

Westminster Conservation Commission

Location: Westminster West Town Hall

Tuesday, July 23, 2020

1. Discussion Session/Unofficial Meeting (no quorum) called to order 7:20 p.m.

Attendance: Tatiana Schreiber, Chair, Rachael Shaw, Secretary, Kathy Kingston (Chair, Planning Commission)

2. Adjustments to Agenda: acceptance of minutes postponed due to lack of quorum.

3. Acceptance of Minutes: 12/5; 1/30; 2/27, 5/28 – 10 [4 meetings]
(postponed)

4. Communications and Public Comment:

Since Kathy Kingston was present, we decided to focus on discussion around Town Plan work, and how the WCC could help with this process

5. Unfinished Business (Discussion / Action) - (Part (a) postponed due to shift in discussion focus)

a) Invasive species brochure – discuss progress/assign tasks –

New deadline -

Next work session

Review budget – write budget request to town

b) Town Plan recommendations –

Kathy brought a booklet called Implementing Act 171: Land Use Planning to Address Forest Fragmentation. This is an act to prevent land fragmentation and protect/support wildlife corridors. This Act needs to be incorporated into the Town Plans (sections: Natural Resources, Transportation). The Conservation Commission should be aware of this act/implementation.

Town Plan: Gets revised every 7 years. Kathy shared a proposed table of contents for the 2022-2029 new town plan. She said that the current town plan will be incorporated into the new town plan. The WCC had previously worked on revisions to several sections of the current Plan. Kathy suggested that these notes and suggestions can be incorporated into the new town plan as well.

Kathy noted that the language in the Town Plan is legally binding (when the word “shall” is used). Thus when the Zoning Administrator, Planning Board, Select board, Development Review Board (DRB) etc. looks at applications, they need to abide by the Town Plan’s directives.

Question: how does the Town Plan get implemented? It is used when questions come up for the DRB but there is not currently a clear process for follow up/implementation. The WCC suggests that a clear process and timeline for implementation of recommendations be added.

An example of how we can update the Town Plan: The WCC suggests we update the

introduction to the Plan to note the context of climate change and how it is predicted to affect the Town going forward as important context for the rest of the Plan. With regard to the agriculture section, Kathy and Tatiana offered to solicit local farmers for their input. Tatiana will make up a short questionnaire to be sent to each farmer along with copy of the current section, to request their suggestions.

It was noted that Westminster could use a distinct Energy Committee.

We will send Kathy the access information for the Town Plan Google document we had created to facilitate editing and revisions going forward.

6. New Business (Discussion / Action) –

a) recruitment of new members. Given the anticipated resignation of one member who is moving out of Westminster, we discussed the need to recruit new members. Publicize the need for Conservation Commission members in the Front Porch Forum and in the Gazette. Check in with Town about putting on the Front Porch Forum. It is not required but we would like to have broad geographical and age distribution among Commission members.

7. Other Business: none

8. Date of Next Meeting: August 27th, (or Sept 24 TBD)

9. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm

Minutes respectfully submitted by
Rachael Shaw, secretary