

Conservation Commission Regular Meeting May 12, 2016

The meeting opened at 7:07 PM with the following in attendance:

MEMBERS:

Jimmy Ayash
Christine Yannielli
Shagufta Zahid
Felipe Flores
Brian Vaugh

OTHERS:

1. Call the meeting to order and pledge of allegiance.
2. VOTED unanimously on a motion to **APPROVE** the minutes of the last meeting of 4/14/16.

New Business

1. Jimmy Ayash announced the resignation of Jim Dunn
2. Melissa Leonard arranged spokesperson from Eversource for June CC meeting.
3. Discussion May Park Commission Meeting :
Melissa Leonard and Len and Christine Yannielli were present. Christine spoke about 1.) the purpose of the CC's (tentative) Mission statement. 2.) the powers and duties that the CC is responsible for especially matters impacting open space. 3.) communication between the Park commission and CC. 4.) understanding what passive space means. 5.) the sensitivity of the Gunntown Passive Park and Nature Preserve (GPPNP). 6.) the various activities taking place on the GPPNP. 7.) educating the public about what is appropriate activities and usage of GPPNP. Len Yannielli spoke about the inappropriateness of BBQ picnics on GPPNP. Recommended Hop Brook Park where there are picnic table, baseball and soccer fields, bathrooms, water, parking, swimming. Also, he mentioned the hayride event is not appropriate for GPPNP. This land is too wet, haywagons, in the past, have gotten stuck. He talked about diversity of passive and open space and diversity of activities on these parcels of land such as the river walk, dog park, bridal trail, athletic fields, land trust, GPPNP, Naugatuck state Forest and High Rock state Park. Melissa Leonard explained that people have always wanted to know how the GPPNP was going to be "used" and that simply leaving open space in its natural state is a "use" for it. It is a Preserve. It is a natural area for wildlife and plant habitat for people to enjoy and experience. Solitude, reflections, meditations, quietness are some activities people can discover outside at GPPNP. Christine reported that the Park Commission voted no to the BBQ picnic and haywagon ride at the GPPNP.
4. Discussion of May Burgess Board Meeting:
Brian Vaugh and Len Yannielli were present. Brian mentioned someone at the Earth Day Mayor event talked about solar panels for the town, placement on Hunter's Mtn. Mayor stated he was interested. Len Yannielli supported Brian on Solar Energy idea. He talked about active and passive parks and the importance of delineation and difference between the two.

Old Business

1. Naugatuck River Festival. Shagufta Zahid 1.) visualized a banner that states Naugatuck Conservation Commission for next event (Earth Day June 5) 2.) Interested people signed up for Friends of the CC group. She put stars after names of interested people. This sign-up sheet was given to Melissa Leonard. 3.) Introduce people to the Naugatuck CC and (tentative) Mission statement. Felipe Flores commented that it was great to encourage interested people to be alternates for the CC. Christine Yannielli invited Shagufta and Melissa to her house Friday before

- the River Festival to contribute displayed information about conservation. Taped on a display board were articles on conservation, photos, (tentative) mission statement, powers and duties as well as some handouts, information articles, and pamphlets. This material will be available for the Earth Day Event June 5th. Brian Vaugh noticed that groups knew one another from past events. He mentioned that kayak rides were available to the public from Platts Mills to Beacon Falls for \$4.00
2. Discussion on Naugatuck Earth Day Celebration Sunday June 5th. Jimmy Ayash has blow up balloons to give to children and can get a vendor tent for the CC table, if needed. He suggested to e-mail or call for scheduling CC people on this day and to use the Tri-display board for the event. A question about the cost of space for the event was asked.
 3. Discussion on Fracking Wastes. Christine Yannielli left message with knowledgeable Sierra Organizer and educator on fracking wastes, scheduling a public meeting in Naugatuck for an informational program concerning fracking wastes and banning this in Naugatuck. Waiting to hear back. Felipe Flores mentioned that this discussion on fracking wastes be set up for a CC meeting, inviting the public, board of burgesses, mayor. Jimmy Ayash suggested a 1-2 page report prohibiting the storage, disposal or use of fracking wastes and presenting this information to the board of burgess and mayor at their monthly meeting.
 4. Discussion on visiting open spaces. Shagufta Zahid talked about the walk to Apple Estate Hills on Osborne Rd (Mulberry St side) We viewed reservoir, Pygmy blue butterflies, mourning Clark butterflies, Canada mayflowers, trout lilies, multi-flower rose. Picked up trash along the roadside. There were suggestions of walks in High Rock Park, Fawn Meadow. Brian Vaugh is open to the idea of hiking trails. Jimmy Ayash suggested e-mail the group about where, time and what hikes scheduled for anyone who is interested.

Roundtable Discussion

1. Brian Vaugh, Len Yannielli, Felipe Flores walked the Spruce Brook Trail in Naugatuck State Forest. Followed painted marks on trees took 2-3 hours. Shagufta mentioned raising money to use the area for paint ball activities bringing money into the town. Felipe mentioned there is a diversity of natural and beautiful trails in town. The CC could help in reviving these trails. The CC could take a lead to compile lists and maps of open/passive space. He mentioned that the CC should be an important agency for the town. An important question to ask is, "How can the CC help?". His suggestions are
 - 1.) Environment/ecology preservation and protection can be talked about at other agency meetings.
 - 2.) Suggestion of conservation ideas. Shared/connected with other agencies.
 - 3.) CC be part of Naugatuck Emergency Advisory Council and be a part of decision making for emergencies when dealing with environmental disasters.
 - 4.) CC be part of inland/wetland decisions about flooding.
 - 5.) CC be in touch with water quality.
2. Brian Vaugh mentioned that the CC should take an interest in focusing on wetlands and street flooding. He is interested in going to other agency meetings and being alert and attentive to their thinking. He suggested that Kevin Zak's video on the Naugatuck River and its environment should be viewed by many. Kevin Zak is an expert and knowledgeable river representative.
3. Shagufta brought attention to littering of yellow phone books that fall at the doorsteps of businesses and houses. She said that these items do not get picked up and are environmental hazards. She has an idea to create a program by CC to clean up and remove these extra yellow phone books.
4. Christine Yannielli mentioned that additional remnants of land owned by the town of Naugatuck includes property on top of Conrad street, on the West side of town, and off of Millville Ave. They might be used for Community gardens or passive space/parklet for elderly to enjoy. This property was owned by the CT Water Company and was given to the town of Naugatuck. CC could get involved in use of this land.

Next meeting will be on June 9th at 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT: Meeting adjourned at 8:42 PM.