

Commission on Conservation & Agriculture



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|-------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Chairperson | Elisabeth Holder ('22) | |
| Vice-Chair | Brian Gartner ('23) | |
| Members | Michael Thomas ('20) | Kate Miller ('23) |
| | Jane Brawerman ('23) | James Miller ('23) |
| | Katharine Owens ('22) | Bob Daniels ('22) |
| | Barbara Schukoske ('23) | David Bauer ('22) |
| | Vacant | |
| Alternates | Ellen Lukens ('23) | Judy Konopka ('22) |
| Staff | Marek Kozikowski, AICP, City Planner | |

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

DATE: Tuesday, June 15, 2021
TIME: 7:00 p.m.

Meeting was held online. Public Access was provide by:

1. Going to <https://webex.com> and joining the meeting using the appropriate meeting number and password
2. Launching the WebEx application and joining the meeting using the appropriate meeting number and password
3. Via telephone at 1-408-418-9388 and the appropriate access code

Meeting Number/Access Code: 173666211

Event Password: Conservation

In attendance: Commissioners Elisabeth Holder, Brian Gartner, Bob Daniels, Katharine Owens, Jim Miller, Barbara Schukoske, Michael Thomas, Judy Konopka, and Ellen Lukens.

Staff in Attendance. Marek Kozikowski, City Planner.

Public In attendance: One unidentified call-in user.

A. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:06pm.

B. Accept the Agenda

A motion to accept the agenda was made by B. Gartner and seconded by E. Lukens passed unanimously.

C. Public Forum

None

D. Approval of Minutes:

1. Minutes from the May 18, 2021 Regular Meeting

A motion to approve the minutes of the May 18th regular meeting was made by B. Gartner and seconded by M. Thomas passed 7-0-1 with K. Owens abstaining.

E. Request for Comment

1. Update on Fedex Trailer Parking Expansion Project

M. Kozikowski provided an update on the project. The IWWA approved the modified plans and the Planning and Zoning Commission will hold a public hearing on the project on June 23rd.

2. Update on OWSA Grant

M. Kozikowski reported that he was working with the State to provide acceptable compliance reports. The reports were forwarded to the Commissioner and he is waiting for a response.

3. Majestic Oaks Acquisition

M. Kozikowski reported that the City signed a purchase and sales agreement for the acquisition which contains a condition of the OSWA grant reward. The Commission held a discussion concerning the price and precedence.

J. Konopka joined the meeting at 7:13pm.

A motion made to encourage acquisition of the majestic oaks property based on its open space value and location with a greenway corridor subject to obtaining the state OSWA grant made by B. Gartner and seconded by B. Daniels fails to carry with a vote 3-0-6. (Voting in favor: L. Holder, B. Gartner, B. Daniels; Abstaining: J. Miller, M. Thomas, J. Konopka, K. Owens, B. Schukoske, E. Lukens)

F. Officers and Committee Reports

1. Chair's Report

i. Red Maple Mapping

E. Holder reported that a group met including David Brown of the Middlesex Land Trust to discuss ways was to preserve the land. M. Kozikowski will work with David to identify an environmental specialist to provide an assessment of the property. The goal is to present to the Council for the placement of a conservation easement area over a portion of the property.

ii. Stewardship and Committees

E. Holder reported that she made and distributed a list of the committees and stewards for the open spaces. There are five that are open including Hubbard, Nature Gardens, Smith Park, Tynan, and Wesleyan Woods. E. Lukens volunteered to be a steward for the Nature Gardens. K. Owens expressed interest in being the steward for Wesleyan Woods but had concerns about access. The Commission discussed the excavation occurring on the adjacent property.

iii. Report on bond spending priorities

No update.

2. Trails Committee

i. Bridge proposal

E. Holder reported that someone has been putting logs across the stream, which are causing negative affects to the stream. She and Jim has been in contact with a carpenter who volunteered to help build a bridge across the stream. They went to the sight can picked a location, considered designs, material needs and other logistics. A discussion ensued about the size, materials, and cost of the bridge.

A motion to approve an expenditure from the open space bond for the construction of a 36 in wide bridge was made by B. Gardner and seconded by J. Miller was approved unanimously.

ii. Tri-town and Land Trust ATV issue proposal

E. Holder reported that David Brown is trying to coordinate a tri-town management group including Middletown, Meriden, Berlin, and possibly Haddam to deal with ATV use and other issues on the open spaces.

3. Agriculture Committee

i. Update on letter to City officials

B. Daniels reported that the Mayor, Chief of Staff and Director were invited to his farm to discuss issues and changes in agriculture.

ii. Report on bond fund proposals

No update.

iii. Ag Program/Grant

B. Daniels created some draft grant programs for assisting farmers in Middletown.

4. Outreach Committee

i. Trails Hike Report

B. Gartner reported that the trail walk event at Hubbard property. There was a low turnout but was a great event. He is looking to put together another event later this year and solicited assistance.

ii. Conservation Corner update

K. Owens reported that Judy wrote an article on wild fermentation and will submit it this week. The last article on Invasive Species was published in the Middletown Press.

iii. Other initiatives

J. Konopka noted that she is an administrator of the Middletown Cares Facebook group and has 100 followers already. The page focuses on environmental issues and art in Middletown.

