

Windsor Conservation Commission

January 30, 2024 - Hybrid Meeting

Draft Minutes

Co-chair commissioner Young called the meeting to order at 7:06 p.m.

Present: L. Chayes, J. Bergeron, S. LeGendre, T. Tomcho, C. Yeich, T. Young, J. Zepperi

Absent: A. Adams, A. Beaudin, J. Henry, B. Robinson

Business Meeting

Colette motioned to approve the minutes from November 28th, 2023; seconded by Lea; accepted unanimously – 5.0.0 (Tomchi/Zepperi new members as of 1.30.2024).

Old Business

-Colette reopened the issue from the last CC meeting regarding Ayse's contact with Lenvo International hydroponics from Bloomfield. Ayse will be absent from future meetings due to scheduling conflicts and requested that a member follow up on the specifics of Lenvo hosting a workshop/forum. Tammy will contact the organization to inquire about availability, subject details, type of presentation (virtual/in person/hybrid), materials needed, etc.

-Julie B. addressed the project she proposed at a previous meeting – the installation of bird houses in Windsor Meadows State Park. The cost associated with this would be approximately \$1,500 for materials and labor (installation, maintenance, and eventual removal) from the town's DPW. Julie suggested a "go fund me page" to raise funds as well as organizing a celebration when the project is completed. Chloe mentioned that according to the Parks and Recreation director, permission would have to be granted by the state to place the birdhouses in a state park. Assuming responsibility for the work involved may be a potential problem. Chloe also mentioned that the Lions were discussing placing interactive signage on the Meadows trails and suggested a potential collaboration with the organization. She will be attending a Lions' meeting on Thursday and will promote the project and suggest Jim Daniels, head of the Windsor Lions, contact Julie. Julie will continue reporting on the project at the next meeting.

New Business

-Tammy and attending members welcomed new members Joe Zepperi and Tim Tomcho.

-Rain barrels and compost bins – Lea mentioned a supply company from North Carolina which was quoted too many months ago to recall actual prices. Enviro World (enviroworld.com) is the Canadian company that was recently in contact with Chloe (55-gallon rain barrel -50 per skid, about \$129; 50-gallon compost tumbler- 18 per pallet). As the orders increase in number, the price per barrel decreases. Lea listed the benefits of owning these two receptacles – interest, utilitarian, environmentally effective, reduce home water bill.

The DPW's help would be needed for storing and distribution. Chloe requested a broad proposal be emailed to her – could be as simple as a handout from the company selected.

How to begin the marketing campaign? Lea will contact the Windsor Locks person who headed the successful campaign in that town for specifics. Tim asked if this could be a fund raiser as well with profits being used toward other CC projects (i.e. bird houses). Chloe warned that dollars raised in this manner are problematic as profits become public monies. The CC budget is \$500 per fiscal year.

PR could include town hall posting on website, Facebook notification, neighborhood app, Windsor Journal blurb, etc. “For the next generation” should be included in the advertising, as that seems to be an effective angle. Lea will continue her mission and report for next month.

Value of Conservation to the community:

- Lea was scheduled to pen an article on plastics - plethora of info - could develop into a series.
- Get youth involved via the schools. Tammy will try to locate a liaison with the public schools and St. Gabriel's; Colette will find a contact with Loomis/Chaffee.

Colette suggested partnering with Lenvo and possibly setting up hands-on hydroponics workshops in science related classes in public and private town schools. Joe mentioned a connection with culinary arts classes as well - growing and using herbs and vegetables. Gardens could be set at home and in classrooms. Or extra-credit after-school workshops could work as well.

- Tim mentioned renewing Arbor Day celebrations. Value of trees emphasized – helps to reduce the carbon footprint and much more.

Petitions from Commissioners:

- Lea asked if Windsor had a Climate Emergency Plan like other towns. The Plan of Conservation and Development will be reviewed soon. Chloe pointed out that a Clean Energy Committee was appointed by the town council and suggested that Lea contact town hall for related information.
- Colette reminded members of the public hearing (Feb. 8 @ 2 p.m. & another at 6:30 p.m. - virtual meetings) for the proposed construction of a solar field on 445 River St. that Chloe apprised us of. Chloe informed us that for the CC to offer comments, we would have to apply for and gain approval from the Siting Council. An independent company is representing Eversource in this matter. The type of permit being sought would eliminate approval from the town TPZ and Inland Wetlands and Watercourses.

Sherwin was concerned with the proximity of residential areas to the proposed solar field. He also asked if this was a lease or purchase. A 30-yr., mixed use (grazing, pollinator, solar) lease is being proposed.

- Acres for America** – Tammy reported that there are many land preservation grants available. Chloe asked the town for priorities – 445 River Street & Birchwood Farm (she believes that development rights have been purchased) were mentioned. She suggested we begin with applying for a smaller, \$10,000 grant.

- Julie H.'s list of suggested priorities will be discussed in her presence at a future meeting.

Lea moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Joe at 8:13 p.m.
Respectfully submitted,

Colette Yeich, Secretary