



TOWN OF WATERTOWN
Conservation Commission
Administration Building
149 Main Street
WATERTOWN, MASSACHUSETTS 02472

Leo Martin, Chairperson
Maria P. Rose, Vice Chair
Charles C. Bering, Member
Patrick W. Fairbairn, Member
Jamie O'Connell, Member
Colleen Egan, Member

Telephone (617) 972-6426
Facsimile (617) 926-7778
www.watertown-ma.gov
Susan C. Jenness, Assistant

MINUTES

Meeting Date: Wednesday, January 8, 2020, 7:00 PM in the 3rd Floor Conference Room 3-3

Conservation Commission Members Present: Leo Martin, Maria Rose, Jamie O'Connell, Patrick Fairbairn, Charles C. Bering,

Absent: Colleen Egan

Also Present: Pam Phillips, Friends of Bees, Elodia Thomas, CPAC, Ben Zimmerman

Staff Present: Laurel Schwab, Conservation Agent, Susan C. Jenness, Assistant

Martin Chaired the meeting.

1. Minutes- December 4, 2019

After a brief review, a motion was made to accept the minutes of the December 4, 2019 Conservation Commission meeting.

Motion: Rose made a motion to accept the December 8, 2019 minutes. Fairbairn seconded the motion.

Vote: A unanimous vote was reached accepting the minutes of the December 8, 2019 meeting.

2. CPA Update

a. Tour of Watertown's Hidden Wetlands and Uplands

Rose reported that the Community Preservation Plan Public Forum- 1 is taking place on January 29, 2020 from 7:00 PM- 9:00 PM at Tufts Health Plan in the Mt. Auburn Rooms.

Rose said that attendees are being asked to rsvp if they are planning to attend. She said that if there is not enough of a response, there is a chance they may modify the format of the event to an open house. A snow date for the CPAC Public Forum 1 is February 6, 2020.

Rose reported that Lanae Handy, the Coordinator for the CPAC is now on staff 20 hours each week. The CPC members are continuing to work with their consultant Jen Goldson making ready to accept applications for projects in any of the 4 buckets.

The CPC has plans to make engagement with the public in the following ways to explore ways of how to use the 4 pots of CPA money for the Town.

- Holding public meetings
- Creating and distributing surveys
- Hold focus groups

Martin said he has discovered it is very important to make sure that conservation restrictions are being created and held for any open space that is acquired through CPA funding in the future. Martin and Bering agreed to work together to find out more about the requirements of conservation restrictions in the near future.

The group discussed the timing of holding a tour of Watertown's Hidden Wetlands and Uplands for CPC members and the public. It was decided that June 6, 2020 was the best time both seasonally and for many members of the CC.

The locations on the tour were listed in order of preference. The first three are definite destinations on the tour.

- Walker Pond
- Whitney Hill
- GSA Wetlands Site

Also being considered on the tour were the following.

- Gore Estate Stream
- Community Gardens

3. Agent Report

a. MVP update- Stakeholder workshops and upcoming public meeting

Schwab reported that the two stakeholder meetings which Martin also attended went very well, and said that she had received very good feedback from participants.

The categories that were explored at the sessions were the following.

Municipal Vulnerability, Infrastructure, and Socio-Economic Concerns.

Some of the data from the sessions suggested stake-holders felt that the Town should acquire additional open space, and should improve tree planting to comply with best management procedures. A plan for a regional flood study was also of interest.

A public meeting will be held on January 23rd from 6:30-8 PM at the Watertown Free Public Library in the Savings Bank Room.

Schwab said she is planning on sending out some written information to members of the CC about the outcome of the stake holder meetings.

b. Update on Exploration of Watertown becoming a Bee City USA member

Schwab and Martin joined to report their conversations with Magoon about becoming a Bee City USA member. Schwab reported he was not sure the town would be in strong enough agreement about funding the membership and crafting a Town Council Proclamation. He did say he was in agreement that the activities on the list were all positive ones.

O'Connell and Rose both discussed it might be a good idea to start working on all the requirements and activities involved and try to file a formal application in the next year or so. Their colleagues seemed to all agree.

Martin volunteered to meet with Bob Dirico to talk about inventorying spots in the Town where their group could plan to plant pollinator friendly species. He will report back to O'Connell and Schwab once he has more information to report.

Pam Phillips said that she would be happy to be in touch with Schwab to keep tabs on how things develop. O'Connell agreed that she would be happy to attend occasional meetings of Watertown for Bees, and Phillips said she would attend some Conservation Commission meetings.

Motion: Fairbairn made a motion that Rose, O'Connell and Schwab would continue to work with Friends of Bees to further consider talking about how the Watertown Conservation Commission could assist them. Bering seconded the motion.

Vote: A unanimous vote was reached accepting Fairbairn's motion.

c. Former GSA Site soil cover monitoring and maintenance summary report

Schwab reported that she had distributed the 2019 Annual Report from the GSA site to members of the commission and pointed out the issues that were of concern to Martin, Rose and to her when they toured the site back in the fall.

Martin said he had viewed the site through the fence earlier in the afternoon. He said that the Phragmites were all cut and that water was able to flow through the catch basins now.

Schwab said she would be getting in touch with Department of Conservation and Recreation to have further conversation about the site and its plan for future maintenance.

d. Arsenal Park update

Schwab reported that the Town is almost ready to get bids out for Phase 1 in the next 3 months which is in regard to the most Eastern section of the park up to the Hard Court areas.

Martin inquired about the 90% plan promised by CDM Smith and Schwab said it was forthcoming.

e. Conservation Commission new member update

Schwab reported that she said there were no new applications on file in the office of the Town Manager.

Martin said he would work on reaching out to residents who had expressed interest in applying for a seat on the Conservation Commission at the Faire on the Square

Pam Phillips who was present for this meeting also expressed she had interest in finding out more about the requirements for filing an application as well.

Motion: Bering made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:20 PM. Fairbairn seconded the motion. A unanimous vote was reached to adjourn.