

**TOWN OF CHESHIRE ENVIRONMENT COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2017
CHESHIRE TOWN HALL Room 115 AT 7:00 P.M.**

Members Present: Bill Sherman, Bob DeVylder, Jodee Heritage, Doug Noble and Jackie Sima.

Staff: Suzanne Simone.

I. Call to Order

Chairman Sherman called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

II. Roll Call

Ms. Heritage called the roll.

Members present were Bill Sherman, Bob DeVylder, Jodee Heritage, Doug Noble and Jackie Sima.

Members not in attendance were Matt Abdifar and Carrie Collins-White.

III. Determination of Quorum

There were enough members present for a quorum.

IV. Pledge of Allegiance

All present recited the pledge of allegiance.

V. Acceptance of Minutes Regular Meeting – January 18, 2017

Chairman Sherman called for a motion to approve the minutes from the January 18, 2017 regular meeting with no corrections.

Moved by Ms. Heritage. Seconded by Ms. Sima. Motion approved 4-0-1 with Ms. Sima abstaining.

VI. Communications

1. 2017 Trails Day Event Registration

Chairman Sherman stated the 2017 Trails Day event registration will be addressed under the calendar of event items.

VII. Calendar – Events

Chairman Sherman reviewed the following calendar of events:

1. Earth Day – Saturday, April 22

Ms. Simone provided an update regarding the planning of a spring series of events in March and April in conjunction with the library. She said no specific event would be held on Earth Day.

2. Arbor Day – Friday, April 28

There was no information to report regarding an Arbor Day event.

**3. Trails Day – Saturday, June 3 or Sunday, June 4
(event submission deadline May 15, 2017)**

The Commission discussed 2017 Trails Day and agreed they'd like to have an event on June 3 with a rain date of June 4.

Ms. Simone explained that she had contact with the Cheshire Land Trust about their interest in running a joint event with the Environment Commission. She said the Land Trust planned to do an event at the DeDominicis property; this site is publically ready and the trails have been remarked and public works has cleaned up trees on the site.

Ms. Sima asked about the date and timing of the event.

Ms. Heritage and Mr. Noble commented that they thought that a Trails Day event at the DeDominicis property sounded good for a hike.

There was some discussion about this location being good for a hike and that the hike could be scheduled for June 3 from 9:30 am (a 2 hour event) and a rain date of June 4.

Chairman Sherman said that all present seemed to agree on hosting a hike and that they could move forward publishing the hike on the website and with the Forest and Parks.

Ms. Heritage asked if there were bags still available to hand out and that the Commission could hand out waters that day.

Ms. Simone agreed to provide the bags for the event and she'd work with the Land Trust on the timing and event coordination.

4. National Public Lands Day – Saturday, September 30

Chairman Sherman noted National Public Lands Day is Saturday, September 30. He suggested that volunteers be solicited for an open space site cleanup.

Mr. Noble explained there were plans already for a cleanup of the Farmington Canal trail from New Haven to Massachusetts.

Mr. Noble suggested that they could tie into this event and that he'd contact Bob Ciccolini of the Parks Department about the cleanup event.

Ms. Simone said they could post information on the town's Facebook page about the events.

Mr. Noble talked about where a cleanup effort could be planned.

Ms. Simone said that the Commission could consider a cleanup effort on an open space property.

Similar open space cleanups have been done in past years led by the Commission.

VIII. Unfinished Business

1. Renaming Dime Savings Property

Chairman Sherman handed out a copy of the letter addressed the Town Council chairman regarding the renaming of the Dime Savings Property to "Yankee Expressway Highlands."

Commission members reviewed the letter and discussed the property renaming.

Ms. Heritage suggested adding a time frame response from the Council regarding the proposed renaming.

Mr. Noble commented that on an alternative name for the property "Nathan Hale Highlands".

It was noted that property adjacent to the subject property is called Nathan Hale (Court).

IX. New Business

1. 2017 Commission Goals and Projects

a. Hike Cheshire: photo campaign

Ms. Heritage talked about the Hike Cheshire photo campaign and reviewed the idea of having hikers submit pictures at the location of their hikes in Cheshire; the photos could be posted to the website.

There was discussion about the Hike Cheshire photo campaign and how posting photos could draw interest and excitement about open space areas in town.

Ms. Simone said they could post photos of the month on the website.

There was discussion about photo contest winners could possible receive a gift certificate (maybe a Cheshire Chamber of Commerce gift certificate) if they won for the best photo.

Ms. Simone said she'd look into the gift certificate idea.

a. School Involvement

Ms. Simone said she recalled the school involvement project was Carrie Collins-White's idea.

Ms. Collins-White was not present at tonight's meeting.

Commission members discussed the idea of involving the schools in the photo contest.

Ms. Heritage said she had previously supplied the schools with maps and trail information but did not receive any feedback.

Ms. Sima talked about promoting information at the schools in earth science classes and on the school websites about the photo contest.

The Commission talked about open space cleanup efforts and supplies needed for cleanup of properties; cleanup efforts start in March so they should start to be advertised.

Ms. Simone said she'd make a flyer and asked that Mr. Noble supply information or flyer about the Farmington Canal program.

b. QR codes at properties

Mr. Noble reported on the QR codes (mobile hyperlinks) at town open space properties. He explained how the QR codes work and how they provide users information (about the property); he said a resources pages is needed to link to information about the properties.

Ms. Simone explained she talked with the town's IT people about the QR codes and that she'd share those details with Mr. Noble.

Ms. Heritage asked that Ms. Simone ask IT about the photo campaign project and how the photos could be received and posted.

c. Hiking Program

Chairman Sherman said the next two projects were ideas from Mr. Abdifar who was not present.

d. Property of the Month

This project idea was from Mr. Abdifar who was not present.

X. Adjournment

Chairman Sherman called for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:26 pm.

Motion: To adjourn the meeting at 7:26 pm.

Moved by Mr. Noble. Seconded by Ms. Sima. Motion approved unanimously by Commission members present.

Respectfully submitted by:

**Carla Mills
Recording Secretary**