

Brooklyn Conservation Commission

Meeting Minutes

Brooklyn Town Hall

April 6, 2015

Present: Diane Wimmer, Chair; Jeannine Noel; Charlotte Merrill; Bev Thornton; Harry Adams; and Michael Oatley. Dana Heilemann was absent with notification.

Guest: Marc Cohen of Atlantic States Rural Water and Wastewater Association; Aaron Kerouack

The meeting was called to order by D. Wimmer at 7:30 pm.

A Motion to approve the March 2, 2015 and March 25, 2015 meeting minutes was made by J. Noel. Seconded by M. Oatley. No discussion. Unanimously approved.

New Business, Subdivision Reviews: There were no subdivision reviews.

New Business, Aquifer Study: D. Wimmer stated that the Commission would return to this agenda item after completing its other business.

New Business, Town Meeting April 7: D. Wimmer stated that a Town Meeting will be held on April 7 to consider three proposals: the school fire alarm system; the peddlers ordinance; and the purchase of Barrett Hill Farm.

New Business, Other: D. Wimmer reviewed the field maintenance list that was submitted to the First Selectman. The Carol Randall Trail requires trail clearing and bushwhacking. She will discuss this with First Selectman Rick Ives. The tee boxes need to be installed at Davis Forest. M. Oatley will discuss this with the Recreation Department. Field harrowing needs to be performed at Riverside Park prior to the end of April. Cutting border trees and spraying for invasive species should also be performed. Creamery Brook requires annual grading, clearing of the sides, and spraying for invasive species. C. Merrill inquired as to who performs the spraying. D. Wimmer replied that the work must be done by someone who is certified. Bittersweet in particular is a problem at Riverside.

New Business, Other: A Motion to nominate D. Wimmer for the position of Chairperson was made by J. Noel. M. Oatley seconded. No discussion. Unanimously approved. A Motion to nominate J. Noel for the position of Vice Chairperson was made by D. Wimmer. H. Adams seconded. No discussion. Unanimously approved.

New Business, Other: J. Noel asked the Commission members what they would like to do about the white board, maps, and items in the cabinet at Town Hall. The consensus was that they should all be brought to the Clifford B. Green building.

Financial Matters, Budget: D. Wimmer stated that the current year budget is on track. The Commission still has some funds to expend for Family Fun Day. D. Wimmer will purchase Cowpots. The Commission briefly discussed what type of seeds to purchase.

Subcommittee Reports, Event Planning Subcommittee Report: J. Noel asked the Commission members if they want to do a cleanup. This event would be for the Commission members only. The Commission agreed to hold such an event from 10 am to noon on April 18. J. Noel stated that she has trash bags. The decision was made to meet at the nature trail at Riverside Park. D. Wimmer noted that this event must be warned as a special meeting of the Commission.

M. Oatley noted that planning for Spooky Nights has begun.

Subcommittee Reports, Family Fun Day: D. Wimmer stated that she will bring a table and get a tent from the Recreation Department. C. Merrill inquired as to the location of the event. D. Wimmer stated that it is held at the fairgrounds.

Old Business, Disc Golf: M. Oatley stated that the tee boxes and kiosk need to be installed.

Old Business, Other: No discussion.

Correspondence: None

Public Comment: None

New Business, Aquifer Study: Marc Cohen of Atlantic States Rural Water and Wastewater Association presented a PowerPoint presentation entitled Source Water Protection Workshop. The Source Water Protection Program is a joint project with the USDA and the National Rural Water Association. The purpose is to protect potential aquifers. The Town would incur no costs to participate in this program. Atlantic States serves as the Rural Water Association for Connecticut and Rhode Island. Mr. Cohen works with the USDA, EPA, Connecticut Department of Health and DEEP. Kim Czaplá heads the Aquifer Protection Program at DEEP. Mr. Cohen reviewed the reasons why source water protection is important. He explained the role local boards and commissions play in protecting source water and reviewed some Town of Brooklyn demographics. The Town has 18 small public water supplies. Mr. Cohen explained how the different types of systems are classified. B. Thornton noted that there is no Level A mapping for the Town. Mr. Cohen discussed the process of glaciation in the region. The resulting aquifers are very porous and permeable. This means that they carry pollution very quickly.

Mr. Cohen explained how the program works. A workshop is held and a team of local stakeholders assembled. Source water threats are evaluated and protection strategies developed. A plan is then prepared. The plan can include outreach and education components. For example, Mr. Cohen could visit the schools and have a booth at the Brooklyn Fair. D. Wimmer inquired as to the size of the typical stakeholders team. Mr. Cohen said the typical team is comprised of 6-10 individuals. He noted that one element of the plan might be for the Planning & Zoning Commission to develop a zoning overlay, based on the many sets of model regulations that are available. He presented an overview of the possible threats to source water. These include development, storm water runoff, and septic system failures. Depending on how it is implemented, agriculture can be either a friend or foe to source water. Mr. Cohen also reviewed possible protection strategies. D. Wimmer noted the need to involve the First Selectman as well as other commissions. She inquired as to how soon such a program might commence.

Mr. Cohen stated that work could begin right away. D. Wimmer noted the importance of ensuring that outreach and education efforts are not too abstract. Mr. Cohen noted that while the program requires him to work with the public systems, any management plan that is developed would also be applicable to private wells. J. Noel asked how long the process takes. Mr. Cohen stated that the process typically takes 2-6 months. D. Wimmer inquired as to which local entity must accept the proposed plan. The answer is that the plan need not be formally approved by any entity. D. Wimmer noted that the Conservation Commission is not a regulatory body and that the Planning and Zoning Commission is the designated aquifer protection body for the Town. She suggested that it might be a good idea to invite one Inland Wetlands Commission member and one Planning and Zoning Commission member to join the local stakeholders team. Mr. Cohen stated that if the Commission is interested in participating in the program, he will talk to Jana Roberson Butts, Land Use Administrator. The consensus was that the Commission should participate in the program. D. Wimmer asked about the type of time commitment Mr. Cohen will require from the Commission. The answer is that all of the Commission's work can be completed within the confines of its regular meetings. C. Merrill asked whether any fieldwork would be required on the part of the Commission. The answer is no. D. Wimmer will talk to First Selectman Rick Ives about the program. B. Thornton noted that the Agriculture Commission should be involved. The decision was made to have Mr. Cohen attend the Commission's next meeting.

A Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by J. Noel. C. Merrill seconded. Unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 8:44 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Shelley Hopkins

Recording Secretary