

**Branford Conservation and Environment  
Commission**

P.O. Box 150  
Branford Town Hall  
Branford, Connecticut

***MINUTES***

**Special Meeting *Thursday, April 4,*  
2024 Joseph Trapasso Community  
House - Activity Room - 1st Floor  
*Zoom link below***

This meeting was held via zoom and at the community center.

Commissioners present: Heather Wells-Sweeney, Patrick Sweeney, Christie Day, Carol Kaminsky, Karyl Lee Hall

1. Announcements and Correspondence

A. BLT requests LOS for their Climate Smart Grant application

Chairperson H. Wells-Sweeney noted she received a request from the Branford Land Trust regarding the Jarvis Creek Farm property (used to be part of Medlyn Farm). She said the Land Trust is eager to transition to a climate smart management plan and they are submitting a planning grant and are asking the Commission to submit a letter of support.

Karyl Lee Hall made a motion to approve a letter of support be sent by the commission to the Branford Land Trust.

Patrick Sweeney seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

2. Highlights from CCLC conference

Chairperson H. Wells-Sweeney said there was a great presentation by the Aspetuck Land trust and noted that in Bridgeport, they installed the first Miyawaki Forest in Connecticut. She said the trees grow very quickly since they try to compete with each other and it also contains native plants. They received a grant to install them at four schools in Bridgeport.

### 3. Pilot Forest Management Plan

Patrick Sweeney reminded the Commission that at the last meeting, they decided to get a few quotes on composing a pilot forest management plan for properties in town. He reached out to Connwood Foresters, Inc. and he sent them some information on a few parcels in town. They responded with a quote that would include a written document which would include many pieces of information and it would be an overview of the health of the forest and what would need to be done to fulfill our stewardship goals. They would meet with the town, do site visits and possibly boundary research which may be expensive. They would also present the plan to the town. For these 7-acre and 25-acre properties, the quote was for \$3400.00. He will share this via email with the commission. He noted there is 1400 acres in town of mixed forest. He asked the commission for their thoughts.

H. Wells Sweeney displayed the budget for the group and noted it was their decision whether to vote on this item tonight to get the process started or they could vote on it at the next meeting. The commission decided it was a good idea and they decided to vote on it. They had a brief discussion.

Karyl Lee Hall made a motion to accept the proposed quote from Connwood Foresters, Inc. Patrick Sweeney seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

### 4. Continuing Business:

- A. Permits for coastal projects- Unsure- The clerk was absent
- B. Proposed developments and other building projects- Unsure since the clerk was absent.
- C. Invasive plant control  
Patrick Sweeney said they would plan approximately four work dates over the summer. He will email the commission when the dates have been set.
- D. Pollinator Pathway

H. Wells Sweeney said she met with the scout troop that meet at Trinity church over at the early learning center where the meadows are and they are interested in being stewards of the area where public works dept. spread wood chips and removed tree of heaven. She will meet with them on Saturday, April 20 at 1pm to discuss this with them. She invited any commission member to join them. They

are going to start with removing any sprouts of mugwort they see. A little token will be given to the troop by the troop leaders designating them official helpers of the conservation commission.

#### E. Natural Resource Inventory

The commission thanked Christie Day for all her hard work in getting this project completed. Christie Day thanked the commissioners who joined the meeting yesterday rolling out the NRI and for their support. She said the report is 99.5 % completed. The only thing left to do is to integrate the open space index. The town Engineer gave a comment about one of the maps. Christie noted she would like this NRI report to be on the conservation commission website as well.

A few of the commissioners gave some comments.

#### F. Earth Day Fair will be **Saturday, April 27**

Annual Litter Pick Up

--Businesses & Volunteer Organizations

--Volunteers from library Volunteer Fair

Chairperson Wells-Sweeney said she emailed a flyer to each commissioner and asked that they share it. She noted the commission had previously decided once again to have the annual litter pick up day the same day as the Earth Day Fair. She will reach out to the people who signed up to volunteer at the two Volunteer Fairs at the library and see if they can help as well as various groups. She will also put-up flyers at the high school so students can earn community service hours if needed. She also asked the commissioners if they could pitch in that day to help as well.

#### G. Branford Festival **Saturday, June 15**

She asked the commissioners for help since they have a lot of plants to give away that day. She will send an email out.

#### H. Crabbing Bridge (Guilford)

Karyl Lee Hall said there is a plan in the works for the crabbing bridge but it has not been made public yet because it is waiting the release of the Rt 146 study that is in progress.

#### I. Farm River coalition

Chairperson Wells-Sweeney said they are still waiting for word on the grant. There were many applications submitted so it will take some time before we hear any news on it. She will keep the group posted. She noted there will be some warm weather events coming up as well as a fall clean up on the Farm River. And, the Farm River Coalition also submitted a grant in conjunction with the East Shore Health District to address the dog waste problem. They discussed this briefly.

### 5. Reports:

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

B. Library books donations

Carol Kaminsky noted they received a thank you note from Sliney School.

C. Spill reports- None

D. Contaminated sites- None

E. Coastal Resiliency Plan

F. Website

Chairperson Wells-Sweeney noted she has been making some final edits to the website and that the links for the previous and current NRI will get on the website. She also noted Neil's comments about volunteering.

6. Budget:

A. Spending to date

The current information was displayed and the Chair noted that there were no changes since last month.

B. Proposed expenditures

The chair suggested spending \$200.00 on plants at Foote Memorial Park to add to the demonstration garden next to the parking lot. She spoke of what is there now.

Christie Day made a motion to spend \$200.00 on plants for that space.

Patrick Sweeney seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

The chair also suggested printing more Pollinator Pathway brochures to distribute at Earth Day.

Patrick Sweeney made a motion to spend up to \$150.00 on brochures.

Carol Kaminsky seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

The chair noted they will review memberships at the next meeting in more detail. She then asked for a motion to renew the membership to the Native Plant Trust.

Patrick Sweeney made a motion to renew the membership in the Native Plant Trust.

Christie Day seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

The commission asked a few questions regarding the budget.

7. Other:

B. Tweed Airport Expansion

Karyl Lee Hall said the Town of East Haven and Save the Sound have filed a petition to vacate the decision of the Federal Aviation Authority to accept the environmental assessment

on Tweed Airport which allowed the expansion to go forward. Now, it's in process but it will take a long time. She talked of filing an amicus brief but felt the commission could not do it. She will keep the commission informed of any updates.

Christie Day suggested printing some flyers for Earth Day about the NRI. The Chairperson suggested a display for Earth day along with the flyers. They will discuss it more at a later date.

Karyl Lee Hall congratulated the commission on all their hard work and accomplishments.

The group thanked Christie Day for her hard work in getting the NRI completed.

8. Adjournment