

Conservation Commission
MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF FEBRUARY 12, 2009

Present

Jane Brawerman
Michael Ennis
Katchen Coley
Ellen Lukens
David O'Brien
Karen Swartz
Kate Miller
James Fortuna

Absent

Eric Mosher
Howard Reid
Steven Ladd
Nancy Newman
Len Tunderman
Sheila Stoane

Other

Michiel Wackers, staff
Earle Roberts

A. Call to Order

Jane Brawerman called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm in Room 208.

B. Roll Call

The roll was called and a quorum was determined

C. Public Forum

Councilman Earle Roberts raised the issue of use of City Open Space for the development of an oil pipeline and the problem this precedent creates. The Commission discussed the issue and the appropriate response from the Conservation Commission. The Commission decided that feasible and prudent alternatives have not been exhausted or adequately considered. Kate Miller motioned that two letters should be written, one to the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency about concern with the proposed wetlands crossing; and, second, to the Planning and Zoning Commission about the use of City open space. The copies of the letters should be sent to the Common Council and the Mayor and a request should be made for a legal opinion from the Attorney General's office. Michael Ennis seconded and the motion was approved unanimously. Katchen Coley volunteered to read the letter at the Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Agency meeting.

D. Elections

Michael Ennis nominated Shelia Stoane for Chair and Jane Brawerman and Vice-chair for another year term. David O'Brien seconded and the motion was approve unanimously.

E. Old Business

1. Public Relations
Conservation Corner

Karen Swartz wrote an article that ran in the Chronicle and will run soon in the Middletown Press.

Katchen Coley will do the March article on a legislative update. The deadline for the Chronicle submission is February 19th.

The April article will be on Letterboxing. Karen Swartz volunteered to write the press release.

2. Open Space Status

Michael Ennis motioned to move the Commission into Executive Session. Jim Fortuna seconded and the motion was approved.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Sec. 1-200 (6)(D) discussion of the selection of a site or the lease, sale or purchase of real estate by a political subdivision of the state when publicity regarding such site, lease, sale, purchase or construction would cause a likelihood of increased price until such time as all of the property has been acquired or all proceedings or transactions concerning same have been terminated or abandoned.

David O'Brien motioned to move the Commission out of Executive Session. Karen Swartz seconded and the motion was approved.

The Commission support Matt Dodge's effort to apply for Forest and Park's grant to assist in the acquisition of the Brock Property.

F. New Business

1. Open Space Map Amendment- Merriam Property

Kate Miller motioned to support addition of Merriam property to 1993 Open Space Map. Ellen Lukens seconded and the motion was approved unanimously.

2. Bylaws

Michiel Wackers reported that the City Attorney's office determined that votes by email are not allowed by Freedom of Information statutes. Therefore a revision of the bylaws is not necessary.

G. Minutes

Jane Brawerman called for Committee to review minutes. Michael Ennis moved to approve minutes with some corrections. David O'Brien seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

H. Reports

1. Letterboxing

Kate Miller thought it would not be appropriate to promote letterboxing and not provide a stamp. If the City does not have the funds we as a Commission should do it. Karen Swartz will ask Matt Dodge for the company name that can produce a stamp from a digital file of the logo.

2. Trailsigns

Kate Miller reported that Matt Dodge will be following up with the Public Works Department on their sign production abilities.

3. Trail Guides

Shelia reported prior to the meeting via email that she would like to meet with Matt Dodge about the trail guide updating. She wanted to open up the GIS intern position up to anyone, not just a Wesleyan student. Request period updates on the progress of updating the guide.

4. Plan of Conservation and Development

Michiel Wackers reported about the new sub-committee run by Catherine Johnson and some of her initial plans about the revision process. Kate Miller will write letter explaining why there should be one Plan of Conservation and Development document.

5. Rockfall Grants

The Commission requested information on the details of the grants and the scope.

I. Correspondence

None

J. Member Forum

Karen Swartz reported a request for information about possible wind turbine sites in Middletown. If the Commission members knew any sites please let her know.

Jane Brawerman reported on the proposed parking improvements for Melilli Plaza.

Katchen Coley motioned to write a letter to express displeasure to the Public Works Chair, the Mayor and the Common Council. Kate Miller seconded and the motion was approved unanimously.

K. Adjournment

Katchen Coley motioned to adjourn at 9:50 pm. Karen Swartz seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.