



**CITY OF TORRINGTON  
CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
September 21, 2023 Regular Meeting**

1. Call to Order:

Meeting called to order at 6:37 pm

Members present in person in Room 324 (Land Use Office) of Torrington City Hall unless otherwise noted.

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

2. Minutes:

a. August 31, 2023 Regular Meeting

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

3. New Business:

Northwest Connecticut Land Conservancy (NCLC) Grant Application

Mr. Nardi-Cyrus shared a request from the NCLC to City Planner Jeremy Leifert for a letter of support to purchase a large farm straddling Litchfield and Torrington with state grant funds. ~40 acres of the property are in Torrington and include a large hay field and forested wetlands. Mr. Leifert is supportive of the project but is looking for the letter of support to come from the Conservation Commission. Mr. McGuinness made a motion for Mr. Nardi-Cyrus to craft a letter communicating the Commission's support for the project and Ms. Svetz seconded. All commissioners voted aye.

a. Eastside Flooding Issues

Mr. Nardi-Cyrus reported to the commission the state of local flooding in the vicinity of Clearview Avenue. Prior to the meeting, the Mayor and City Engineer requested the Conservation Commission explore this issue and embark on a communication campaign to inform landowners about best practices in streamside management. This is a complex issue, considering flood management, conservation practices, and inland wetlands regulations are not necessarily complimentary. The Commission agreed that, in the absence of any reports or assessment describing the issues and suggested best management practices, they felt uncomfortable proceeding with any kind of education campaign. Ms. Svetz said she would look into state funding options and report back to the Commission.

#### 4. Old Business

##### a. Schedule HVA Wildlife Crossing Assessment Training

The Commission discussed the HVA presentation from the prior meeting but were uncertain of when to hold the training. They also had questions about what time of year was preferred and if the training could be a larger public event, in collaboration with other local groups (e.g., Torrington Trails Network, High School clubs, etc.) Mr. Nardi-Cyrus will reach out to HVA prior to the next meeting to get answers.

##### b. World Clean-up Day Debrief

The Commission discussed the event and agreed it was a wonderful success. They also talked about engaging other groups for targeted fall clean-ups in future years (e.g., Trout Unlimited for river clean-ups, etc.). Mr. Nardi-Cyrus will share clean-up pictures with the group for circulation in the Commissioners social networks and via City-managed social media.

##### c. Food Forest Planning Update

The last site visit was cancelled due to rain so the group will meet October 11<sup>th</sup> at 9am at the Sullivan Senior center to assess open space properties and potential food forest sites.

##### d. Red Mountain Trail Update

The internal working group kick-off meeting is scheduled for September 28<sup>th</sup>.

##### e. Open Space Inventory

The Commission discussed prioritization of enforcement actions targeted at Open Space encroachments. The group suggested prioritization based on locations with the worst offenses. Worst offenses should be categorized by size and the presence of permanent unauthorized improvements. Using a form letter might help to save time.

##### f. Natural Resources Inventory

Nothing new to report.

#### 5. Adjournment:

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:42 pm.

*Nate Nardi-Cyrus*

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