5. Open Space Management Committee

i. Examination of Bond Funding guidelines and priorities

No update.

6. Open Space Acquisition Committee- Executive Session

i. Pending Property Updates (Mckiernan, Sunshine Realty, Westlake Drive, South Plumb Road)

A motion to move 6.i to the end of the meeting was made by B. Schukoske and seconded by E. Lukens passed unanimously.

G. Old Business

1. Timber Management and Southern Border Safety

No update.

2. Wilcox Management Plan

No discussion.

H. New Business

1. 2021 OSWA Grant Funding Round

No discussion.

I. Member Forum

B. Gartner requested an update on the re-organization of the departments. M. Kozikowski reported that Common council voted dissolve the Planning, Conservation, and Development and created the Department of Economic and Community Development and the Department of Land Use and associated staff positions. This will be effective July 1st. They are resolving physical space issues. The Land Use department would provide staff to this commission as well as others. The staff will be a Director, a Zoning/Blight Enforcement Officer, an Environmental Planner, Administrative Assistant, and Assistant Planner position.

B. Gartner reported that he wrote a letter at the Charter Revision Commission, discussing the proposed term limits and limits on the number of boards and commission a person can serve.

E. Holder reported that Jane Brawerman reports that UConn is applying again for a soils grant and will work with Jane. Furthermore, Jane is working with the high school to develop a vocational agriculture program.

E. Holder noted that she reserved a letter that Eversource is planning on a new gas line on Saybrook Road that starts in Middletown and goes down to Montville.

B. Schukoske inquired about the farm stand regulations. M. Kozikowski reported that he showed the proposal to the Planning and Zoning Commission and they were enthusiastic. He is finalizing the draft proposed amendments.

J. Konopka inquired about the mapping of trails.

A motion to move to executive session made by B. Daniels and seconded by B. Gartner passed unanimously. The Commission went into executive session with M. Kozikowski at 8:45pm. The Commission came out of executive session at 8:53pm.

J. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn made by B. Daniels and seconded by B. Schukoske passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 8:53pm.

Commission on Conservation & Agriculture Volunteer Responsibilities – Draft June 2021

Committee Membership:

Acquisition – Liz, Ellen, Brian, Judy
Agriculture – Bob, Barb, Jane, Jim Judy
Management – Kate, Jane, Kat
Outreach – Brian, Judy, Kat
Trails – Jim, Mike, Liz

Open Space Properties – Stewards:

Blue-blazed Trail Higby – Connecticut Forest and Park Association
Blue-blazed Trail Lamentation – CFPA
Blue-blazed Trail Katchen Coley – CFPA
Blue-blazed Trail Seven Falls & Bear Hill – CFPA
Daniels-Schwarzkopf
Guida Farm – Mike Thomas
Hubbard
Long Hill Estate – Friends of Long Hill
McCutcheon Park – Jonah Center, Trevor Davis
Middletown Nature Gardens –
Ravine Park – John Degon & Andrew White
Smith Park
Spiderweed – The Nature Conservancy
Tynan Park
Veterans Memorial – Public Works, City of Middletown
Wadsworth Falls – State of Connecticut
Wesleyan Woods
Wilcox Conservation Area – Jim Miller



Middletown Conservation Commission
Attn: Elisabeth Holder
29 Long Lane
Middletown, CT 06457

June 10, 2021

Proposal for the purchase of materials for two foot bridges.
All materials will be pressure treated lumber rated for ground contact.

Materials for 12' Blue Trail Bridge:

| Description | Unit Price | Total |
|------------------------------------|------------|-----------------|
| 2) 4x6x12' Stringers | \$55.00 | \$110.00 |
| 1) 2x6x12' End plates and bridging | \$18.57 | \$ 27.83 |
| 10) 5/4x6x8' Decking | \$14.95 | \$149.50 |
| 1) 4x4x8' Sleeper | \$26.72 | \$ 26.72 |
| Fasteners | | \$ 75.00 |
| ½ Rebar (for both bridges) | | <u>\$ 15.00</u> |
| | Total | \$404.05 |

Materials for 16' Red Trail Bridge:

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------|-----------------|
| 2) 4x8x20' Stringers | \$119.00 | \$238.00 |
| 1) 2x8x16 End plates and bridging | \$47.06 | \$ 94.12 |
| 12) 5/4x6x8' Decking | \$14.95 | \$179.40 |
| 1) 4x4x8' Sleeper | \$26.72 | \$ 26.72 |
| Fasteners | | <u>\$ 75.00</u> |
| | Total | \$613.24 |

| | |
|---------------------------|-----------------|
| Blue and Red Bridge total | \$1017.29 |
| Sales tax 6.35% | <u>\$ 64.60</u> |
| Total | \$1081.89 |

Note: For 36" wide decking add \$43.00 to total.