

TOWN OF EAST WINDSOR
CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Meeting
February 22, 2012

The Meeting was called to order in the Town Hall Meeting Room, 11 Rye Street, Broad Brook, CT at 7:02 p.m. by Chairman Grant

ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM:

A quorum was established as four members (Albert Grant, Robert Slate, Jim Stremper, Barbara Halloran); Member Janice Warren was absent

Also present was Assistant Town Planner, Robin Newtown

ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

A unanimous vote was taken and officers were voted in as follows:

Albert Grant – Chairman;
Robert Slate – Vice Chairman;
Barbara Halloran – Secretary

APPROVAL OF MINUTES/ January 25, 2012:

Minutes for the January 25, 2012 meeting were unavailable and approval was tabled to the March meeting.

DISCUSSION OF COMMISSION'S ROLE IN REFERENCE TO STATE GUIDELINES:

Chairman Grant reported on a meeting he had with Denise Menard (First Selectman) and Robin Newtown (Assistant Town Planner) regarding the commission's role for the town. It was agreed that the commission will follow the guidelines of the State Statutes.

COMMUNITY GARDEN:

The Commission was informed by Robin Newtown that a ten (10) acre parcel of Leased Town owned Land is being released and being given back to the Town. Five (5) acres of that parcel will be available for a Community Garden. All members were asked to draft up plans and ideas for the community garden and bring them to the March meeting for discussion.

ESTABLISH A FARM COMMITTEE:

The Commission was informed by Robin Newtown that The Planning and Zoning office was given the okay by the Board of Selectman to adopt an ordinance for an Agricultural Commission. This will be voted on at the March 6 Town Meeting and all members were encouraged to attend.

The meeting for the Agricultural Commission would be scheduled for the same day as the Conservation Commission and would take place directly after the Conservation Commission Meeting. The terms of the Agricultural Commission will be different than the Conservation Commission.

Members of the Conservation Commission can also sit on the Agricultural Commission, but there will be spots available for new members.

PA 490 FOR OPEN SPACE:

A Plan of Conservation and Development of Open Space does not exist in Town. A local ordinance will need to be written and adopted by 2014. The Conservation Commission, Assessor's Office and Development Office will all need to work together to accomplish this.

APPLYING FOR STATE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE GRANT:

The Grant is for farms which are less than 30 acres and are now producing food or fiber.

The Commission is now in the prequalification phase of the Grant. The deadline for Prequalification to be submitted is May 31, 2012.

Prequalification issues discussed:

“Designate a fund for farmland preservation and have a method of funding”. The Town has an Open Space Fund. There will need to be an amendment to the local ordinance.

“Request identification of locally important farmland soils through U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Resources Conservation Service”. A letter has been prepared to have the soil tested and become “Farmland Certified”. As soon as it is approved by the First Selectman the letter will go out.

“Prioritize farms for preservation using a criteria scoring or ranking system”. The remainder of the meeting was spent reviewing parcels to determine if they are growing Fruit and/or Fiber and determining if the farms fall under the correct criteria.

The Meeting was adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Halloran, Secretary, East Windsor Conservation Commission