

East Windsor
Conservation Commission/Agricultural Commission
JOINT Meeting, September 25, 2013

Review of:

**Core Strategy: Conserving Community Resources/Strategies and Actions
Conservation Commission/Agricultural Commission**

Primary Strategy: Preserve More Open Space

Action – Develop an Open Space Preservation Program:

- Establish a separate Conservation Commission and assign it to implement open space program - **Completed**
- Develop open space evaluation tools
 - Criteria developed for various types of open space (recreation fields as well as farm preservation)
 - inventory of small and large farms (over and under 30 acres has been developed,
 - **New tool:** Maintain inventory as a continuing/living document to be able to ascertain when parcels become available for purchase/acquisition.
- Recommend open space priorities for regulations and other open space efforts in EW
 - **New tool:** Keep in touch with CGS and regulations to keep recommendations current.
- Establish open space funding mechanisms
 - New tools:**
 - Percentage of taxes dedicated to Open Space acquisition/development
 - Purchase of Developments Rights (which reduces taxes for applicable parcels which then become deed restricted from residential or non-farming commercial construction/development) via DEEP Open Space grants and/or Community Farm grants.
 - Develop local Land Trust
 - Other funding sources: Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, Knox Foundation
- Prepare, implement, and regularly update an Open Space Action Plan
 - Promote preservation of Open Space
 - Support continuing review of Open Space inventory
 - Develop GIS maps

Discussion Point: How to incorporate walking/hiking trails into Open Space properties?

Strategy: Preserve Community Assets

Actions:

- Continue 490 Tax Abatement for Farmland (filing/continuing registration discussed)
(All members were in favor of 490 continuing for any parcel not intended for development, especially larger parcels)
- Ensure Supportive Standards for Farming Activities
 - Zoning regulations should be MORE farm-friendly
 - Zoning regulations should be a continuing/living document
 - EDC should include promotion of farming activities in its function.
- Provide Marketing Support for Local Farms
 - Update Sign Regulations to support identification of farming activities
 - Develop maps to locate (seasonal?) farming locations
 - Develop social media campaigns (supported by volunteers)
 - Develop pamphlets/flyers to promote seasonal crop availability/find locations to make this material available
 - Develop sub-section of Chamber specific to farmers (EDC task?)
- Adopt Policy for Agricultural Use of Municipal Land
 - Develop a more open process regarding lease process
 - Agricultural Commission to be a partner in consideration of leases
- Protection Scenic Roads
 - Conservation Commission should work with Historic Preservation Commission regarding review of scenic roads
- Support Historic and Cultural Assets
 - Conservation Commission should work with Historic Preservation Commission to develop common goals

Discussion point: EW has unique soils which should be considered when making decisions on development of properties

Strategy: Protect Environmental Quality

Actions:

- Separate Wetlands and Conservation Commissions - **Completed**
- Adopt Aquifer Protection Regulations (dependent on Level A mapping by CT Water Co.)
Discussion point: Consider developing strategy to assist residents dealing with contaminated wells.
 - Promote organic farming/lawn maintenance
- Revise Earth Excavation Regulations - **Completed**
- Revise Impervious Surface Standards
 - PZC and Inland Wetlands develop standards for low-impact development to protect impact/effect on water quality
- Consider Environmental Ordinances

- Monitor Existing and Potential Environmental Problems
- Continue Regional Environmental Program Participation

Discussion point: Additional “advertisement” sources:

- ❖ Blanket mailing
- ❖ Town “alert” system (legal notice advisement?????)
- ❖ Link off of Town website
- ❖ Facebook
- ❖ Reminder
- ❖ Patch – with link??????
- ❖ Develop logo