

East Hampton Conservation Commission
Regular Meeting
January 8, 2009
Town Hall Meeting Room
Unapproved Minutes

1. **Call to Order:** Chairman Zawisza called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.
Present: Chairman Peter Zawisza, Members Patience Anderson (7:05 p.m.), Michael Brogan, Duncan McNeill, and Allen Petell.

Not Present: Member Peter Bergan.

2. **Communications, Liaison Reports, Committee Reports and Public Comments:**

Communications: THE HABITAT newsletter was provided for each of the members in their packages for this meeting.

Liaison Reports: Mr. Petell reported that he was able to attend the IWWA meeting on December 19th. They discussed a nutrient budget for the Lake, Belltown Place, Theater Square, and sea wall repairs. The minutes of that meeting are available online and in the Town Clerk's Office.

Mr. McNeill reported on the recent Parks and Recreation Advisory Board meeting minutes. Sears Park and the Airline Trail were discussed at the meeting. A master plan outline for Sear Park was distributed. The minutes of this meeting are available for review online and in the Town Clerk's Office.

Chairman Zawisza will contact Ruth Plumber of the Parks & Recreation Department regarding interest the Conservation Commission has in Sears Park, the Airline Trail, and open space.

Ms. Anderson reported on Board of Finance meeting. They are in the preliminary states of the budget process. The issue of eliminating the Town Planner from the budget for 2009 was discussed. The minutes of this meeting are available for review online and in the Town Clerk's Office.

Sue Weintraub, Town Council Liaison to the Conservation Commission, reported that Jeff O'Keefe, Town Manager, was unable to attend tonight's meeting; however, he would be attending the next meeting. Mr. O'Keefe did ask Ms. Weintraub to report that the recruitment process for an Environmental Planner is progressing and that the Town would have a permanently and consistently assigned senior staff member. Ms. Weintraub reported that it was made very clear at the Governance Meeting held the night before that landuse is number one in importance and staffing and communications are of vital importance.

Ms. Anderson reported that there had not been a Town Council meeting since the last Conservation Commission meeting due to the holidays. The will be meeting next week.

Ms. Anderson reported that she was able to attend the Town Governance special meeting. This was a great opportunity to provide feedback in regard to the operation of commissions in Town. Communication was the dominant theme. Staff support for the boards and commissions was also discussed. The minutes of this meeting are available for review on line and in the Town Clerk's Office.

Ms. Anderson reported that the Lake Pocotopaug Commission has not held a meeting since the last Conservation Commission meeting. She will attend the meeting to be held this month.

Mr. Brogan reported that the Planning & Zoning Commission met the night before. It conducted an executive session during which pending litigation was discussed. He did report that the Town hired an independent engineer, Fuss & O'Neill, to review the report of Malone & MacBroom on the Belltown Place water supply. The independent engineer did concur with the results of Malone & MacBroom. The minutes of this meeting are available for review online and in the Town Clerk's Office.

Public Comments:

Sue Weintraub discussed a new tactic the Town Council is employing to aid their members in pursuing projects of special interest to them. Individuals on the Council are being encouraged to select and pursue projects in which they personally feel vested. She recommends that each individual on each commission consider a similar approach to driving those very projects that are of most interest to them.

The Commission discussed the recommendations that they have made to the PZC regarding a policy for Fee in Lieu of Land and a Development Review Checklist.

3. Acceptance of Minutes of December 11, 2008:

A. December 11, 2008 Regular Meeting: *Ms. Anderson moved to accept the minutes of the December 11, 2008 meeting as written. Mr. McNeill seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

A. Review: None.

4. Old Business:

A. Inventory/Index of Open Spaces: Presentation by Emily Wilson, The NEMO Program, CLEAR, UCONN:

Emily Wilson, of NEMO, was present to discuss NEMO. It is part of the Department of Extension of the College of Agriculture at UCONN. She works out of the Middlesex County office which is in Haddam. NEMO stands for Nonpoint Education for Municipal Officials. It is part of the Center for Landuse Education and Research (CLEAR). This is a joint endeavor of the Department of Extension and the Department of Natural Resources and the Environment, formerly called Natural Resource Management and Engineering. The program is designed for outreach education. This program works with local landuse officials. By request NEMO comes to town commission meetings with a variety of topics. They have two full time

planners. They have a graphic designer. Ms. Wilson is responsible for mapping and GIS. They are involved in a national network that includes over 30 states. The headquarters is right here in Haddam. Their goal is to bring resources and technology to the people who are tasked with making decisions on a local level.

Ms. Wilson discussed the map layers that are available at the Extension Service now. She discussed with the Commission the various layers that would be of interest to the Commission and the upcoming GIS that will be available.

Mr. Petell explained the goal of the Commission in regard to updating the existing maps. The intent is to create a useful database of publicly held lands which could be used to help the Town create contiguous, useful greenways.

Ms. Wilson explained Natural Resource Based Planning. The intent is to get all of the commissions together to create a "planning process". The first step of the process is an inventory. It is called a Community Resource Inventory. It includes natural, cultural, historic, and archeological resources. NEMO has put together a website for Connecticut called the Community Resource Inventory Online. This inventory allows communities to figure out what is currently in their inventory and map the locations. This website allows one to pick and choose data layers and create their own mapping. Parcels are not yet available neither are layers that would not be of interest to the State. She explained that this is a good starting point. The Commission needs to determine what the Town has and then proceed to gather the information they want to include. Ms. Wilson recommended that a workshop NEMO offers called the Community Resource Inventory would be beneficial. She could provide a presentation to several of the landuse boards in Town with a NEMO planner and describe the process and get it started.

The Commission discussed with Ms. Wilson a methodology for proceeding and what to expect from the program. They discussed how to proceed with the search of the land records. Ms. Weintraub suggested that there are funds available for outsourcing on the GIS project and it may be possible to merge this project with that as it will ultimately be part of the GIS. GIS is mandated by State Statute. Mr. Petell will continue to research the legend on the map provided by Frank Junga. Ms. Wilson expects that the Town's GIS system will be available for her to provide the parcel layer in February. She should have a map, with most of the layers requested, prepared by the March meeting.

The Chairman indicated that the Commission will need to update PA 490 land, land held by Middlesex Land Trust, and developmental rights sold to the State.

The Chairman also requested an update and a renewed attempt to engage the PZC on the Fee In Lieu of Open Space and the Development Checklist recommendations.

5. **New Business:** None.

6. **Adjournment:** *Ms. Anderson moved to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Petell seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Daphne Schaub
Recording Secretary