

Town of Montville Conservation Commission

Special Meeting Minutes January 15, 2019, 7:00 PM Montville Town Hall, Room 203

- Call to Order
 - Meeting of the Montville Conservation Commission called to order at 7:00 PM.
- Roll Call
 - Commissioners present: Chase, DiNoto, Crossley, Emilyya, LeClair
- Approval of Agenda
 - Commissioner Chase made a motion to approve the agenda Commissioner DiNoto seconded. The agenda was approved unanimously.
- Comments from the Public on Agenda Items
 - No comments from the public.
- Approval of Special Meeting Minutes from December 27, 2018
 - Commissioner Chase made a motion to approve the agenda, Commissioner Crossley seconded. The minutes of the December 27, 2018 Special Meeting were approved unanimously.
- Correspondence
 - The Commission reviewed correspondence received at the December 27, 2018 Special Meeting. The majority of the correspondence was out-of-date and no longer relevant to the Commission.
 - The Commission received a membership renewal letter from the Connecticut Association of Inland Wetland and Conservation Commissions (CACIWC). Annual membership for one commission is \$65.00/year and for two commissions, \$120.00/year.
 - The mission of CACIWC is “to promote the statutory responsibilities of Connecticut Conservation Commissions and Inland Wetland Commissions and to foster environmental quality through education and through the conservation and protection of wetlands and other natural resources.”
 - Membership was discussed by the Commission. Membership supports CACIWC education and outreach programs, the Annual Meeting and Environmental Conference, the publication and distribution of the newsletter The Habitat, the CACIWC.org website and CACIWC’s operational budget.
 - The Conservation Commission will consider renewing membership in CACIWC.
 - The Conservation Commission received email correspondence from the Town of Montville Finance Director. The Finance Director requested that the Commission complete a budget request for the 2019-2020 municipal budget. Commissioner

LeClair will ask the Finance Director for a timeline and the Commission will consider budget requests at its next meeting.

- Old Business
 - Discuss Opportunities for the Mostoway Property
 - Commissioner LeClair contacted the Town of Montville Parks and Recreation Director regarding the Mostoway Property planning process being undertaken by the Parks and Recreation Commission. The Parks and Recreation Director indicated that the planning process has not yet begun; and that the town is currently in the process of securing a site survey for the property. The Conservation Commission will remain in contact with the Parks and Recreation Commission as they develop a strategic plan for the site.
 - Members of the Conservation Commission expressed their continued interest in developing passive recreation opportunities at the location and noted the signification historical significance of the Mostoway Property to the Town (activities at the location date to the early 1700s).
 - Discuss Fire Street Property
 - Tabled.
- New Business
 - Discuss Montville Conservation Center Operations and Maintenance
 - The Conservation Commission members walked the Montville Conservation Center trails on their own prior to the meeting in order to assess the state current of the Conservation Center.
 - Conservation Commissioner observations of the Conservation Center:
 - The trails are flooded in multiple locations, and in many cases impassable. It is possible that the wetlands on the property have been blocked, leading to flooding. Additionally the town has experienced many frequent rainstorms as of late. The cause of the flooding should be determined, and remedied if possible. Possible solutions might include clearing obstructions to waterways, construction of boardwalks, other. If any obstructions to the wetlands appear to be manmade, the Commission may notify the Inland Wetlands Commission to address any potential violations.
 - The parking lot would benefit from upkeep. There is a dead tree limb precariously located above the parking lot. The site could be improved by resurfacing, lighting, and the placement of a trash receptacle.
 - In the parking area there is a map of the site. It is not clear if the map accurately represents location of trails. The trail map should be ground-truthed, and the trails should be marked to be able to locate on the map. The Commission may investigate the possibility of creating a trail that leads to the playground at Fair Oaks. The map is behind a piece of broken glass or plexiglass. This should be fixed. Additionally, the sign could be modified into a welcome area of sorts, with a sign-in book, perhaps information on the site (information on the environment, etc.). The map depicts ruins on

the property. It is believed that these ruins are just a modern house foundation. This should be determined, and the sign should be modified if needed.

- The Commission will ask the Department Public Works if they can remove some blockages to the stream, if they have any secondary millings available to resurface parking lot (and possibly trails), if they can fix the sign, if a trash barrel can be located and maintained in the parking lot, and if the dead tree limb located directly above the parking lot can be removed. Additionally, the Commission will ask the Department if we as a Commission are allowed to do any maintenance on the trails.
 - The Conservation Commission would like to improve the Conservation Center. At the next meeting of the Conservation Commission, Commissioners will begin to outline a site plan for improvements and maintenance. The Commission will also begin to identify groups in the community that might be interested in service projects and/or learning opportunities at the Conservation Center.
 - The Commission would like to restore and improve the site to serve as a community resource. When the site is ready, the Commission may put trail information on the Commission website and possibly in the Montville Community Booklet. The Commission would like to engage youth organizations in the ongoing maintenance and improvement of the site.
- Review Open Space Maps for The Town of Montville
 - Commissioner DiNoto brought a map of the Town's Open Space from the Town of Montville Planning Department. The Commission will request additional maps printed in color to identify the different types of open space.
 - One objective of the Conservation Commission is to keep an index of all open space areas, publicly or privately owned for the purpose of obtaining information on the proper use of such areas and may recommend programs for the development and use of such areas. The Commission will request of the Planning Department a detailed list of the open space parcels and their attributes that are depicted in the open space map.
 - Commissioners reviewed an open space inventory template that was developed as a part of Sustainable CT, a statewide municipal certification program intended to promote sustainability at the local level. Within the program there is an open space planning action (2.4 Develop an Open Space Plan) that includes a detailed inventory that defines several important attributes for open space, notably including primary use and protection status. The Conservation Commission would like to populate this template with existing open space parcel data and identify any areas where additional research is needed for parcels in order to better understand the status of open space conservation in the Town.
 - Review the Conservation Commission Web Presence on the Town's Website

- The Commission reviewed the content of the Conservation Commission page on the Town’s website. The Commission would like to add Commissioner roles to the page, and will contact the Town of Montville Information Technology Department.
 - In the future, the Commission will consider adding additional materials to the website, such as information about the Montville Conservation Center and possibly educational/informational resources that relate to conservation.
 - Plan of Conservation and Development – Status Update
 - The Planning Department will be contacting commissions in the upcoming months as they prepare the Plan of Conservation and Development update.
 - The Conservation Commission reviewed a proposed trail for Camp Oakdale in the 2010 POCD (p. 50-51). The Commission will inquire about the status of the trail plan with the Town Planning Department.
- Comments from the Public
 - The Connecticut Bar Association is offering an upcoming workshop, “CT Land Use Law for Municipal Land Use Agencies, Boards, and Commissions,” on March 23, 2019, 8:30-4:30 PM, Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT. Additional information, including registration, can be found here: <https://www.ctbar.org/events-education/events/event/2019/03/23/default-calendar/ct-land-use-law-for-municipal-land-use-agencies-boards-and-commissions-spz190323-1182499>.
 - A member of the public commented that violations of wetlands laws should be pointed out to the Inland Wetlands Commission.
- Comments from Municipal Liaison
 - None.
- Comments from Commissioners
 - Commissioner DiNoto will ask Councilman McNally if the Commission can fundraise.
 - The Commission would like to maintain close contact with the Parks and Recreation Commission as they begin to undertake planning for the Mostoway Property.
- Adjourn
 - Commissioner Chase made a motion to adjourn, and Commissioner Crossley seconded. The Special Meeting of the Conservation Commission adjourned at 8:34 PM.