

Town of Montville
Conservation Commission

Meeting Minutes
August 6, 2024, 6:00 PM
Room 102 – Town Hall

- 1) Call to Order- 5:57 p.m.
- 2) Pledge of Allegiance
- 3) Roll Call -Chair John Guetens, Secretary Bonnie Bacon, Commissioner Adam Heckle, Alternate Commissioner Elaine Hess, and Town Council Liaison Nick Sabilia were present. Also present were Mayor Lenny Bunnell, Town Council Chair Tim May, and Planning Director Matthew Davis.
- 4) Presentations - Open Space planning discussion led by Matthew Davis, Planning Director. Director Davis discusses his office's function in overseeing boards, permitting, and coordinating between different interests. He named members of his staff and discussed some projects underway. No slides were used. He recommended that the Conservation Commission update the inventory of open space, currently represented in map form, to create a list with more details about the properties. Town Council Chair May and Commissioner Heckle noted during discussion that the conservation center is town land but is not designated for conservation use. Director Davis also advised that the Conservation Commission should look at what other towns have in their plans of conservation and development, and should set priorities and goals regarding acquisition of land; for instance, land that supports native species or biodiversity.
- 5) Comments from the Public on Agenda Items -none
- 6) Approval of Meeting Minutes from July 2, 2024-Chair Guetens requested a motion to approve. Secretary Bacon made a motion to approve, Commissioner Heckle seconded, and it was approved unanimously.
- 7) Communications-none
- 8) Old Business Agenda
 - a) Garden club update-Commissioner Heckle cleared the Welcome to Montville sign on Route 32 near the bottom of Fitch Hill Rd. He is waiting for the additional entrance signs for the Conservation Center and is considering plantings at the signs. He will be talking with the Parks and Rec Commission regarding their recommendations for sites for gardens.
 - b) Website update-none
 - c) Conservation Center- updates on previous items from July 2 2024 meeting- Chair Guetens and Commissioner Heckle are in the process of selecting trees and putting up

some tree tags to identify trees in the Conservation Center. Chair Guetens suggested that Commissioner Heckle may consider selecting trees at Horton Cove for tagging also. Dog waste station and signs appear to have arrived at the Department of Public Works. Chair Guetens will work with them to get these installed.

- i. Plexiglass replacement - Chair Guetens obtained an estimate of \$375 for a new sign similar to one used at Burnham Tavern Trails. This sign could replace the map that is in the kiosk with broken (likely vandalized) plexiglass.
- ii. Water testing- Chair Guetens will consult with UConn Ag extension service and also develop a schedule to test the pond and river water annually.
- iii. Planning/timing for managing beech tree die off -Commissioner Heckle has been planning where (which trees) to begin cutting and clearing, and has gathered information on soil types to develop a plan for replanting the areas that must be cleared. There was discussion regarding what to do with the cut trees, which may be chipped on site or brought to the transfer station to be chipped.

9) New Business Agenda

- a) Conservation Center new issue - Erosion on pathways – The following solutions to the erosion areas on the orange trail were discussed: check dams, wooden steps/terraces, mulch/wood chips.

10) Comments from the Public – Town Council Chair May suggested that SCRRRA be invited to a Conservation Commission meeting to talk about waste management and recycling issues and initiatives in Southeastern Connecticut.

11) Comments from Town Council Liaison -Town Councilor Sabilia thanked Director Davis for attending the meeting and noted that the Conservation Commission will be working with the Planning Department.

12) Comments from Commissioners -Commissioner Hess provided UConn ext Master Gardener program pamphlets, which she had reviewed and found useful. She expressed interest in further talks on native plants and invasives.

13) Adjourn -8:20 p.m.