

**MINUTES**  
ENFIELD CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING in the Enfield Room  
820 Enfield Street, Enfield, CT 06082  
Tuesday, May 9, 2023-7:30PM

RECEIVED  
ENFIELD TOWN CLERK  
2023 MAY 16 PM 3:12  
Sharon Bailey

**1. Call to Order**

Chairman William Cote called the meeting to order at 7:45 PM.

**2. Roll Call**

Members Present: Chairman William Cote, Commissioners Karen LaPlante, Kathleen Vose, Gretchen Pfeifer-Hall, Phil Kober, and Michael Dynia.

Members Absent: Timothy McGuire and Nancy Wyzga

Also present: Ms. Driver, Assistant Planner

Chair Cote stated that Commissioner Kober is a voting member.

**3. Approval of Minutes:**

a) April 11, 2023

Commissioner LaPlante made a motion to approve the minutes for April 11, 2023, seconded by Commissioner Vose.

Discussion: Commissioner Dynia stated that in section **8. New Business** “**A vote by a show of hands 5-2-0 passed unanimously**” The word **unanimously** should be removed and add that Chair Cote and Commissioner Wyzga voted against.

Commissioner LaPlante stated in item **6. Reports of Officers, Committees, and Staff** – Commissioner Dynia stated that the Enfield Watershed Committee revised to read the **Scantic River Watershed Association**.

Commissioner LaPlante made a motion to approve the minutes as amended for April 11, 2023, seconded by Commissioner Vose.

**Motion passed by 5-0-1 vote.**

**4. Public Communication:** None

**5. Correspondence:** None

**6. Reports of Officers, Committees, and Staff:**

Ms. Driver stated that the Open Space Ordinance is slowly moving forward.

Chair Cote discussed the Community Environmental award that Commissioner LaPlante brought up last meeting. He did get some information from the members of the Scantic River Watershed Association about Kirsten and the background on how long she has been doing the testing on the Scantic River and to get some more information on what she is doing in Somers. Kirsten is making a film on the Connecticut River and the tributaries, The Connecticut River Conservancy and in association with Silvio Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge. He put out the nomination together and submitted it Monday.

**7. Unfinished Business:**

**a.) List of Natural Resources**

Chair Cote stated that he exchanged emails with Nancy and she is working on the geography part and she has not completed that yet. Chair Cote and Commissioner Vose are working on the geology part. He took the POCD from 2011 and read through natural resources and climate change and picking items and putting them down on a form and leaving space for adding pictures.

**b.) Open Space**

Commissioner LaPlante asked Ms. Driver if she had a list. Ms. Driver said yes, she received the one that she gave her. Commissioner LaPlante said she does not know what kind of open space some of those parcels are. Ms. Driver believes the Assessor may have a list.

Commissioner Pfeifer-Hall stated that at the last meeting they had talked about Nathan Hale School. She said there was a public hearing and that she and Karen gave input. Commissioner Pfeifer-Hall said she sent a letter to District 3 Representative saying that she does not think the Town should sell Nathan Hale, they could lease it and demolish the rest and keep it as open space because they do not have that much open space in that part of town.

Commissioner LaPlante said the other open space issue is 2 Chapel Street, which is part of the parcel that they are looking to redevelop that was the old Lamagna Center. That parcel where the community gardens used to be, was bought with open space funds. It was purchased by the town for \$222,000. She said that same year \$225,000 went missing from their open space fund, so they took the money from the open space fund to purchase this parcel. Commissioner LaPlante stated that they want the money back.

Ms. Driver indicated that they need to request the money back by submitting a letter to the Town Manager.

Commissioner LaPlante made a motion to have the Chair, William Cote write up a letter to the Town Manager and Town Council to return the \$225,000 that was used to purchase 2 Chapel Street to the Open Space Fund when the property is sold to the developer.

Commissioner Kober suggested conducting an inquiry or validating this by pulling up a copy of the public hearing and the motion to see what occurred. The Commissioners decided to review prior to submitting a letter.

Ms. Driver stated that she did reach out to the Assessor in 2021, asking if she had the open space list. Ms. Driver read the response from the Assessor. "If you are referring to developments that are deed open space to the town, that is not considered open space for their purposes, it's valued at all other vacant properties. Open space is statute specific for assessing. The land coded as open space was being reviewed as it may not have been eligible for open space purposes".

Commissioner LaPlante suggested requesting a list of town owned properties and seeing what is vacant.

Ms. Driver stated that they could do that by going onto the GIS.

#### **c.) PA490 Open Space**

Chair Cote stated the Open Space Ordinance is moving forward. Ms. Driver indicated that there is no set date yet.

Commissioner LaPlante stated that the problem she has with this ordinance that they talked about at the Town Council meeting is that it's modeled after Willington's, it's limited to open land 5 acres or more; residential property. This is not where the open space properties are in Enfield. Most of the open space in Enfield is in industrial.

#### **8. New Business:**

Commissioner Kober suggested creating a subcommittee to research 2 Chapel Street and generate a letter to the Town Council and Town Manager. Commissioner Pfeifer-Hall stated that she would put together the letter. Commissioner LaPlante said that she would look for the minutes of the public hearing regarding 2 Chapel Street.

Commissioner Kober made a motion to create a subcommittee on the status of 2 Chapel Street as preserved open space seconded by Commissioner Dynia.

#### **Motion passed unanimously.**

Commissioner LaPlante passed out information on the Mass Mutual property. The documents were obtained from the Environment and Human Health Organization. One document indicated 12 reasons why synthetic turf fields pose a health risk. The documents provide an overview of the hazards associated with synthetic turf.

Ms. Driver stated that she received an email from the Connecticut Water Company about this as well. Connecticut Water Company will weigh in on this use of synthetic turf. Ms. Driver

referenced the State website, the aquifer protection area guide to best management practices for golf courses, athletic fields, etc. and specifically mentions turf management.

Commissioner LaPlante said this is going to come up with Planning and Zoning and Wetlands and we should be prepared.

Chair Cote suggested putting something together a comment with supporting documentation so when we must move forward, we have something.

Ms. Driver indicated that this point in time they do not have any information on the turf, and although she understands that they want to be prepared they should move on until more information is received.

Commissioner LaPlante brought up that some are up for reappointment in June. They must reapply for their appointment.

**9. Next Meeting Date:** June 13, 2023

**10. Adjournment:**

Commissioner Kober made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner LaPlante.

**Motion passed unanimously.**

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 PM

Prepared by: Recording Secretary, Sandie Barone