

MINUTES
Conservation Commission Regular Meeting
January 5, 2022, 7:00 p.m.
Room 135, Town Hall, 100 Pocono Road, Brookfield, CT 06804

1. Call to Order

Chair J. Bronn called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Chair J. Bronn, Vice Chair J. Blick, Regular Member C. DePoi, Regular Member M. Carmody and Regular Member T. Cappiello

Also Present: Conservation Director A. Dew, Zoning Enforcement Officer F. Lollie, Recording Secretary A. Kennedy

Absent: Alternate Member A. Schutte-Bell, Alternate Member M. Dew and Alternate Member R. Blessey

2. Minutes from Previous Meeting

- December 1, 2021

Vice Chair J. Blick made a motion to approve the minutes from 12/1/21. M. Carmody seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

3. Guest and Public Comment

4. Correspondence

Chair J. Bronn discussed correspondence received from Paul Alconan from Northwest Conservation about a volunteer for an intern project for the Town, to GPS all the trails in Town and update the Town's maps.

Chairman J. Bronn discussed correspondence received from M. Dew regarding projects at the Gurski rental house by Steve Turco.

Chairman J. Bronn made a motion to approve the estimate and work to be done by Steve Turco, Inc. to replace the shingles on the front side of the Gurski Homestead rental house in the amount of \$4,975. T. Cappiello seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

5. Treasurer's Report

Chair J. Bronn said he has the year-to-date budget report, on which they are in the red. He discussed the invoicing for the paving. WEO A. Dew discussed the different categories within the budget and asked to what categories the Committee wanted

different costs to be assigned. Chair J. Bronn read WEO A. Dew's note aloud for the Committee, which offered suggestions for the budget.

6. Old Business

A. Invasive Plant Removal Project

Chair J. Bronn said A. Schutte-Bell has been in touch with Sustainable CT, and she recently attended a meeting with them. He noted in the last meeting's discussion on the topic of invasive plant removal project they decided to start with Eriksen, and he is in the process of trying to get another expert. Chair J. Bronn said he spoke with Betsy Corrigan from Northwest Conservation District, and was supposed to send her a GIS map of the property. He said that she can't do an invasives survey until they grow in, which is a problem, as they wanted to start sooner rather than later. Chair J. Bronn read from plan submitted by T. Schaeffer.

C. DePoi discussed a small portion of the field near the Giving Garden to use as a pollinator perennial garden, and even put a bench out there. She said even if it is mowed, the public will see they are trying to keep the pollinators happy while they are doing this. Vice Chair J. Blick asked if the Conservation Committee ever worked with the garden club for plantings. The Committee discussed previous communications with the Garden Club.

Chair J. Bronn suggested going out in early spring to section off areas where they could try this project.

7. New Business

A. Rental Properties

Chair J. Bronn said he made a presentation to the Board of Selectmen about the rental properties, and they asked about rents and appraisals. He said per WEO A. Dew's suggestion, he mentioned that the tenant at the Brookfield Nature Center may be interested in managing the properties for either a fee or reduced rent. WEO A. Dew said F. Lollie has also volunteered to help with that as needed.

B. Treasury Transparency

Vice Chair J. Blick discussed the need for a good accounting of the books for the Committee, and therefore the need for a treasurer. Chair J. Bronn asked if Land Use could email the budget along with the agenda monthly.

C. Educating the Public

Chair J. Bronn discussed A. Schutte-Bell's idea of educating the public through the library about invasive plant species. Vice Chair J. Blick said they started the Facebook page and it is very popular.

D. Conservation Goals for 2022

WEO A. Dew said WESTCOG has been working on an open space inventory and they are now looking for information on properties within flood plains. She said this ties back to Sustainable CT because if you identify flood plains and properties sometimes you can get FEMA discounts on flood insurance for residents. WEO A. Dew said she and C. Murphy have been looking at this and they have to talk to WESTCOG about exactly what information they want and how to get it to them. She offered to send the information to Chair J. Bronn.

M. Carmody discussed the barn quilt. Chair J. Bronn said it is completed and he has been trying to find out about getting it hung. M. Carmody discussed additional quilts going forward.

Vice Chair J. Blick discussed more publicity for the Committee and educating the public.

C. DePoi discussed getting Eriksen on the pollinator pathway and more walking areas in the new school property.

T. Cappiello discussed the opportunity to connect open spaces within Town with safe passage corridors. WEO A. Dew said that was part of the POCD. He said they should review the plan and identify one or two things to make a priority.

Chair J. Bronn said he would like to see the barn quilt hung, taking action on the invasives, and another Trail Day event, which could be more publicized, etc.

8. Tabled Items

Vice Chair J. Blick asked if the Town looked at the boat launch at Lillinonah Woods yet, and WEO A. Dew said she doesn't think so, but she mentioned it to Parks & Rec.

Chair J. Bronn asked if there was any update on the purchase of the property adjacent to Old Bridge. WEO A. Dew said the owner has gone silent, and said she had mentioned family issues and asked WEO A. Dew not to contact her.

Chair J. Bronn thanked WEO A. Dew for all her hard work over the years and what a big loss it will be to the Town with her moving on. She said it has been a pleasure working with everyone and said maybe someday she will join as a member of the Committee as a resident. Chair J. Bronn said when he first joined the Committee, WEO A. Dew was very welcoming and helpful.

9. Adjournment

Chair J. Bronn made a motion to adjourn at 7:58 p.m. Vice Chair J. Blick seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.