

**Conservation Commission Special Meeting
Town Hall Meeting Room
January 11, 2018**

Minutes

(note regular meeting of January 4, 2018 canceled due to snow)

Attendance:

Members present: Eric Brower, Sue Baker, Nancy Dickinson, Gary Silberberg, Urling Searle, Skip Parker, and Laura di Bonaventura.

Staff present: Denise Savageau, Sarah Nahabedian, and Aleksandra Moch

Audience Present: n/a

Commission Discussion Session – 2:00 p.m.

Meeting called to order at 2:20 p.m. by Brower

1. **Seating of Alternates:** Parker seated for Rutherford, di Bonaventura seated for Henrey.
2. **Review and approval of minutes** for December 7, 2017 regular meeting: A motion was made by Silberberg and seconded by Searle to approve the minutes as presented. Motion carried unanimously.
3. **Chairman's Report:** was not provided

Laura di Bonaventura arrived to the meeting introducing herself as a new Conservation Commission alternate member. She is currently holding a position as the Director of Sustainability at The Greenwich Country Day School and had previously served on the BOS Environmental Task Force.

4. Staff Report

a. **Administration**

- i. **FY2019 Budget:** Savageau stated that the budget was submitted and it will be presented at the upcoming BET meeting on January 29th. With changes to the BET, hopeful that there will be support for upgrading the part-time position to full-time as the Conservation Commission's budget requests. Savageau encouraged the members to attend the BET meeting and express their support.

b. **Water supply**

- i. **Update on water supply and conservation restrictions:** Savageau reported that the reservoirs are only 43% full. There is heavy rain in the forecast, which would partially restore the water levels in the reservoirs, but due to the frozen

soil, the ground water would receive very little or no replenishment. Savageau will be meeting meet with USGS regarding updating the ground water study done in 2002. The update may potentially include an expansion of the surveyed areas to include the neighboring towns which are part of the Greenwich Water System.

c. POCD update

- i. Meeting for commissions – 1/17/2018 – 2:30 - 4:pm: Savageau reported that she met with the consulting group hired for drafting the new POCD. Even though they are from Chicago, they have demonstrated an extensive knowledge of the area and the local issues. They will be conducting several public meetings listening to the public and collecting information. The meeting on January 17th is designed primarily for various commissions. This is just the beginning of a year-long process. Savageau encouraged as many Conservation Commission members to attend as possible.

5. Old Business

- a. **Fracking Waste Ordinance:** Savageau handed out a summary of the previously discussed issues regarding the proposed ordinance. She also summarized the findings of the RTM Land Use Committee which extensively researched the topic. EPA does not classify the byproduct of fracking operation as hazardous; therefore, they could be legally used for dust control, winter road conditioning, etc. The proposed House Bill 6329 was not voted on; therefore, there is no ban on using these wastes in CT. It is likely that this will be postponed at the January RTM and will come to the full RTM in March for a vote.

The following motion was made Baker and seconded by Parker:

Upon review of the extensive research provided by the RTM subcommittee and given that the CT General Assembly did not pass HB 6329, the Conservation Commission supports the banning of waste for oil and natural gas extraction that is currently before the RTM.

Motion carried unanimously.

- b. **Plastic Bag Ban:** Savageau stated that the proposal was generally well received at the several RTM committees. There is some resistance from people who reuse the grocery bags for trash containment. Searle went to the RTM district meeting in Cos Cob to present the ordinance. She will also attend RTM district meeting in Old Greenwich. Savageau announced that BYO will sponsor the movie night “Bag It: Is Your Life Too Plastic?” at Greenwich Library, Cole Auditorium at 6:30 pm on January 25th. They expect to bring this to the full RTM in March.

c. **Workshop – Sustainable CT program – Sustainable Greenwich**

Savageau stated that the Greenwich Board of Selectmen voted on December 18, 2017 for Greenwich to join the Sustainable Connecticut initiatives. Greenwich was the 4th community to register with the program. This named the Conservation Commission as the lead agency for the Town. Savageau provide an overview of the program which provides a road map for municipalities to become more engaged in sustainability efforts. In Greenwich, this brings together many programs we are already working on. Through a long list of best management practices and actions, the goal of this initiative is to achieve more sustainable communities targeting transportation, infrastructure, public services, planning, land and natural resources, local economics, housing, vibrant and creative cultural ecosystems. There are several steps that need to be taken in order to achieve the bronze or silver certification. This program will require a strong public/private partnership and several groups of volunteers to collaborate on tasks which will lead to the successful program implementation. The Sustainable Greenwich Facilitated workshop scheduled for January 24th from 9-12 noon will initiate the efforts and provide the proper structure for the groups to work together.

The following members volunteered to be on the Sustainable Greenwich Steering Committee. Searling, di Bonaventura, Silberberg, and Dickinson. Savageau indicated that Henrey is also interested. Rutherford will make the final appointments to the committee.

6. Adjournment

A motion was made by Baker and seconded by Silberberg to adjourn the meeting. The motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 4:03 p.m.

Submitted by,

Aleksandra Moch
Environmental Analyst