



**CITY OF TORRINGTON
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
January 19, 2023 Regular Meeting**

1. Call to Order:

Meeting called to order at 6:30 pm

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

Roll Call & Announcements: Members present: Steven Ivain, Dan McGuiness, and Christine Altman (Chair).

Via ZOOM: Michael Kanab

Members Absent: Tom Kalinowski

Staff: Nate Nardi-Cyrus – Assistant City Planner

Members of the public: Karen Svetz

2. Minutes:

a. November 22, 2022 Special Meeting

A motion to approve the minutes was made by Michael Kanab, seconded by Steven Ivain. All commissioners voted aye.

3. New Business:

a. Neighbor offer to purchase 140/008/010 (Torrington Street Open Space)

Mr. Nardi-Cyrus updated the commission on a request by an adjacent landowner to purchase the property. The commission discussed the open space values of property vs. potential benefits to selling the property. Mr. McGuiness made a motion to recommend City Council deny the request, seconded by Steve Ivain. All commissioners voted to recommend denying the request.

b. Acquisition of property abutting Machuga Park

Mr. Nardi-Cyrus updated the commission on municipal plans to acquire ~3 acres of foreclosed property adjacent to Machuga Park. Acquisition is unlikely at this point, but development of the site is nearly impossible, given that it is surrounded by municipal land.

4. Old Business:

a. Update on Klug Hill Special Exception

Mr. Nardi-Cyrus updated the commission on the project status and which of the Commission's recommendations were required by P&Z as conditions of approval. The commission discussed the project and asked to be updated.

b. 2023 food forest planting prep / Food security

The Commission reviewed informational maps and discussed potential food forests sites for 2023. All agreed that Besse Park and the senior center/greenway trail were good starting points but that land trust properties might also work, if we are unable to work with Parks and Recreation. Members of the land trust offered to bring it up at their next meeting. Mr. Nardi-Cyrus will be meeting with the conservation district to discuss how they might help support such a project and will report back to the commission.

c. World Clean-up Day / Earth Day planning

The Commission agreed the event should be held 4/22 at the Red Mountain Trail. Mr. Nardi-Cyrus will follow-up with the Ocean State Job Lot plaza about parking a dumpster and coordinating activities from their property. The commission only has the February and March meetings to plan for the event, although the regular meeting could be canceled and a special meeting set before the event. This clean-up will help support current efforts to develop a multi-use trail on the property.

d. OSI/NRI Progress

Mr. Nardi-Cyrus updated the commission on inspections and status of projects. Ms. Altman requested we coordinate site visits with commissioners during the 2023 season. Mr. Nardi-Cyrus will bring a list of priority parcels to the next meeting for discussion.

5. Other:

a. New membership

The Commission welcomes Karen Svetz, who is expected to be appointed by the next regular meeting. A potential new member, not present, said he was interested in what the commission knew about food waste efforts in the City. Ms. Altman offered to connect him with a local composter that worked in the community in the past.

b. Promotion and media

Mr. Nardi-Cyrus shared a copy of the Conservation Commission's annual report. He will circulate to the group after the meeting to get feedback before submitting to City Council. The Commission also brought up issues with the 2023 meeting schedule and Mr. Nardi-Cyrus offered to follow-up and report back at the next meeting.

c. Training opportunities

Mr. Nardi-Cyrus will continue to follow-up with training opportunities, however, some of the Land Use trainings that require fees will be preferences to ZBA, IWC, and P&Z over Conservation.

6. Adjournment:

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Dan McGuinness, seconded by Steve Ivain. All commissioners voted aye.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

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