

Branford Conservation and Environment Commission  
P.O. Box 150  
Branford Town Hall  
Branford, Connecticut

## ***MEETING***

## ***MINUTES***

**WEDNESDAY, March 5, 2025**

**Branford Community Center, 30-48 Church St., [2<sup>nd</sup> floor Conference Room](#)**

**7:30 p.m.**

**or via Zoom with the link below if unable to attend in person.**

Commissioners Present: Heather Wells Sweeney, Patrick Sweeney, Neil Goodlad,  
Lauren Ruotolo, Carol Kaminsky, Karyl Lee Hall, Joshua Greenberg,  
Karen Hannon,

Commissioners Absent: C. Day , Karyl Lee Hall

1. Approval of minutes:

A. January 8, 2025

C.Kaminsky made a motion to approve the minutes as written.

J.Greenberg seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

B. February 11, 2025

C.Kaminsky made a motion to approve the minutes with the edits discussed.

P. Sweeney seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

2. Correspondence and Announcements:

A. Jim Finch re: next year's budget

Chairperson Sweeney noted she received an email from the Finance Dept and they are submitting a budget for this commission that is the same as last year.

B. Letter submitted to CGA in support of HB re: restricting neonics

Chairperson Sweeney noted they submitted a letter and N. Goodlad Commented that there were a lot of responses posted on the Facebook page. L. Ruotolo added a few comments.

C. BHS Volunteer Fair

Chairperson Sweeney did reply to the invitation we received to the fair. She asked them to keep us on the list for next year.

D. Larry Albert

Chairperson Sweeney reminded the commission this is the man who sent them an email about the cutting along the Tabor Trail. They asked the

man to identify exactly the location he was talking about. He replied back with 4 photos which were displayed for the commission. The commission discussed this briefly and the consensus was that Chair Sweeney would contact public works dept. to get more information.

E. Eric Lepeak

Chairperson Sweeney set up a meeting with him , he is the man who authored the Ecology Park Plan. She will report back to the commission after the meeting.

F. Protecting Coastal Birds training

Chairperson Sweeney said she received an email from the upcoming Seabirds and Shore Birds Seminar. Karon Hannon will attend and report back to the commission.

Chairperson Hannon said after the commission submitted the letter supporting house bill restricting rodenticides, it then went to the senate. It was combined with the second generation ,anticoagulant rodenticides as well as info about climate. She sent a letter on her personal behalf. She didn't feel the commission had enough time to review the information and be well enough informed to send a letter. She wasn't sure if the commission could comment on just a portion of the bill. She asked for someone to reach out to their legislators to find out. The wording of the bill is very lengthy and complicated. Chairperson Sweeney said she would send an email to the group with email addresses if they wanted to comment as an individual.

3. Previous Business:

A. Rodenticides

B. Tree Give-away with Community Forest Commission

Chairperson Sweeney noted that the Forest Commission is looking at 2 potential dates for the tree giveaway, either April 26<sup>th</sup> or May 17<sup>th</sup>. Ivy from the Forest Commission is asking for volunteers to help distribute the trees. Chair Sweeney will report back at the next meeting if a date has been determined.

4. Budget:

A. Fiscal year 2024/25 - year to date

Chairperson Sweeney noted that there has been no additional spending since last month.

5. Continuing Business:

A. Permits for coastal projects

None

B. Proposed developments and other building projects

None

C. Invasive plant control

P. Sweeney said he had a meeting scheduled with Lauren Brown, but they had to cancel. A new meeting date has been set for March 27, 2025. Chairperson Sweeney asked when a date for a workday has been set, please let Neil Goodlad and Lauren know so they can post it to the various platforms.

D. Pollinator Pathway

Chairperson Sweeney said she has a few ideas and wanted to brainstorm with the group how they want to work on this. She suggested maybe having a special meeting to discuss this or maybe forming a subcommittee to work on it. An idea that was talked about previously was to invite Victor Damasi to come and speak. His fee is \$150.00 for about 45 to 60 minutes, regardless of the day of the week. Lauren also suggested Doug Tallamy's talk. Perhaps we can put together a lecture series? She asked the group for comments. They had a brief discussion and exchanged ideas and suggestions. The final consensus was that they would try to set a date to meet again in about 3 weeks. Chairperson Sweeney will email the group. Patrick Sweeney volunteered to reach out to the Pollinator Pathway organization or look on the website for further suggestions. He also said he sent out 4 emails to various depts. Asking about their use of pesticides. More info to come. He is awaiting replies.

E. Natural Resource Inventory

Chairperson Sweeney and Lauren Ruotolo plan to meet this month. More information to follow.

F. Earth Day

i. Litter Clean-up Date?

Chairperson Sweeney noted that the clean up day is 4-26-25. She asked for volunteers to help work on this. Neil Goodlad and Joshua Greenberg volunteered. Carol Kaminsky offered to help remotely.

ii. Subcommittee?

G. Branford Festival

This will be discussed at the next meeting.

H. Crabbing Bridge (Guilford)

Nothing to discuss since Karyl Lee is absent/

I. Farm River coalition

i. Water Quality Symposium Mar 19 3-6 North Branford Library

Chairperson Sweeney encouraged the commission to attend.

J. Pilot Forest Stewardship Plan

This item will be discussed at the next meeting.

6. Reports:

A. Select Committee for Open Space Acquisition- Nothing was discussed

B. Library books donations – Invoices were submitted to Finance Dept.

C. Spill reports- None

- D. Contaminated sites - None
- E. Coastal Resiliency Plan- Nothing was discussed
- F. Cross-commission meeting- Nothing was discussed
- G. Highlights from the SALT conference from Carol and Karen –  
This was an error and should not have been on agenda.

7. Other:

- A. Tweed Airport Expansion- Nothing was discussed. No updates received from Karyl Lee Hall.
- B. The school district is working on a master plan. The survey is online. They are asking for public comment.
- C. The Main Street Reconstruction Plan- The plan is on the town website.  
This can be discussed at the next meeting.

8. Adjournment- meeting ended at 8:13 pm.