



**CITY OF TORRINGTON  
CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
July 27, 2023 Regular Meeting**

1. Call to Order:

Meeting called to order at 6:33 pm

Members present in person in Room 215 of Torrington City Hall unless otherwise noted.

Roll Call & Announcements: Members present: Steve Ivain, Erin Stelma, Karen Svetz, and Christine Altman (Chair).  
Via ZOOM: None  
Members Absent: Michael Kaneb and Dan McGuinness  
Staff: Nate Nardi-Cyrus – Assistant City Planner  
Members of the public: Liz Cilfone

2. Minutes:

a. June 29, 2023 Regular Meeting

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Mr. Ivain, seconded by Ms. Stelma. All commissioners voted aye.

3. New Business:

a. 980 Tarringford Street Application – Easement Review

Mr. Nardi-Cyrus presented a proposed site plan modification for a new bank near a conservation easement on the same large RRC-zoned property. No work will occur within the boundaries of the easement. Mr. Nardi-Cyrus explained that if there is a conservation easement on a property that is requesting an approval from Planning and Zoning, the Conservation Commission must pass a motion stating if the project violates the terms of that easement. Since no work is proposed within the easement, the commission should pass a motion stating so. Mr. Ivain made a motion declaring the project is outside of the conservation easement, seconded by Ms. Stelma. All commissioners voted aye.

b. Staff Meeting with HVA

Mr. Nardi-Cyrus discussed his meeting with the Housatonic Valley Association's Land Protection Manager, Julia Rodgers, with the Commission. He indicated that HVA is interested in conservation projects in our area and will keep the Commission up to speed on communications regarding those properties. He also stated that Ms. Rodgers would be willing to come to the next commission meeting to discuss Commission involvement in surveying potential wildlife crossings identified

remotely in the City. The Commission agreed and Mr. Nardi-Cyrus will follow-up to get her on the August agenda.

#### 4. Old Business

##### a. World Clean-up Day Planning

Started discussion with input from Liz Cilfone about ramping up the City's impact on reducing trash through our clean-ups and beyond. Ideas included:

- Anti-litter marketing campaign
  1. "Torrington: Active and Attractive" – 1912 slogan
  2. Woodsy the Owl reboot
  3. Highschool/FFA outreach
    - a. Coordinated modules for schools from local orgs – CC, Torr. Historical, Heritage Land Preservation Trust, NWCD, Trout Unlimited, etc.
- Clean-ups (General)
  1. Liz to approach guidance counselors for Region 6, Torrington, and OWT
    - a. Advertise for required service hours
  2. Create master list of folks to approach for outreach
  3. Idea for project where students map trash in community for clean-ups (Earth Day 2024)

The group then discussed the specifics of the World Clean-up Day event, to be held Sept 16<sup>th</sup> 2023. To help re-orient the commission to the site, a site walk was scheduled from 8/16 at 9am (later rescheduled to 8/23). The Commission agreed the homeless population there should be informed of the clean-up, so Mr. Nardi-Cyrus will reach out to the hospital to determine how they communicate with this population. Mr. Nardi-Cyrus shared draft press release and flyer for the event. The group reviewed and provided basic comments on the press release and flyer. Nate will edit and, when OSJL approves the event, will circulate it to the Commission, press, social media, and our targeted list of potential participants (by mail) for distribution.

##### b. Food Forest Planning update

Mr. Nardi-Cyrus has received no word from Parks and Recreation director after several attempts to reach out. The group will re-examine open space properties to find opportunities there.

##### c. Red Mountain Trail Update

Mr. Nardi-Cyrus shared that there is still no contract with the DEEP yet but the City will be a meeting with OSJL property staff next Thursday to discuss the easement and improvements. Mr. Nardi-Cyrus will keep the Commission informed on the status of this grant.

##### d. General Solar Discussion

Mr. Nardi-Cyrus informed the Commission of the protections afforded by the newly passed version of PA – 23-163, although it will not affect the Solar development on Rossi Road. A long Discussion ensued regarding the proposed solar field located off Rossi Road. Mr. Ivain would like the commission to request intervener status to question the developer about resident concerns about the removal of fill. Mr. Nardi-Cyrus informed the Commission that he and City Planner Jeremy Leifert believe the window for this type of intervention has closed and he advised against spending resources on this effort. Ms. Altman requested Mr. Ivain produce written references to the items of concern prior to the commission voting on perusing interviewer status. Mr. Ivain agreed.

e. Open Space Inventory

Next visit will be Weds August 23<sup>rd</sup> at 9am at locations TBD by Mr. Nardi-Cyrus.

f. Natural Resources Inventory

Nothing new to report.

5. Adjournment:

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Ivain, seconded by Ms. Svetz. All commissioners voted aye.

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm.

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Nate Nardi-Cyrus, Assistant City Planner  
Staff to Conservation Commission