



TOWN OF THOMPSON

Conservation
Commission

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MONDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2021, 7 PM
Merrill Seney Room at the THOMPSON TOWN HALL
hybrid meeting via ZOOM:

- Call to Order
Meeting Called to Order by Norma O'Leary at 7:00 PM.
Present: Norma O'Leary, Carol Smith, Peter Cummins
Staff: Dan Malo (Conservation Agent), Heather Gauthier-Bourgeois (Recording Secretary)
Guests: Amy St. Onge (First Selectman)
- Approval of Minutes _ November 15, 2022
Carol Smith moved and Peter Cummins seconded the motion to accept the minutes from the November 15, 2021 meeting as presented. All in favor. The motion carried.
- Financial Matters
Currently we have used 44.9% and have available \$11,012.01 of the budget to date (Carol Smith)
- Correspondence
 - a. Members received via email:
 - Minutes of the Conservation Commission, November 15, 2021
 - b. Incoming Mail:
 - CT Rivers Alliance Annual Report
 - CT Land Conservation Conference Annual Report
 - c. Incoming Mail via email:
 - Emails from Town Planner regarding Subdivision Regulation Changes (*Covered in Conservation Agent Report item "Subdivision Regulation Revisions"*)
 - Correspondence Ruth Shapleigh-Brown of Connecticut Gravestone Network- Dan reached out to see if there were other grant opportunities for our negated cemeteries. No new grants or information is available at this time.
 - d. Outgoing Mail via email:
 - Comments to USACE regarding West Thompson Lake Master Plan (*Covered in Conservation Agent Report item "West Thompson Lake Master Plan"*)
 - e. Incoming Comment Forum (Received late, not on agenda):
 - UCONN Extension Grown Connected Program (*Covered in Conservation Agent Report item "Other FYI"*)
- Officer and Committee Reports
 - a. Conservation Officer Report (Dan Malo)
 - Bluebird Nesting Boxes – No new photos or no new requests for boxes. ***Carol Smith reports that she gave (2) boxes to a friend, and they have seen activity at the boxes.*
 - Volunteer Stewardship Ideas – No updates, Dan will correspond with Club 2087 and Marianapolis. There has been some heavy litter/dumping on roads near West Thompson Dam and on Church Street. We cannot change human behavior but as a commission and town we can set a good example. ***Peter Cummins - The state*

*picked up on route 131 recently. **Norma O'Leary – Church street, and the Wilsonville exit area has been littered in the past, members have had to do extra cleanup.*

***Carol Smith – There has been less little on Route 12 area after our last clean up.*

***Dan Malo – I noticed this morning a lazy boy recliner on Army Corp property.*

***Norma O'Leary – The town highway foreman can help remove large items.*

- Old Conservation Website – No billing was received, and the subscription appears to be cancelled. All the information from the old website was migrated to the new website.
- Neglected Cemeteries Grant Reimbursement – A check has been issued to Parker Services. The grant reimbursement has been submitted to the Office of Policy Management (OPM) for the work done at the Wilsonville cemetery.
- MS4 Compliance – Inter-departmental effort which involves the selectman office, Town Planner, Wetlands Agent, and department of Public Works. An internal timeline is being prepared by the town of Thompson, and no timeline has been established by the state. We have asked for help from J&D Civil engineers and will be working with the town to develop the necessary ordinances to get the compliance in place.
- Office Organization – Ongoing project organizing the office. There is information in both digital and paper format that has to be organized. Many information requests are proving difficult to find previous information due to the disorganization of the material.

b.Other

- Subdivision Regulation Revisions – Comments/correspondence from Town planner was shared with commission members. The Inland & Wetland Commission along with Wetlands agent, Marla Butts, requested a “red-lined” copy of the regulation. The Town Planner advised that she did not have this but would provide a “messy” draft or was willing to set up a meeting to discuss the changes at length. Marla Butts is using a document comparison program to compare the documents and will share her results when they are available. The deadline for the comment period is January 31, 2022; however, it may be appropriate to ask for more time to review the changes.
- Grant Seeking – Dan Malo is researching other opportunities for grants in the Conservation, Environmental and Recreation areas. Most grants are due in the fall, so there would be some time to formulate proposals before they are due. Dan Malo is making a spreadsheet of the grants and will share his information when it is complete.
- Annual Giving – Rivers Alliance of CT and Connecticut Land Conservation Council both mailed their annual report as well as request for donations. Dan Malo will research what (if any) was donated in the past and will provide information to the commission.
***Norma O'Leary - Asked if the commission will be within budget with a new staff person employed to give donations. **Carol Smith – reviewed financial reports and could not advise what is used to date for memberships or donation. **Dan Malo – I believe CACIWC (Connecticut Association of Conservation and Inland Wetland Commissions) is an affiliation, CT Land Conservation Council may also be, I am not sure if river alliance is. I will investigate what we have spent on these organization in the past and will bring to the next meeting.*
- Office 365 – The Town has migrated to the cloud Microsoft Office 365 for email, and all Microsoft applications (word, excel, powerpoint, etc). This has created some issues as I can only see email back 365 days , the IT department is looking into how to resolve this issue. There has been some difficulty printing from the new programs.
- Selectman's Update – The First Selectman is requested a blurb from all departments to have into her January Selectman Update. Information on the content is due by January 14th, 2022. In the past the commission has used the same verbiage as previous years, Dan Malo will email that out to members for approval.
- Shadowing Wetlands Agent – Dan Malo is still following Marla Butts on site visits so he can be familiarized with the town, property owners, contractors, and ongoing projects.

