

TOWN OF MANSFIELD
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Minutes of the February 20, 2019 Conference Room B, Audrey P. Beck Building
REVISED DRAFT MINUTES

Members Present: Mary Harper, Quentin Kessel, Erin King, John Silander, Chadwick Rittenhouse,, Julia Rogers and Michael Soares. *Members absent:* Scott Lehmann

Others present: Jennifer Kaufman (Wetlands Agent), Paul Ferri (UConn's compliance section of their reorganized Environmental Program) and Margaret Kessel.

1. The meeting was **called to order** at 7:02 PM by Chair Soares.
2. **The minutes of the January 16, 2019.** Soares expressed concern with the second sentence of Section 4. Rittenhouse re-worded it as follows: "The extension of Discovery Drive through wetlands to Route 195, an idea floated early in the study process, lingers as a "strategy to consider" for Arterial traffic control." Rittenhouse moved the minutes as amended and Rogers seconded the motion. It passed unanimously. It should be noted that the CC recommended against the proposed extension.
3. **Opportunity for Public Comment.** There was no public comment.
4. **New Business: Boards and Committee Handbook.** Kaufman made a brief presentation regarding this handbook. Kessel expressed disappointment with the inclusion (pp.10 and 11) of a February 3, 2000 letter to Mansfield Advisory Groups from then Mayor Elizabeth Paterson and then Town Manager Martin Berliner. Included in this letter is the request that groups, such as the CC, route comments on issues of town-wide importance through the Town Council, not to State or private parties. This letter was generated during the UConn Pfizer/Horsebarn Hill controversy. Kessel objects in principle to this restriction of providing information to the public and noted that a portion of the policy cannot apply to the CC because the State's enabling legislation for establishing Conservation Commissions specifically states that we are free to address issues directly to the Commissioner of the DEEP.
5. **Continuing Business:**
 - UConn project/Compliance update.** Ferri, filling in for Jim Hutton, reviewed organizational changes in what is now the "Environmental Program" at UConn. Rich Miller's group now deals with sustainability while compliance falls under Terry Domingo and is housed in the Professional Park, just across Route 44, opposite the end of Discovery Drive. Ferri reviewed the reasoning behind the frequency of the UConn landfill testing and provided what information he had on UConn's Agronomy/Turf Farm off Route 195.
 - Sustainable CT Update.** Kaufman reviewed the Town's progress, including the open space inventory. Rogers noted that much of the information is in the Town's GIS base layers, including which properties are protected. She noted the need for a layer showing the trails which pass through these properties, some of which are owned by Mansfield, Joshua's Trust, and the Army Core of Engineers.
 - Membership.** In the near future the CC will have two vacancies, the vacancy left open by Facchinetti's resignation and the coming resignation of Julia Rogers. Rogers has accepted a position with the Hudson Highland Land Trust, based in Garrison, New York.

Kaufman made note of Rogers's many contributions to our CC, and the CC congratulated her on her successes. Rogers's thesis defense is set for April 3, 2019.

Conservation Easement Monitoring. King is working on a Google-based spreadsheet that might be used when monitoring easements.

6. Other Communications. Kaufman reviewed a long-standing violation near Cider Mill Road, where a culvert has collapsed. The result is sedimentation and erosion occurring close to where the stream enters the Willimantic River. She will keep the CC updated and noted that the State could fine the owner as much as \$1,000/day.

7. The meeting adjourned at 8:20 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Quentin Kessel
Acting Secretary

Edited by Scott Lehman
Secretary