

MINUTES OF THE JAN. 8, 2019, MEETING OF
THE PUTNAM VALLEY COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

In Attendance: Wendy Whetsel, Mia Azcue, Julie Ruben (via telephone), Mike Usai, Eileen Reilly, Friedel Muller-Landau, Pat Grove and Glenn Sapir

The meeting began at 5:10 p.m. at the Putnam Valley Library. Chairman Mike Usai had prepared an agenda, which guided much of our discussion.

Mike move to accept the minutes of the previous meeting, and Eileen Reilly seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

We discussed the timing of accepting minutes of our meetings to get them on the website in a timely manner, and it was agreed that once the minutes were in their final form, they would be sent via email to all CCE members for their review and acceptance, which must be expressed within seven days of their distribution.

Mike used the action items from the minutes from the last meeting, distributed to everyone present in print format, as the initial part of his agenda. They are reprinted herewith:

ACTION ITEMS (from Dec. 11, 2018 minutes):

Glenn will regularly contact town webmaster Glen Baisley to post minutes of our meetings as well as notice of our next meeting date.

Wendy will invite Tom Patterson, chairman of the Planning Board, to our next meeting (Tuesday, Jan. 8, at 5 p.m. at the PV Library) to help establish when the CCE can be most helpful in the review process.

Wendy will discuss with Bruce Barber, the town's wetlands inspector and town planner, when the CCE should—and would--be contacted regarding any zoning code proposals.

Mike will develop, for the next meeting, a draft form for CCE in reporting its review and approval of plans put before it

Each member, for the next meeting, will report on a topic for which they will take responsibility as an educational effort to be presented live or on the town website and/or television station, along with a date of when they can have it presented.

Wendy will contact webmaster Glen Baisley about giving the commission's contributions prominent placement on the home page of the town's website.

Glenn will write a short annual report on the CCE's activities in 2018 and distribute it to the CCE members for their review.

Glenn will contact Glen Baisley to post these minutes and our next meeting date on the PV website.

In that regard, Glenn Sapir reported he has contacted Glen Baisley regarding putting our upcoming meetings on the town calendar and posting minutes. Pat Grove, who was appointed to the CCE at the town board's organizational meeting earlier in the month, asked about minutes from prior meetings. Glenn acknowledged that these hadn't been sent to Glen, but he would see if Glen would post previous minutes and, if so, would provide them.

Mike distributed a draft form for the CCE in reporting its review and approval of plans put before it. Pat offered a few suggestions for additions, such as stone walls and stone chambers, flood plains and storm water discharge. Members were asked to review the form and offer any revisions at our next meeting. The question of when will it actually come into play was asked regarding this form, and we felt that could best be answered after hearing from Tom Patterson, chair of the town's planning board. Tom had been invited to address our group, and his arrival was expected to be at about 6 p.m.

We started to report on the topic for which each member wished to prepare in some format an education for our town's people. How this info would be presented could vary from a live presentation that would be videoed, a video presentation or another format to be presented on the town website. This would be in addition to the "eco tips" we decided at the previous meeting we would like to present on the website. Freidel Muller-Landau volunteered to spearhead a program on Canada geese and the environmental problems they can present. He believed he could decide on format and update us in March for an April presentation. Mike selected invasive species. Mike felt July would be appropriate because it could be presented in conjunction with Invasive Species Week. Eileen also said her topic was invasive species as well. Julie also expressed an interest in working on that topic, Eileen deferred to Julie, and it was agreed that Julie and Mike would address invasive species. Eileen advised that she would come up with a different topic for the "eco tips".

Pat Grove said she would like to spearhead a project on vernal pools, identifying where those not shown on our NRI map might be located. We were discussing Pat's idea, and that is as far as we got in identifying individual members' projects when Tom Patterson arrived to speak to us at about 5:50 p.m.

Tom explained the process of consideration and approval when an application for a project comes before the town. To the best of my understanding from his explanation, the application is received and reviewed by the Town Planner/Wetlands Inspector Bruce Barber and the Town Engineer Todd Atkinson. The next step is for the applicant to fill out an Environmental Assessment Form. Bruce will advise the applicant of which parts must be completed. The application then goes on the Planning Board's agenda for review or sketch approval (the first public step toward application approval). Then comment letters point out necessary improvements. Then a public hearing takes place. After the hearing, the application is voted upon. According to Tom, we would have to review any plans before the town at Town Hall between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. weekdays. Also according to Tom, site inspections are either conducted by Bruce or Todd.

The main question posed to Tom was when should the CCE come into the process, and other questions were based around the answer to that question. Tom candidly said he didn't know, because the CCE hadn't been active in recent years in reviewing applications. Tom asked that the CCE email him questions we have, which could include the timing of our involvement, whether we can go on site inspections (he indicated there might be liability issues involved) et al.

Mike volunteered to send a list of bullet-pointed questions for Tom, compiled from any questions we would like addressed.

Although there was much more on our agenda, the meeting with Tom preempted further business, and we were forced to adjourn because of the library's closing at 7 p.m. Before we did adjourn, however, Wendy Whetsel was asked to investigate whether Town Hall was available for future meetings, which, among other conveniences, would allow us continue meetings without a pre-established curfew.

The meeting was informally adjourned at 7 p.m.

ACTION ITEMS:

Eileen, Mia, Wendy and Glenn: If you decide to participate in our educational effort, be prepared to report at the next meeting on the topic you would like to spearhead for an educational presentation.

Glenn: Discuss with Glen Baisley the idea of posting and archiving past minutes on the website, and, if this is possible, providing him with those minutes.

Wendy: Investigate availability of Town Hall for future CCE meetings.

All Members: Review, amend if desired and approve these minutes within seven days of receipt (that is, by Jan. 17)

All Members: Send Mike any questions you would like bullet pointed in his letter to Tom Patterson.

All Members: Be prepared to discuss at the next meeting remaining agenda items that weren't addressed at our Jan. meeting.

All Members: Come to a consensus on our next meeting date.

All Members: Review the review-and-evaluation form Mike distributed and offer any changes at our next meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Glenn Sapir, Secretary