

Brooklyn Conservation Commission

Meeting Minutes

Brooklyn Town Hall

June 1, 2015

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

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

The meeting was called to order by D. Wimmer at 7:38 pm.

A Motion to approve the May 4, 2015 meeting minutes was made by M. Oatley. Seconded by C. Merrill. No discussion. Unanimously approved.

J. Noel motioned to move agenda item Old Business – Aquifer Protection Program up before New Business. C. Merrill seconded. No discussion. Unanimously approved.

Old Business – Aquifer Protection Program: Marc Cohen of Atlantic States Rural Water and Wastewater Association provided an update on the project. Land Use Administrator Jana Butts Roberson has informed him that in addition to the Conservation Commission members, the project team will include one member of the Public Works Department; one member of the Planning & Zoning Commission; one member of the Inland Wetlands Commission; and one member of the public. These appointments shall be made by First Selectman Rick Ives.

New Business, Subdivision Reviews: The Commission reviewed the proposed Niemann property subdivision. This property is located on Allen Hill Road. D. Wimmer noted that this is not the first subdivision. There are both a residential dwelling and a storage unit business on the property. The owner proposes to keep the house and sell the business. The applicant proposes a deed restriction restricting the use of an approximately three acre portion to conservation or agricultural uses.

M. Oatley estimated that one third to one quarter of this portion is comprised of farmland soils. There is archaeological probability for three quarters of this portion. J. Noel stated that 90% of the portion is comprised of forested fragmentation. M. Oatley noted that wetlands cover half of the portion.

D. Wimmer stated that the Commission acts in an advisory capacity and must submit its recommendation to the Planning & Zoning Commission. M. Oatley inquired whether it is within the purview of the Commission to take into account financial considerations. D. Wimmer said that she is not sure that it makes sense for the Town to acquire as open space a landlocked piece of land. She noted that while acquisition of open space is one means of conserving natural resources, any other method that accomplishes this, such as a deed restriction, is acceptable. A deed restriction could conserve natural resources such as forests, fields, and meadow stands. J. Noel stated that this is the reason for the Commission's existence. The consensus of the Commission was to recommend a deed restriction. A brief discussion ensued regarding what types of restrictions should be enumerated in the deed restriction.

J. Noel motioned to recommend to the Planning & Zoning Commission that the applicant retain ownership of the yellow outlined portion of the Niemann property on Allen Hill Road and that a deed restriction in perpetuity be placed on that portion of the property with the following restrictions:

1. No structure of any kind shall be built for any reason.
2. No motorized vehicles with the exception of farm equipment.
3. No hunting, trapping, etc.
4. No dumping.
5. No fires.
6. No mining or natural resources extraction of any kind.

M. Oatley seconded. No discussion. Unanimously approved.

New Business, Other: None

Financial Matters, Budget: D. Wimmer stated that she spent approximately \$80 on supplies for Family Fun Day. She suggested the Commission consider purchasing a custom banner using funds from the printing/publication line item.

A Motion was made by J. Noel to purchase a banner. M. Oatley seconded. No discussion. Unanimously approved.

Subcommittee Reports, Event Planning Subcommittee Report: No report.

Subcommittee Reports, Family Fun Day: D. Wimmer stated that she and C. Merrill planted 140 sunflower seeds. The remaining seeds and other materials were given to the Teen Center and the Garden Club at Brooklyn Middle School.

Subcommittee Reports, Spooky Nights: D. Wimmer inquired whether M. Oatley has chosen a new song. He has selected Dead Man's Party by Oingo Boingo.

Old Business, Disc Golf: No update.

Old Business, Other: No discussion.

Correspondence: J. Noel distributed e-mail correspondence from Holly Drinkuth regarding conservation-related issues that should be brought to the attention of state legislators before the General Assembly adjourns on June 3. Of particular interest is the proposed Conveyance Act, which would enable private sand and gravel extraction companies to build access roads on the Quinebaug Wildlife Management Area.

Public Comment: None

D. Wimmer noted that CACIWC dues have been built into the budget.

A Motion to adjourn the meeting was made by J. Noel. M. Oatley seconded. Unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 9:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Shelley Hopkins
Recording Secretary