



**Town of Sherman
Conservation Commission**

Monthly Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, March 8, 2023
Mallory Town Hall @ 7:00 p.m.

Members Present: William (Bill) McCann (Chair), Michele MacKinnon (Vice Chair), Lauren Weber, Anne Weisberg

Members Absent: Colette Shulman

Other Attendees: Christine Aruza (Clerk), Jen Freed (commission nominee),
Public

Call to Order: Chairman B. McCann called the meeting to order at 7:12 p.m.

Approval of Minutes:

A. Weisberg made a motion to approve the minutes

Seconded by: L. Weber

Vote: Unanimous For

Correspondence:

No new correspondence.

New Business:

Potential New SCC Member

J. Freed attended the meeting to learn more about the commission, its mission, and priorities. She has expressed interest in potentially filling the current vacancy on the commission. J. Freed is a long-time Sherman resident (35 years). In the past, she was involved with ‘Conserve Sherman’ which was a short-term initiative with a specific purpose. She was on the Naromi Land Trust

for several years and volunteered with a Happy Acres farm advisory group for a short time after the town purchased the farm.

Planning for James Sirch Talk, April 22

Per M. MacKinnon she reached out to James Sirch to secure him for the commission's spring program on Earth Day. The program will be co-hosted with the Sherman Library. His presentation will be titled, 'Plant It and They Will Come: Attracting Connecticut Butterflies to Your Yard'. It will be held on April 22 @ 2 p.m. at the Sherman Library. M. MacKinnon also spoke with Ashleigh Blake (Executive Director, Sherman Library) about involving the children at the library with an art activity. A. Blake suggested the children could do the artwork the week prior and have their art displayed the day of the presentation. She also spoke with her about having the composition, 'Butterflies in Sherman', on display for the presentation. B. McCann designed the piece and will inquire with the recipient of the work if he gives his approval for use.

The library will start promoting the program around the end of March. The commission will put the library registration link on the town web site and Facebook pages when available. M. MacKinnon will speak to A. Blake about refreshments for the event. She shared that they had discussed the Conservation Corner at the library and the potential of having related children's and adult conservation books available. They also discussed having seed packages as an event takeaway that the school can help package. M. MacKinnon will investigate appropriate sources for native seeds. The commission also agreed to pen an article for the local paper highlighting the spring program with Jim Sirch.

Earth Day Fair Planning Continued

Group discussion then moved to ongoing planning and additional ideas for the upcoming Earth Day Fair on May 6th. J. Freed suggested having information available about 'Dark Skies' which is an effort to reduce nighttime light pollution. She will contact the [Lights Out Connecticut](#) organization to see if they can provide informational materials to hand out. A. Weisberg will organize the renewable energy home owner panel. J. Freed proposed that the panel have one homeowner per each type of renewable energy source (solar, geothermal, heat pump, etc.) to provide a balance of options. If it was not possible, she recommended having homeowners that could speak to different types of solar implementation and decision-making (lease, buy, roof vs. field, etc.). L. Weber suggested 'Solar 101' as a potential panel topic if that were the case. A. Weisberg mentioned [Sealed](#) as a potential panel participant. She will reach out to obtain more information and explore this option with them. J. Freed will reach out to the local 4H club to see if they can participate.

J. Freed raised the topic of 'energy vampire monitors', which assess the amount of energy leaked by home appliances and electronics even when not in use. Per M. MacKinnon they have one at the library. J. Freed will try the monitor and catalog the experience as a case study so they can

have the information available at the fair. Other ideas included: bear-safe, responsible composting instructions; an invasives poster and booklets; approaching the [Jane Goodall Center for Excellence in Environmental Education](#) at Westconn and the [UCONN Center for Clean Energy Engineering](#) (C2E2); including a community supported agriculture (CSA) farm; marking off pedestrian-safe walking areas, commission business card with QR code and creating an aerial map of participant booths/locations.

Per A. Weisberg the Greening Sherman project will be hold a ‘Wine, Cheese and Green’ social at the JCC on April 16th. This will be an informal way to introduce the town to Greening Sherman and a good lead up to the commission's April 22nd event and May 6th fair. In addition, Greening Sherman will not invite vendors to the fair as previously discussed. Instead, they plan to hold a series of forums on different aspects of improving energy efficiency/clean energy in homes over the summer.

She also reported that [PACE](#) (People's Action for Clean Energy) cannot attend the Earth Day Fair due to scheduling conflicts. Commissioners agreed to follow up with PACE at a different time. Lastly, A. Weisberg shared that State Representative Matthew Callahan has agreed to attend the fair.

Discussion then concluded with which other participants have committed and which ones are unable to participate as well as event branding, promotions and logistics.

Pollinator Garden Planting Schedule

Per M. MacKinnon the plan is to schedule the first planting for mid-May. The commission is looking to the weekend of May 20th – which is World Bee Day – as the potential date. M. MacKinnon will come up with the type of plants and quantities. She will also write up a descriptive sheet for the Master Gardener’s office for volunteers.

Old Business:

Archiving SCC Articles on the Web

C. Aruza walked the commissioners through available options to archive and organize information on its town web page. The commissioners will decide on the number and naming of category headings to organize information on their web page. L. Weber to create a category and sub-category mock-up for discussion. Commissioners will also forward their authored articles to C. Aruza to brand and re-format for web posting with the date of placement and publication origin for proper attribution if not paraphrased. C. Aruza to inquire if it is possible to do a shortened alias or vanity URL for promotional purposes, request the removal of outdated documents and follow-up on the analytics question.

Public Forum

Susan Zeitler (8 Curtis Drive) attended the public session. She came to the meeting to discuss the Golden Bridge Project and its stated mission of reducing the carbon footprint for the town. She inquired what role the commission would have in the initiative. B. McCann advised the commission is in favor of reducing the earth's carbon footprint but acts purely in an educational capacity within town. S. Zeitler brought information on various topics she felt should be a part of the conversation such as sprayed aerosols and 5G and their negative impact on the climate.

Adjournment

L. Weber made a motion to adjourn the meeting

Seconded by: A. Weisberg

Vote: Unanimous For

B. McCann adjourned the meeting at 9:51 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Christine Aruza
Next monthly meeting: Wednesday, April 12, 2023, @ 7:00 p.m., Mallory Town Hall