

CUMBERLAND CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Minutes of meeting, February 11, 2010

The Cumberland Conservation Commission (CCC) met on February 11, at the Arnold Mills Community House, Hillside Road, Cumberland, at 6:30 p.m., with George Gettinger presiding. In attendance were Julie Guerin, secretary, John Monaghan, Mike Scalzi, Greg Myers and Lucille Martin.

MINUTES: Minutes from the January meeting were approved.

Mr. John Aubin, Director of Planning, accepted an invitation from the CCC to attend. Mr. Gettinger described the need for the CCC to receive more timely and detailed notification of pending development proposals. Mr. Aubin will have someone in his office forward the agenda and detail backup for the Technical Review Committee (TRC) meetings to Mr. Gettinger each month going forward. The topics discussed at the TRC meetings will be on the Planning Board meeting agenda at the end of the same month. This will give the CCC the opportunity to review the TRC agenda at our monthly meetings, and submit advisory comments to the Planning Board prior to their meetings. Mr. Aubin will include the CCC in all updates to the Comprehensive Plan, and he also provided updates on several projects underway in town, including the Heritage Park and Manville Landing.

SUBCOMMITTEE REPORTS:

Trails: Mr. Aubin reported that Mr. Lieb, Town Planner, submitted a grant application to the Dept. of Environmental Management (DEM) on Feb. 11 for \$50,000 plus a \$10,000 match to in kind efforts. The courts are currently accepting proposals for the use of the Emerson property. The next step will be a walk-through of the property to begin mapping actual trails. Obtaining easements on private property will be the responsibility of the Planning Dept. going forward.

OLD BUSINESS:

Diamond Hill Park: Mrs. Guerin asked if state guidelines were developed prior to handing the park over to the town. Mr. Aubin replied that the town's legal counsel, Mr. Hefner, is meeting with the DEM. It appears that the DEM will leave decisions up to the town. It is critical that a management plan be developed for the park. Mrs. Guerin will forward notes that were written by Mr. Monaghan regarding proposed used of the park to Mr. Aubin for his reference.

Wood Furnace Ordinance: Mr. Aubin is ready to present the ordinance to the ordinance subcommittee for review and revision and then approval by the full Town Council. The penalty wording for violations has been included. The Municipal Court in Cumberland will be able to hear cases regarding recalcitrant property owners and

impose a fine of up to \$500 per day. Mr. Scalzi requested that the ordinance be updated to include more stringent guidelines being published in 2010 by the federal Environmental Protection Agency.

Franklin Farm: Mrs. Guerin reported on the recent meeting of the Friends of the Metcalf-Franklin Farm. Plans for this year's garden were discussed, with two new gardens being developed. One will be for additional vegetables closer to the barn, and one will be a kitchen garden featuring herbs and flowers that were planted in colonial times. This area will also be used as a gathering space for groups of volunteers.

Fish Ladders: Mr. Aubin commented that he will be attending a site visit at the Cumberland Heritage Park to review a future fish ladder at that location.

Cemeteries: Mr. Scalzi reported that RI Historic Cemetery Commissioner Evelyn Wheeler discovered an obscure law that the Veteran Administration is supposed to be maintaining the graves of Americans soldiers. Senator Whitehouse approached the RIHCC so that they apply for Federal Grant monies for the restoration and cleanup of the neglected Historic cemeteries across the State of RI. Mr. Scalzi helped to write those proposals which also went to Senator Jack Reed, and Congressmen Kennedy and Langevin.

NEW BUSINESS:

Town Charter: Discussion of modifications to the Town Charter with respect to the CCC were held and the recommended revision is as follows:

1610 Conservation Commission

There shall be a Conservation Commission which shall consist of seven (7) members appointed by the Town Council each for a term of three (3) years except that all vacancies shall be filled for the balance of unexpired terms, such appointments to be made by the Town Council. The Conservation Commission shall make recommendations to the Town Council and to all other Town Boards and Commissions for the preservation of the natural resources of the Town and for all other ecological questions pending before any and all such Boards and Commissions.

Mr. Gettinger will follow up with Ms Giovanelli, Town Clerk, regarding next steps and any additional requirements.

Open Space Commission: Mr. Monaghan was unanimously elected to replace Mr. Geary as the liaison to the town's Open Space Commission.

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Julie M. Guerin

Secretary