

Windsor Conservation Commission
2.27.2024 Draft Minutes
Hybrid Meeting

Present: J. Bergeron, L. Chayes, J. Henry, S. Legendre, B. Robinson, T. Tomcho, C. Yeich, T. Young, J. Zepperi; ex officio, C. Thompson

Absent: A. Adams, A. Beaudin

Co-Chair Young called the meeting to order at 7:02.

Business Meeting

-Brad motioned to accept the January 30th minutes, seconded by Tammy. Passed unanimously 9.0.0

Old Business

-Rain Barrels/Compost Bins – Lea will further investigate whether a local retailer will give the commission a break on multiple orders.

-Bird House Project- Julie B. addressed the issue of birdhouse placement on the river walk in the center of town. Approximately a dozen houses are now available to hang with more being produced. Several members were concerned with cost, height, security, maintenance, placement, and species of birds attracted. Julie reported that a community group called *Rise Up Handy Services* may be of help in hanging them. Chloe asked whether Washington of Millbrook Parks were considered. The artist prefers that the bird houses be placed near the river. Julie will obtain the x-y coordinates accompanied with screen shots of the areas/trees selected to be donned with the colorful houses and send the information to Chloe. She will also review costs.

-A painting workshop with school-age children was suggested for the additional unpainted birdhouses. A celebration to elicit community engagement and awareness was also mentioned.

New Business

-Biodiversity Education - Tammy has been in contact with St. Gabriel's School and will inquire about opportunities for projects in biodiversity. Julie H. suggested a program on the importance of native plants, trees, and shrubbery. Perhaps a walk at Northwest Park identifying natives would be appropriate. Brad pointed out that this is a statewide concern as native vegetation makes our ecosystem more viable.

-Hydroponics – Tammy has been in contact with the personnel from *Levo International* and they have confirmed availability on March 26th, the date of our next Commission meeting. All commissioners agreed on holding the workshop on this date. Tammy will supply Chloe with a list of materials needed. The workshop is to be held at the Town Hall Council Chambers and run from 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. Commissioners are asked to send Chloe their thoughts on an appropriate title ASAP. Hydroponics for Homeowners, Window Gardening, Hydroponics for Any Space were several suggestions.

-Possible Forum: Conservation Scientist Consultations - tabled for next the meeting. Due to the forum scheduled for the subsequent meeting, it might be necessary to schedule a special meeting. Chloe would need ample notification to schedule it.

-PFAS – has made news recently and members will keep abreast of forthcoming information. Brad inquired as to whether monitoring of the Farmington River has continued. Colette asked about the shad and if, on Shad Derby Day, the festival rituals continued. No information on this, however, Brad pointed out that shad, which are anadromous, do not feed in the river, but swim upstream to spawn.

-Plastic Bag Recycling – local grocery stores are accepting plastic bags; however, it is not known how they are recycled.

-Grant Opportunities – Tammy volunteered to help with the process, if, for instance, we wanted to apply for monetary help with the birdhouse project. *Sustainable CT* grants are available.

d. Petitions from Commissioners – Tim reviewed the “nips” regulations. Each municipality receives 5 cents for each nip sold within its borders. The monies collected, in turn, must be used for litter reduction. A recent proposed bill in the state legislature would allow cities and towns to ban the sale of nips. Glastonbury is pushing for an ordinance banning nips if the bill becomes law. Tim suggested that the commission take a position on this and propose it to the town/state. If brought before the state as a commission, protocols would have to be adhered to in speaking for the town of Windsor. He questioned the amount that has been refunded to the town and what steps are being taken to reduce litter. Chloe pointed out how difficult it would be to effect change up against the product distributors.

-as an appropriate segue – Colette read an article from the booklet “There’s a Lot to Do in Windsor” encouraging residents to adopt an area in town to monitor and keep clean. It requires a two-year commitment and a minimum of two clean-ups per year. She suggested that this would be a good project for the commission - Tammy and others agreed. She will apply.

-Colette asked about landfill environmental clean-up. Chloe reported that remediation is in progress: dealing with erosion, iron leachate, and mitigation of phragmites.

Staff Reports

-River Street Solar project – Chloe has sent everyone the state websites related to this project.

-Condition of town ponds – Monitoring continues at Washington & Stroh Parks – water chestnut reduction & removal of invasive species.

Respectfully submitted,

Colette Yeich, Secretary