- FOIA Training – The town will be offering FOIA Training virtually on February 10th and a live in-person training in March (date to be determined). Town employees, commission members, and staff on commission boards are encouraged to attend. Information from the trainings will be shared with commission members when it is available.
- UCONN Extension Grown Connected Program – Joy Tyler would like to do a town presentation on local farm/food programs available in Northeastern CT. She has a grant to work with 23 area towns to host meetings and share how locally grown farm foods can help the communities with consumption of locally grown goods. They produced a guide to fresh farm foods which has been sent to our library along with a digital copy. Dan Malo will send digital copy by email to Commission Members.
- GIS Mapping requests – Steady requests for map updates are coming in, many are due to grant applications with fast approaching deadlines. Dan Malo is learning the GIS program and is novice at best as the program takes years to master. One possibility is to outsource the program requests to NECOG or UCONN in the interim while Dan Malo learns more about the program. ***Amy St. Onge, The town is willing to pay for any training to get Dan Malo up to speed with the GIS Mapping system.*
- Ballard Road Conservation Easement – The Town received a building permit for a single-family house on the west side of Ballard Road. Conservation, specifically Dan Malo, was asked to review the request as the AppGeo map showed easement however those easements were not listed on the Conservation Easement list. Other properties on Ballard Road with easements have them listed in the Conservation Easement list, but the easements are not shown on the AppGeo map. Dan Malo drafted a letter to the building department advising that Conservation markers need to be in place prior to any issuance of certification of occupancy.
- West Thompson Lake Master Plan (Email correspondence was shared with members)– Dan Malo reviewed the plan and responded to the Army Corps of Engineer's with his comments. Dan Malo mentioned a few items such as timetable for the Blain Road footbridge, trails along the south side of the dam could be marked and added to the trail map, an observation platform on high ground south of the south overlook with safe street crossing, and linking of the West Thompson Dam trails to adjacent properties (Airline Trails, Bull Hill Recreation; Wyndham Land Trust Preserve). The response to Dan's comments were vague, but they noted his comments were insightful and they will evaluate his comments to see if they could be included in the master plan. The updated master plan can be viewed at <https://www.nae.usace.army.mil/Missions/Recreation/West-Thompson-Lake/>
- Old Business
 - a. Fabyan Property with "Honor Roll" marker (Philip Thomas)
No progress. Peter Cummins to attempt to meet with new owners and see if they are okay with the marker remaining there and if they would be willing to maintain the marker.
 - b. Neglected Cemetery Grant (Norma O'Leary)
The Wilsonville cemetery work is complete. The check to Parker Services and the grant reimbursement have been submitted. The gentleman who was doing community service in partnership with Thompson Together has completed his 100 hours of community service.
 - c. Initial discussion on the Draft Subdivision Regulations – previously discussed
 - d. Bluebird nesting boxes – previously discussed
- New Business – previously discussed
- Citizens' Comments – none

- Members' Forum
Norma O'Leary – Citizen involvement with Conservation Commission. AT this time there are no new applications for members to join the conservation commission ***Amy St. Onge – We could do some promoting in the spring.*
- Announcements:
Letter for Bernie Davis was distributed to members for review and signature. Norma O'Leary will bring it to Philip Thomas for signature and return to Dan Malo.
- Next Meeting is Tuesday, January 18, 2022, at 7 PM. This is being held on Tuesday in observance of Martin Luther King holiday on Monday.
- Adjournment
Meeting adjourned by Norma O'Leary at 8:00 PM.

View the Zoom Recording

https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/QzRgLmrcl1coq9mKEx22IKQ-ttw1_dSI_DEZnYt5Tlfjr9-zMIH3KvLapMZiuP9W.NZMIzKNWhn2iEiHM

Passcode: X2\$5T?Xc

*Submitted 01/02/2021
Heather J. Gauthier-Bourgeois
Recording Secretary*

***These minutes have not yet been approved by the Conservation Commission. Please refer to next month's meeting minutes for approval of and/or amendments to these minutes.*