



**CITY OF TORRINGTON
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
November 18, 2021 Regular Meeting**

1. Call to Order:

Meeting called to order at 6:40 pm

Members present in person in Council Chambers of Torrington City Hall unless otherwise noted.

2. Roll Call & Announcements: Members present: Christine Altman, Dan McGuiness, Michael Kaneb (Via Zoom, arrived and established quorum at 7:11) and staff Jeremy Leifert.

Members Absent: Tom Kalinowski

Members of the public: None

The meeting started at 6:39 as an informational meeting only due to lack of quorum.

3. New Business:

- a. Discussion on open space/trail planning - solar project off Wimbledon Gate N., Highland Avenue and Rossi Road in Torrington and Litchfield – Ali Weaver, Director, Project Development, Silicon Ranch and Matt Kisbur, founder, Silicon Ranch

The commission opened discussion with representatives of Silicon Ranch, who went through a short presentation on their company and a description of their Torrington/Litchfield project. In addition to their company background, emphasis was placed on community engagement and public outreach, particularly to schools.

Discussion ensued of a specific 7.5 acre parcel that Silicon Ranch is interested in donating which abuts City Owned open space.

Discussion also took place on grazing for maintenance around the proposed solar panels and the possible use of herbicides and runoff if grazing is not available. Ms. Weaver stated that no herbicides would be used on the property.

There were questions and answers regarding potential impacts on agricultural soils and the long term viability of agricultural soils if the project were to cease. Mr. Kisbur went over the regenerative land management program that Silicon Ranch employs.

The committee members asked questions regarding state level permits and monitoring through DEEP and Army Corps, with specific concerns regarding stormwater and runoff.

Mr. Leifert noted that commission member Kaneb signed on via zoom at 7:11, establishing quorum for the meeting.

The committee had a final discussion regarding how and where the electricity from the project is transmitted from the project.

J. Leifert stated that he would follow up with both a contact for the Board of Education and potential dates for a site walk of the proposed open space parcel before the December meeting.

4. Minutes:

a. July 8, 2021 Regular Meeting

Motion to accept the minutes of the July 8, 2021 regular meeting as presented was made by D. McGuinness and seconded by C. Altman. Motion passed. M Kaneb abstained.

5. Old Business:

a. Continued discussion of short term and long term projects and commission goals

Motion to add discussion of Sue Grossman Trail Grant Application discussion to the agenda by D. McGuinness, seconded by C. Altman. Motion passed unanimously.

- Sue Grossman trails grant – J. Leifert updated the commission on the submittal of the Recreational Trails Grant from Newfield Road
- Food forests. Discussion ensued on the existing food forest on University Drive, and possible locations for another possible food forest near Five Points and a second one within downtown. Commissioner Kaneb invited Cynthia Rabinowitz and Bob Brown to sit in on the meeting to assist with grant funding.
- Open Space plan funding – J. Leifert discussed the recent parcels that were reviewed and the overall goal of funding for and open space funding
- Leoni Property Acquisition - J. Leifert stated that there is an agreement in place for the City to purchase the Leoni property on Winsted Road, but some lingering issues with property cleanup. Not much else could be discussed at the moment due to the pending land transaction.

6. Communications:

None

7. Adjournment:

Motion to adjourn the meeting by D. McGuinness and seconded by M. Kaneb. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:36 pm.



Jeremy Leifert, Asst. City Planner
Staff to Conservation Commission
Cc: City Clerk, Mayor's Office