



Town of Hamden

Planning and Zoning Department

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MINUTES: THE NATURAL RESOURCES AND OPEN SPACE COMMISSION, Town of Hamden, held a Regular Meeting on Wednesday, January 30, 2013 at 7:30 p.m. in the 3rd Floor Conference Room, Hamden Government Center, 2750 Dixwell Avenue, Hamden, CT. The following issues were discussed.

Commissioners in Attendance: Bill Doheny, Dick Bell, Mike McManus, Kevin Burgio, Peter Vitali, Mike Horn, Hamilton Milroy, Marigrace Lark,

Excused Absence: Aris Stalis

Others in Attendance: Journalism Students from SCSU, Dr. Doheny's son Bill and Grandson Will Doheny, Assistant Town Planner Dan Kops, Meeting Clerk Gerry Tobin

1. Review: Minutes of December 19, 2012

On Page 1, under item 2, continuing business: change the Town canceled to Habitat for Humanity canceled

On Page 2, second paragraph under new business change us to Friends of CT State Parks

Mr. Vitali made a motion to approve the minutes of December 19th as corrected. Dr. Doheny seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

2. Continuing Business:

A. Masselli property and other properties of interest
C.I.A. Grants

Dr. Doheny reported that Dr. McManus, Mr. Milroy, himself, two people from the Civic Association and a Council Representative were supposed to meet regarding the community gardens. Due to several unforeseen circumstances, this meeting didn't happen and they are scheduled to meet next Thursday. The Barn on the property has hit and recovered from a snag. The contact that was ushering the grants through is no longer in that position. Several weeks later, another person who worked with Dr. Doheny on grants for the Town Hall and the Lock Keeper's house has moved up into that position, so the placer (grant request) is still in place. They are working on two aspects now. They can get a \$5,000 grant from the the Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation, which requires matching dollars from the Town. In order to apply for this grant you have to be a member of the National Trust and both the Town and the Historical Society are members. The barn roof is leaking. We could use the grant to do a stabilization, but the problem with that is if we do a patch and go for another grant after, the patch money would be wasted. The next approach would be to use the grant to get some sort of engineering study so we can do an RFP to see what it would cost to restore the barn (better approach). The grant could be all used up with

architectural and design costs. Perhaps Bob Labulis, the Town's building official, is qualified to do that. People Dr. Doheny has worked on grants with in the past are now working at the State level, and could authorize a larger grant (\$20,000).

Mr. Bell asked what the end game (object) is. He feels this project would be very costly and might not go over big in these economic times. Dr. Doheny said fixing it as a barn for agriculture with no addition of lights, plumbing, etc. would not be that costly. He hopes that if we get grants, the Town might put \$25,000 into it. A community garden or CSA would be a good use for a portion of the property. Dr. McManus said establishing a community garden requires a lot of work and oversight. Mr. Milroy and his wife Fran participated in the existing community garden 20-25 years ago.

Dr. Doheny reported that the 59 acres on State Street is in the hopper for review, and further action will depend upon Governor Malloy's budget, which currently has no money for surveys. He said the owner found the A-2 survey. The owner is anxious to dispose of the property.

- B. Survey of Town owned properties – no report
- C. East Rock polo field – continued vigilance

3. New Business:

- A. Report from Earth Day Committee Representative

Ms. Larke attended the first meeting of the Earth Day Committee. 3-4,000 people are expected to attend. There will be commercial areas and a food court with local vendors. Hazwaste people will be giving out containers again. The committee wants Big Brothers and Big Sisters, the Salvation Army and Goodwill, to attend and explain how they recycle merchandise. They will also be there to collect. Stop & Shop gives out cloth grocery bags and the committee will mark Hamden Earth Day on them. Ms. Larke said she thought it would be a good idea for a kid project of covering pine cones with peanut butter and rolling them in seeds. The president of the Morris Cove garden club would help with this craft. There was discussion regarding having Atka, a friendly white 140 pound Arctic wolf on display. Mr. Horn would be willing to pay for this exhibit. A previous town attorney felt that this would be too dangerous and would not allow it. This wolf has visited many schools in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut. Dr. Doheny suggested Vidor, an Andean Condor might be available. Ms. Larke will pass this information on to the committee. A petting zoo, the reptile club, a magician, a scavenger hunt, etc., will be on the program, and the committee is trying to get more exhibits. This program costs about \$4,000 run.

Mr. Vitali said he would like to take pictures of commissioners to put on their kiosk for the Earth Day event.

B. Five Lakes Park

Mr. Horn said when he joined the Commission back in 2000, Five Lakes Park (Olin Powder Farm) was on the agenda. The administrations said that the Newhall remediation would have to be completed first before the Town could think about requesting remediation of the Park, because it was important to take care of the residential areas first. . The Newhall project is complete. Mr. Horn wishes to bring forward the disposition of Five Lakes Park. The RWA has done nothing about the property since it is not a threat to the water supply. The site might be useful for passive recreation. There is a lot of wildlife in there and it seems to be doing really well. We don't know whether or not remediation is necessary. If the Town takes possession of the property, it would be responsible for what is in there. How do we move this forward? Mr. Bell reported that the RWA owned the property around the Newhallville school, and are responsible for the school yard. They have no responsibility for anything in the Park. Olin is responsible for everything in the park. Mr. Horn said he will ask for a consensus later, but it is in the long term

interest of this commission to have the park open for passive recreation. Dr. Doheny said the last time there was any interest in the park was when Gina was the commissioner. She walked the property and asked that the Town not request any additional cleanup funds at that time because they had just begun the Newhall remediation. Mr. Horn received some documents showing the estimated cost of cleaning up the park to be \$55 million. This is the only open space park in the southern end of town. The consensus of the commission, with one abstention, was hopefully someday this park will be open for passive recreation. Mr. Kops will talk to the administration and commissioners should wait for a response before contacting anyone at the state level. When that time comes, members of the Senate can be reached at 1-800-842-1420, and House members at 1-800-842-8267.

Dr. Doheny mentioned that the Friends of CT State Parks group will be in Hartford, on Wednesday, May 20th. He is hoping that it will also be agriculture day where food is available.

Mr. Bell said that Olin would not be willing to open the park for public use if there are the contaminants in there that people seem to think are there. Guided tours of the Park take place in May and September, and it is usually advertised in the Post Chronicle.

Mr. Bell was involved in the Olin/Science Park Corporation Project. Olin donated the land to Science Park and really stepped up to the plate on the remedial issues in that area. All but one of the Science Park buildings were once owned by Olin. The other newer building belonged to Winchester and is now owned by Yale. He will see what he can find out from the residual Olin presence.

Will Doheny is here for his Citizenship in the Community Badge, which is required for him to become an Eagle Scout.

5. Adjournment

Mr. Vitali made a motion to adjourn. Dr. Doheny seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.

Submitted by: _____
Gerry Tobin, Meeting Clerk