

**TOWN OF TRUMBULL
CONNECTICUT**



Trumbull Conservation Commission Virtual Meeting
Wednesday, August 30, 2023
7:00 pm

Present: Chairman, Mary Ellen Lemay, Tim Coughlin, Sara Sterling, Richard Post and John Massari

Absent: Pam Roman and Matthew Sulzicki

Also Present: Janet Epstein

Mrs. Lemay called the meeting to order at 7:03 pm.

Past Minutes

Motion was made by Mr. Coughlin to approve the minutes of March 29, 2023 as written. Seconded by Mrs. Sterling and approved with one abstention by Mr. Post.

New Business

Plan for Fiscal Year 2023/2024 Starting July 1 – Mrs. Lemay provided the Commissioners with a copy of the approved budget noting they received \$12,000 to continue the 1,000 Trees for Trumbull Initiative this year. The Commission used 96% of last year’s budget. This year’s budget includes funding for community and public relations initiatives, signage for the 1,000 Trees Initiative and the project in Twin Brooks Park, seminar participation and organizational dues.

Old Business

Twin Brooks Initiative – 1,000 Trees for Trumbull – Mrs. Lemay noted Don Watson was commissioned to design a free-standing sign for the park to be located just before the bridge coming from the Vietnam Memorial on White Plains Road. She shared his design which is entitled “Mosaic of Biodiversity”. This sign will show all of the areas of interest in the park. She noted Pollinator Point will be planted this winter and will be supported by the Commission through the purchase of seeds. Various other areas were discussed on the sign. This is in production with text drafted by Mr. Paris and Matt that will be added to the sign. Linda Thomas, who works with Mr. Watson, is doing illustrations to highlight some of the areas in Twin Brooks. A ribbon cutting was already done to open up Twin Brooks to the public after its renovation but to move forward with the 1,000 Trees Initiative and the other projects, some type of ceremony should be done in the spring when the sign is up. The cost of the sign was shared between the Conservation Commission and Parks and Recreation. This park has the most diversity in eco-systems and

now they can celebrate all the work that has been done in the park over the years.

Discussion was held regarding the location of the large sign. It was felt this is not the most used entrance into the park. It was noted the template can be duplicated and it will be placed into the kiosks throughout the park with some additional information. The QR code can be scanned as well. Suggestion was made that trail signs with QR codes could also be done for each individual area. Mr. Watson will be asked to contact Mr. Massari regarding the reproduction of the sign. Mr. Watson also designed a mailer with information on the park that could be used in the future.

Discussion was held regarding an area by the walking bridge along the river that needs to be replanted. This would be a true riparian buffer having a layered affect with a variety of trees and shrubs. This area would be planted in the fall. Mr. Coughlin and Mr. Paris should do a site visit to plan for next spring's planting of trees as manpower is not available at this time. Invasives need to be cleared which can be done over the winter. Many ash trees were removed in this area due to beetle infestation.

Mrs. Sterling questioned the possibility of doing the second planting in another location. Mr. Coughlin felt the first project was well-received. It is a good location to plant at this time and then move to other areas. Street tree planting still needs to be discussed. Overall, it was successful as a municipal project. Native plantings were chosen by Mr. Paris which were suitable for the wet location.

The Commission felt the Arbor Day Ceremony in 2024 would be a good time to reveal the new plantings and sign.

Status of P&Z Regulations Upgrades and Applications

Mrs. Lemay shared with the Commission the Sediment and Erosion Control Plan. She noted the document they were working with for over a year was never approved, it was only a proposal from the consultant. She reviewed the document details that went into effect on August 25 noting that any slope greater than 15% will need to be reviewed by the Town as well as clear cutting of an area of a certain size. There has always been an exception for single family dwellings but they will now be required to go through the Town Engineer to determine the appropriate process.

Lengthy discussion was held regarding the single-family dwelling being built at 9 Valley View Road and the erosion that has occurred since last fall. The Town had been advised of the violations and took some action to mitigate the situation. Many trees were cut on the property that were of concern for an erosion problem. The Commission agreed that the situation is a State violation with dumping into the Pequonnock Valley. It is unknown if the Town advised the State of the violation. Concerns were voiced regarding the soil brought into the site. Unstable building platform and soil contaminants were discussed.

Community Interest - 1,000 Trees for Trumbull

Mrs. Roman noted community members are interested in helping with the project. She would be willing to coordinate some type of sub-committee group for individuals in Town who would like to participate in the project.

Non-Profit Status

Mrs. Roman submitted an application to the State for a 501c3 designation to accept donations for the 1,000 Trees Initiative. This was approved and now the Town Attorney is assisting with the last steps.

Tree City USA Status

A plaque has been received commemorating the recognition as a Tree City. It was felt the plaque should be presented to the First Selectman at the Arbor Day ceremony.

Pollinator Pathway Updates – Veterans Memorial

The application was approved by Inland Wetlands last month. Funding for the memorial is still being secured.

Mailers for 1,000 Trees and Waterside for Town Lakes

Both mailers have been produced. The 1,000 Trees brochure is available in various town locations. The Waterside brochure has distributed by volunteers to residents around Pinewood Lake, Canoe Brook Lake, Thrushwood Lake and Dogwood Lake.

Senior Center Building Update

Mr. Post will send to the Commission the plans as discussed at the last Building Committee meeting.

Trumbull Center Development

The application passed Inland Wetlands but it is still in a FEMA flood zone. It will now be sent to P&Z for consideration. There are many concerns with the project that need to be addressed.

Waterside Brochure Distribution

Ms. Epstein shared her experience with delivering the brochure noting she had various reactions to the brochure and the accompanying letter, both positive and negative. She was concerned this information was difficult to search for on-line. It was suggested direct links to the documents should be on the website so individuals would not have to search for them.

Proposed Watershed Pledge

Mr. Post shared a draft document – Watershed Pledge for Protection of Trumbull Lakes and Streams. Suggestions were made to streamline the document and a recommendation was made to contact individuals in Glastonbury for feedback on the success of the document.

Removal of Invasives

Discussion was held regarding an invasive education initiative. Mr. Massari will work on this with Mrs. Lemay.

Adjournment

There being no further business, motion was made by Mr. Massari to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 pm. Seconded by Mr. Post and approved by unanimous consent.

Respectfully submitted,

Barbara Crandall
Clerk