that forwarding all applications to the Conservation Commission created another layer, which really is not necessary, since the town has the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency, the
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Water Pollution Control Authority, the Health Department, and land use town officials, all of whom are required to review the applications that will go before the Planning and Zoning Commission. Reviewing all applications takes time away from the Conservation Commission's main charge, which is to complete the Natural Resources Inventory, according to Mr. Anderson. Once the Natural Resources Inventory is completed and submitted to the town, it becomes a valuable document that land use officials and the Planning and Zoning Commission can use as reference material to make decisions and to focus on critical resources that should be preserved or protected, according to Mr. Anderson. He suggested the Conservation Commission concentrate on the charge of completing the inventory and presenting it to the town, adding that it should be a print document that could also be put online, with links to Madison's layered maps and other state and national agencies that have identified natural resources in the town or along the coast. Vice Chairman Christine Bouchard stated that the Conservation Commission has done a lot of work on the Natural Resources Inventory—it made a list of Madison's 10 natural resources, assigned the topics to commissioners to write narratives, and created a 2017 timeline for completion of each task. She stated that the town of Guilford's Natural Resources Inventory is a nice one and could be used to assist in creating the Madison document. Commissioners sought Mr. Anderson's direction to finish the project, and he stated they should make the timeline, finish the narratives—two paragraphs for each, perhaps—and make it a print document, while also posting it online. As each section is completed, more could be added online, and the Natural Resources Inventory could be regularly updated, he stated. Mr. Anderson also stated he would ask the Board of Selectmen for funds, so the Conservation Commission could hire a consultant to assist in the completion of the work. Vice Chairman Bouchard stated that the commission could use its second meeting in each month to do the Natural Resources Inventory. Commissioner Crawford stated that she would get in touch with former Commissioner George McManus to have him submit his narrative.

4. **Natural Resources Inventory (NRI):**

~ **Update on the work by the Town's GIS service provider to test uploading the Epicollect5 data:** Chairman Brady stated that data the Conservation Commission submitted during its Rockland walk has been incorporated on the map by the GIS service provider. Commissioners started the data gathering at the lake and noted vernal pools, according to Chairman Brady. Director of Planning and Economic Development David Anderson stated that the Conservation Commission could carry on with the site visit and data collection work, but the commissioners should draw on that work to create the Natural Resources Inventory. It would be important to include mitigation strategies in the Natural Resources Inventory, to minimize negative environmental impacts on the natural resources, he stated. Mr. Anderson suggested the Conservation Commission review frameworks they might like to use in the final report, and then develop a strategy for completing the NRI. Chairman Brady asked whether coastal resiliency should be emphasized in the Natural Resources Inventory work, but Mr. Anderson stated that a separate committee is being formed to handle the coastal resiliency effort. The NRI has to be comprehensive for the town, Mr. Anderson stated. Agriculture, open space, geology, archeology, forests, dark sky, coastal areas, and water are included in the 10 topics selected by the Conservation Commission for the NRI. Chairman Brady suggested that Commissioner Crawford's narrative on coastal resources be reviewed at the commission's next meeting.

~ **Next walk – Confirm participation – Salt Meadow Park Saturday June 15th 9:30 a.m.:**
Three commissioners will meet for the Salt Meadow Park walk.

5. **Planning and Zoning Commission's coastal resiliency presentation summary:** No report.

6. **Conservation Commission Visit to Ryerson Elementary School 4th Grade on June 4th ~ Do we want to build on this experience?** A total of 38 fourth grade students participated in a lesson,
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wherein two bags of garbage from the beach were displayed; the program went very well, especially in showing the amount of single use plastics discarded, according to Chairman Brady. Students were asked to draw pictures using the theme, *How do our actions and choices affect the world around us?* Student artwork from the lesson is on display in the main foyer of the Town Campus.

7. **Project/Issue Updates**

~ **Intern Management plan—weekly progress reports, Conservation Commission meeting presentations and final presentation to the Board of Selectmen in August. Educational tools to be developed.** Plans are to meet with the three Conservation Commission interns every Monday at 10 a.m., throughout the summer, and a format will be followed, according to Chairman Brady, who displayed, on an electronic monitor, a calendar he created. Several projects are being proposed for the interns, such as an invasive species video, continuing input into geographic information systems and mapping, and other items that will be included in the Sustainable Connecticut initiative, according to Mr. Brady. A report of the Conservation Commission's work will be given to the Board of Selectmen in August, according to Mr. Brady.

~ **Sustainable CT Silver Goal for Madison—discuss the proposed assignment of Conservation Commission members as owners for the following programs that will be worked on by three interns.**

- Watershed Education (Sustainable CT category 2.1), assigned to Scott Sandora.
- Create a Natural Resource Inventory (Sustainable CT category 2.5), map at least eight sites, assigned to Vice Chairman Bouchard.
- Invasive Species Education & Management (Sustainable CT category 2.10) cover CT's top 5 -7 invasives, assigned to Commissioners Crawford and Rachel Klein.
- Innovation Action (Sustainable CT category 10.1): Lead idea is Single Use Plastics Education with the integration of BYO Madison efforts into Commission sponsored support. The objective of 10.1 is to create a sustainability curriculum, together with the town's schools, that encompasses, unifies, and enhances existing programs and objectives." Director of Planning and Economic Development David Anderson stated that it would be a great idea if such a curriculum could be developed and used in Madison's schools. Vice Chairman Bouchard summarized the procedure involved in creating a curriculum for use by a school district, noting that state and federal educational standards must be met in such a creation. She suggested that Chairman Brady start with the superintendent's office in bringing this educational objective forward.
- Madison Farmers' Market; feedback from the last event on June 7th, 2019: Chairman Brady stated that 12 people stopped by to express an interest in single use plastics, and another 12 stopped by to discuss invasive species. The Farmers' Market meets the first Friday of every month.

8. **Adjournment**

Commissioner Crawford made the motion to adjourn at 9 p.m.; it was seconded by Vice Chairman Bouchard and unanimously approved.

Vote to adjourn at 9 p.m. passed, 4-0-0.

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

OPPOSED: None.

ABSTAINED: None.

Respectfully submitted,
Marlene H. Kennedy, clerk