

**NATURAL RESOURCES AND OPEN SPACE COMMISSION
MEETING**

MARCH 28, 2012

**THIRD FLOOR CONFERENCE ROOM
HAMDEN GOVERNMENT CENTER
2750 DIXWELL AVENUE
HAMDEN**

Commissioners in attendance: Michael Horn, Chairman
Mary Grace Larke
Aris Stalis
Dr. William Doheny, Jr.
Hamilton Milroy
Daniel Camenga
Peter Vitali
Richard Bell
Michael McManus
Kevin Burgio

Others in attendance: Daniel Kops, Assistant Town Planner
Peggy Craft, Acting Commission Clerk

Call to Order

Chairman Horn called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM.\

1. Review: Minutes of January 25, 2012

Chairman Horn asked if there were any additions, deletions or corrections to the Minutes of the January 25, 2012 Meeting. Hearing none, Mr. Horn called for a motion to approve the Minutes as presented. **Dr. Doheny motioned to approve the Minutes as presented. Mr. Bell seconded the motion that passed unanimously.**

2. Old Business:

Maselli Property – Conservation Easement

Mr. Horn discussed an e-mail indicating that the Mayor has backed off on the easement. He asked Dr. Doheny to inquire why the Mayor was doing this. He also asked all the members of the Commission to contact their local representatives to find out why this is happening. He has contacted his representative in the Sixth District about this. Sixth District Councilman Tom Rousseau told Mr. Horn that he is working on it.

Next, Mr. Horn asked if anyone knew why the Mayor has backed off on this. He also asked Mr. Kops if he had any information on this. Mr. Kops did not.

Mr. Horn asked if anyone had contacted or heard from their local representatives. The Commissioners had not heard from their representatives.

Dr. Doheny reported that the Mayor said he guaranteed there would not be 72 houses on this property. He added that this is a considerable step back from three years ago when it was agreed that there would be a

conservation easement. He also discussed the former easement that was objected to by the Town Attorney. Dr. Doheny said they could go with a generic easement. He added that other than "trust me", there was nothing specific. He said when Craig Henrici was Mayor he was told that there would be a conservation easement. He added that it is time to "fish or cut bait." He added that it is his feeling that this is easy to ignore because there are not a lot of people talking to him about it. He said his recommendation is that the Commissioners speak to the members of the Legislative Council. Mr. Horn said he hopes they are not planning to put the Animal Shelter there. Mr. Kops said they are not. Dr. Doheny said he heard there might be a winery there. Mr. Kops said at this point, plans for the winery are sketchy. He said the person who was interested in building a winery was told to have plans drawn up. He has not done so yet.

Dr. Doheny said a conservation easement, as it was formerly constructed, would not preclude a winery; it would preclude a winery and houses. He said if the Town purchased this for open space, why not put up a straight easement and have it only for open space.

Mike Colaiacovo, the Councilman from that district is in favor of a conservation easement. He has spoken to the Mayor several times, and is pursuing this. It was noted that the Councilman from the Eight District is also in favor of an easement. It was also noted that if enough Council members say they are in favor of an easement it would be done

McMahon Property – Conservation Easement

Mr. Kops noted that the Town got this property in foreclosure. Mr. Horn asked if the deed has been transferred. Mr. Kops said yes, it is the Town's property. Mr. Horn said an easement is needed.

Mr. Horn wanted it noted in the Minutes that the Commission had passed a motion on the McMahon Property the Town should pursue an easement on the McMahon property.

Town owned land committee report

Mr. Horn moved this item to the end of the meeting.

3. New Business: Earth Day Saturday, April 21, 2012

Earth Day will be held on April 21, 2012, at the Hamden Middle School. Mr. Horn will be out of town. The Commission will have a table at this event. Mr. Vitali will take care of the Commission's plans for Earth Day.

Re-Appointment of Gilbert Spencer as a member of the West Rock Ridge Conservation Commission.

Dr. Doheny noted that the correct title is West Rock Ridge State Park Advisory Council. After a brief discussion during which Dr. Doheny explained the duties and function of the Council, Chairman Horn called for a motion. **Dr. Doheny motioned to re-appoint Gilbert Spencer as a member of the West Rock Ridge State Park Advisory Council. Commissioner Vitali seconded the motion that passed unanimously.**

Ms. Larke said she attended a Legislative Council meeting where many people from the Highwood remediation area were encouraged to discuss their concerns and problems. She reported that most of the people were concerned with the loss of street trees. They also expressed worry that the trees would not be replaced.

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Mr. Kops asked if anyone has said that they are not getting trees. He added that this is the DEEP's call not ours. He also said that the plan is to replace the landscaping. He doesn't think they would not honor the plan. There was a discussion regarding this subject..

Mr. Stalis said he attended Connecticut Urban Force Council Meeting, and it appears that UI is looking to take a chunk of money and go in to communities and do street tree planting. He will keep an eye on this.

Mr. Milroy said that it is important to plant the right kind of trees. Mr. Kops said there is a list of acceptable trees. There was a discussion regarding the role of the Tree Warden in Town. The Tree Warden has jurisdiction over all the street trees in Town. There was a discussion regarding tree coverage in Town. Dr. Doheny said there used to be a line item in the Public Works budget for tree planting. Mr. Kops will determine if this line item still exists.

Town Owned Land Committee Report

Commissioner Vitali discussed the program he created. The program includes five items from the GIS property list. The items include a property map, a property card, a description sheet and a comment page. This was done by using the bird's eye view from the Town GIS. He did not fill in the neighboring open space. He further discussed the comment line and said that the Commission could add information to this page including photos. He added that the comment page is for the Commission's use. The other items are the Town's GIS information.

Mr. Horn discussed a .12 acre of town owned property on Dessa Drive, that is for a storm drain.

Mr. Vitali said there are 140 pieces of property included in his survey. He only included property this is owned by the Town of Hamden. He did not include property owned by the Hamden Historical Society, the Land Conservation Trust or the Housing Authority. He created 140 folders in alphabetical order.

There was a discussion regarding what could be added to the survey.

Mr. Horn discussed comments made by Mr. Vitali at a previous meeting. Mr. Vitali and Mr. Stalis said they are defining parameters.

Mr. Vitali demonstrated his survey program on his laptop computer for the Commissioners.

ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business to come before the Commission, and Chairman Horn called for a motion to adjourn. **Dr. Doheny motion to adjourn. Mr. Milroy seconded the motion to adjourn. The motion passed with a unanimous vote.** Mr. Horn adjourned the meeting at 8:20 PM.

Submitted by: _____
Peggy Craft, Acting Commission Clerk