



Town of Hamden

Planning and Zoning Department

Hamden Government Center
2750 Dixwell Avenue
Hamden, CT 06518
Tel: (203) 287-7070
Fax: (203) 287-7075

THE NATURAL RESOURCES AND OPEN SPACE COMMISSION, Town of Hamden, held a Regular Meeting on Wednesday, November 20, 2013 at 7:30 p.m. in the 3rd Floor Conference Room, Hamden Government Center. The following issues were discussed:

Commissioners in Attendance: Marigrace Larke, Peter Vitali, Frank Cohen, Mike Horn, Bill Doheny, Jonathan Richardson, Kevin Burgio, Mike McManus

Commissioners Absent: Richard Bell

Others in Attendance: Assistant Town Planner Dan Kops, Meeting Clerk Gerry Tobin

New member Mr. Richardson told the Commission that he is currently a post doctoral research scientist at the University of Connecticut. He has lived in Hamden for eight years. His wife teaches at the Helen Street School, and they have two boys, ages three and one. They moved here from Seattle, Washington, but he has lived all over the Country.

Mr. Cohen is originally from Eugene, Oregon, and moved to Connecticut in 1969. He was in Hamden High School's class of 1975. He did his undergraduate studies at Cornell University, and graduate studies at the University of Michigan. He is currently the associate editor of New Haven Living. Mr. Cohen is also a restaurant critic. He likes to hike Sleeping Giant. Mr. Cohen is married to a Filipino woman who works at the New Haven Advocate, which is about to close its doors, and at Ibiza restaurant. They have a son who just went back to the Philippines. Mr. Cohen's environmental awareness is from having four properties on small islands in the Philippines. He said it is very interesting trying to preserve islands against all manner of issues, including the recent typhoon. Fortunately there was no major damage to his properties.

1. Review: Minutes of September 25, 2013

Mr. Vitali made a motion to approve the minutes of September 25, 2013. Mr. Burgio seconded the motion. The vote was seven in favor. Dr. Doheny abstained.

Minutes of October 30, 2013

An informal session was held on October 30th, so there was not need to vote on the notes.

2. **Continuing Business:**
Masselli property

Dr. Doheny said we received the grant for the roof and it is going out to bid. We are waiting for the other grant application to the Department of Agriculture that won't be acted upon until after the first of the year. The deadline for submission of this grant is December 9th. If approved, the funds will be used to do a study of the property. Mr. Horn said the Dunbar Hill Civic Association has an interest in what happens to this property. Dr. Doheny has met the family that lives in the farm house. Mike Horn signed a letter on behalf of the commission commenting in favor of the grant.

Mr. Horn noted that this commission was formed in 2000 when the former Conservation Commission was divided into two parts, the Inland Wetlands Commission and this Commission.

Mr. Kops had no reports on any of the properties of interest.

There was discussion on the clay pit property. Mr. Vitali was trying to identify it on a map.

One of the items we looked at a couple of months ago was to find a way to find new members. Mr. Richardson and Mr. Cohen both saw the notice in the Chronicle. Another new member will be joining the commission next month and we will then have one opening.

Mr. Horn explained that one of the nice things about being an advisory commission is that we are not that structured, but we do get things done.

Mr. Horn mentioned that the Land Trust held a walk at the Olin Powder Farm, now called Five Lakes Park. No one from the commission attended, but Mr. Kops was able to direct some members of the public to the event. Mr. Horn explained that the remediation of Five Lakes Park will have to wait until the Newhall remediation is finished. Mr. Horn said tours are held at Five Lakes Park twice a year. There is a lot of wildlife in there. The end of April and the beginning of May are great times to tour the property.

There was nothing new to report on the Bednarzic property.

3. New Business:

2014 Meeting Calendar

The November meeting date should be changed to Wednesday, November 19, 2014.

Dr. Doheny made a motion to approve the 2014 meeting schedule as amended. Ms. Larke seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

Ms. Larke said the first Earth Day Meeting will be held on December 11th. The Earth Day celebration will be held on April 12th. She indicated that there was a chance Atka the wolf will be allowed there.

Mr. Horn indicated that the bald eagle pair can still be seen on State Street.

Mr. Kops mentioned that the Town is coming out with a new program for trash and recycling collection. New trash and recycling bins that will be emptied by a truck, will be delivered to Hamden residents. There will be a 96 gallon blue container for recycling, and a large green trash bin for garbage. There will also be instructions for separating trash from recycling. Trash pickup will not be provided for those not using the new bins.

Mr. Horn said he would like to see a new chairman. Elections are in February. Ms. Larke is the vice chair and Mr. Burgio is the corresponding secretary.

Mr. Horn responded to Mr. Cohen that this commission operates through Planning & Zoning. The Mayor presents issues to the Commission, or we come up with issues ourselves. Mr. Horn mentioned that commissioners have testified at Inland Wetlands and Planning & Zoning.

Mr. Cohen mentioned a ravine on Paradise Avenue as it leaves Laura Road and further along on Paradise Avenue from where the Blue Trail passes through. Dr. Doheny said that property is in the West Rock Ridge area, and the State has the right of first refusal on properties in that area. Dr. Doheny described the Town's cooperative agreement where they have been buying land near Brooksvale Park and the Naugatuck State Forest from the west to east, and the Town is buying land from the east to the west. When the Town purchases land, the State reimburses the Town for 65% of the cost. We are in

negotiations now for the Bednarzic property consisting of 12-14 acres, and there are another 20 odd acres there that may be on the market. We need funds to purchase open space land. Dr. Doheny asked Representative Sharkey if we could get some CIA money, and mentioned that several other towns have received CIA grants.

Starting in January with the new legislative session, there will be a new program out of Mary Mushinski's committee. Dr. Doheny explained a serious flaw in State owned open space land. It allows the legislature and the commissioner to dispose of any land he wants to with no oversight. This came up twice, near the Goodspeed Opera house which eventually failed due to appraisal problems and land was transferred from Hammonasset State Park to the Town of Madison. This has to stop. They will try to draft some legislation this year to address that. Mr. Cohen said that might make a good New Haven Living story at some point.

Dr. Doheny said we would like to enable DEP to give a conservation easement to the Land Trust. We have been able to get money from the RWA or the Land Trust to get conservation easements on our land, but that is not the case with the Maselli Farm. That property is not protected. Certain lands do not need protection. Dr. Doheny met with Representative Sharkey, Senator Crisco and Zupkis, so that is something to be aware of.

There was no further business.

4. Adjournment:

Dr. Doheny made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Burgio seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Submitted by: _____
Gerry Tobin, Meeting Clerk