CCC Minutes for the meeting of November 17, 2022

Location: Zoom

The meeting was called to order at 10:34 am.

Attending was Heidi Cunnick, Chair, Commissioners Nancy Berry, Deb Bennett, Katherine Freygang. Also in attendance was journalist Riley Klein of the Lakeville Journal.

The minutes of the Oct 20, 2022 were approved. The agenda for today was approved.

**TREASURER’S REPORT**

Treasurer Nancy Berry reported that after the expenditure of $219.58 for water testing and $65.00 for CACIWC dues, the CCC has a balance of $1,975.42.

**OLD BUSINESS**

 **Section #1 Projects Near Completion**

It was decided that the Commission will schedule 10 meetings for the calendar year 2023 and will meet every month except for December and February. The third Thursday of the month was agreeable to all, but the time was changed to 9:00 am. Physical location has not been confirmed, but there is a desire to start some in-person meetings this year.

 **Section #2-Education and Outreach**

Waste and Composting- As reported last month, Nancy and Heidi will be working on this issue with the Garden Club on speakers and presentations. These educational programs will be targeting homeowners as well as the town as part of a double pronged effort. Gordon met with Katie and said that he would like to concentrate on educating the public about the benefits of home economy whereby the people of Cornwall would learn to save up front by, e.g., buying in bulk with less packaging, using the freezer, using leftovers, etc. Less waste would be the result of this campaign. A big issue of late is the new buying trend of online shopping which generates huge packing waste. It was noted that Sustainable CT also had many ideas for this type of action.

The second approach will feature municipal composting. Ted and Will, the Transfer Station attendants, are looking into a regional composting program whereby a firm is hired to pick up compost collected at the Transfer Station. Salisbury/Sharon Transfer Station is already doing this. Six towns need to eventually participate to make this program sustainable. It was noted that the cost for this service to the towns has come down considerably.

Heidi and Nancy will be meeting with town officials as well as the Garden Club to develop this program.

**Education**-Heidi spoke for the CCC at the Cornwall Conservation Trust’s Forum on Conservation and Affordable Housing. She made the point that conservation lands and property needed for affordable housing do not necessarily overlap and further that these concerns are not necessarily in conflict. Heidi also stressed that ecosystem services rendered by conserved lands are beneficial for all of Cornwall and vital to our economy and well-being. There seemed to be general agreement on these points.

**Section #3-Program Monitoring Whereby Active Ongoing Projects are Monitored by Committee Leads**

 Herbicide by HRRC

Heidi met with various agents of this program and presented maps showing various data points including inland wetland areas, aquifers, natural diversity data base points, Inner and Outer corridors of the Housatonic River. The “agents” were a cross-town group of concerned citizens. They will encourage the railroad to use Best Management Practices giving these towns the dates, chemical to be used and amount of the same. Further, the group will meet with Tim Abbot of HVA in order to see if water tests will capture residual herbicide.

 Sustainable CT

Katie reported that she met with Gordon to discuss ongoing Sust CT projects. She expects the town to get credit for the Greenway project and perhaps the Town Garage will get solar panels. Katie also reported that various projects will be worked on this coming year. She mentioned the Energy Efficiency Program at the school, EV stations for cars, analyzing the CT Clean Energy Action air quality program, working with other town commissions (EDC) to wrap up their programs.

 Ridgeline Project

Deb and Heidi presented the Horizon Line Conservation District Overlay Zone to the Planning and Zoning Commission, outlining a proposal for the adoption of a horizon-line (ridgeline) zone. Properties in this “belt” would be subject to a stricter review by P&Z to prevent overly impactful construction on our town’s highest points as viewed from Cornwall’s public roads. The CCC has worked for a number of years with HVA to develop objective mapping to complement the regulations.

Heidi delivered a Powerpoint demonstration of the methodology and justification adopted by Kent in 2005. Kent P&Z Commissioner, Darrell Cherniske, followed up with an hour long question and answer period.

The Conservation Commission acted on its town advisory role and the presentation was well-received. P&Z will advise us should they need further explanations. CCC may develop an educational program for the town as well.

 HMPA

A round of applause was given for actions mainly enacted by Katie Freygang, public citizens Bruce Bennett of Cornwall and Michael Nadeau of Sharon for their persistence and success in completing Phase 1 of the Housatonic Meadows Restoration. Assistant to the project , Deb Bennett, noted that what started with discord between the public and DEEP ended up being much more agreeable and productive. Phase 2 will be completed in the spring of 2023.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:30.