

Conservation Commission Regular Meeting March 10, 2016

The meeting opened at 7:10 with the following in attendance:

MEMBERS:

Melissa Leonard
Jimmy Ayash
Christine Yannielli
Shagufta Zahid
Felipe Flores
Brian Vaughn
Robin Bennett
Jim Dunn

OTHERS:

Len Yannielli

1. Welcomed new members, Robin Bennett and Jim Dunn. Michael Turman has decided to resign from the commission. Jim Dunn has agreed to take his place as a regular member once approved by the Board of Mayor and Burgesses.
2. **VOTED** unanimously on a motion by Jim Dunn and seconded by Shagufta Zahid to **APPROVE** the minutes of last meeting on 2/11/2016.
3. Public Comment: Len Yannielli discussed a recent meeting the Wingman project from Sandy Hook and several members of the Committee for a Cultural / Environmental Center at Gunntown Road. The Wingman project recommended several changes to the park, including building a butterfly garden with a plastic trellis and installing and painting bird houses. The Park Commission subsequently approved the request with several provisions. Mr. Yannielli asked the commission to send a letter to the Park Commission requesting that they notify the Conservation Commission when any work is to be done at the GPPNP since it is a unique area and the only passive park and nature preserve in the Borough.
5. Discussion: The State plan for the preservation of open space as it relates to Naugatuck. Shagufta will invite the Town Planner, Sue Goggin, to our next meeting to begin a conversation with this commission on our goals for preserving open space.

Old Business

1. Discussion: What members would like this commission to accomplish and what its mission should be. Suggestions for goals included changing the restriction on the Gunntown Passive Park property from 25 years to perpetuity, preserving and labeling borough scenic views, asking the Garden Club for information on invasive plants with the thought of encouraging residents to plant native plants instead, recognizing companies that are good stewards of their property, encouraging more businesses to participate in the Adopt a Spot program. The duties and powers of the commission listed in the commission's charter were discussed.
2. **VOTED** unanimously on a motion by Felipe Flores and seconded by Jim Dunn to keep the meeting time to 90 minutes with the understanding that we have the flexibility to go beyond this.
3. **VOTED** unanimously on a motion by Christine Yannielli and seconded by Jim Dunn to prepare a letter to the Park Commission requesting that they consider the Conservation Commission's input, especially regarding the butterfly garden and the painted bird houses at Gunntown Passive Park and Nature Preserve. Both projects are not consistent with the definition of a passive park.
4. Discussion of fracking concerns were tabled to the next meeting.

5. Discussion: Purchase of the historic building adjacent to the Gunntown Passive Park and Nature Preserve. There may be a grant may be available that could pay for a portion of the price, any proposal would need to be cost neutral.
6. Discussion: Drain labeling. The Street Dept. already has plaques or labels for drains and has been notified that the commission would like to help with this project. A suggestion was made to send a letter to new borough residents regarding the need to keep street drains clear and not to pour oils / pesticides / etc down the drains. Shagufta agreed to draft this letter.
7. It was suggested that all members of this commission read the Naugatuck Conservation and Development plan.
8. For our next meeting we will each research and make suggestions for the definition that the commission will use for "passive/active open/recreational space".

Our next meeting will be on April 14th at 7⁰⁰ a.m.

ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 9:10 PM