

# **TOWN OF SOUTH KINGSTOWN CONSERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES**

A regular meeting of the South Kingstown Conservation Commission was held in the Town Council Chambers on Wednesday, February 3, 2010 at 7:00 p.m.

## A. Roll Call

Loomis – present  
Gates – present

Johnson – present  
Dickinson - present

Boardman – present  
Flanders - present

## B. Approval of Minutes of December 2, 2009

Johnson moved, Loomis seconded; motion carried: "To approve the minutes of the regular meeting of December 2, 2009 as amended."

**VOTE:**        Flanders - aye        Loomis - aye        Dickinson - aye  
                  Johnson – aye        Gates - aye

## C. Special Items

### 1. Town Tree Nursery

Members were in agreement to move this item to the end of the agenda and to continue the item to the next regular meeting if the intended discussion with Dr. Brian Maynard does not occur this evening.

### 2. Bay Scallop Spawner Sanctuary Project

A general discussion ensued regarding potential adverse impacts that aquaculture operations could have on salt pond ecology. Mr. Loomis noted that, although he generally supports sustainable fishery activities, he has some concerns based on empirical information. He noted that recently there appears to be less tidal flow into the southern portion of Potter Pond. In addition, he has observed bio-mats floating in the pond in an area south of recently installed aquaculture operations.

Further discussion ensued regarding potential biofouling caused by aquaculture operations. Members expressed the need to have more information provided regarding management of these operations as it relates to mitigation of potential adverse environmental impacts.

Members were in agreement to direct staff to contact Dr. Michael Rice at U.R.I. and David Beutel at CRMC regarding their availability of attending either the next or a future

Commission meeting to discuss these matters and respond to Commission member questions.

The Commission agreed that any motion to CRMC should incorporate those concerns relating to potential ecological impacts to the salt ponds caused by aquaculture operations.

Loomis moved, Flanders seconded; motion carried: “The South Kingstown Conservation Commission has reviewed the CRMC Research/Educational Aquaculture Application for the proposed three year bay scallop spawner sanctuary project identified as File No. 2010-01-048. While the Commission does not object to the project we do have the following concerns: 1) the potential biofouling from aquaculture cages and equipment; 2) adequate management of generated biofouling material from the proposed operation; and, 3) potential adverse impacts to water quality from possible biofouling.”

**VOTE:** Johnson – aye                      Loomis – aye                      Gates – aye  
                    Flanders – aye                      Dickinson – aye

Mr. Flanders noted that Rex Eberly was present and suggested the Commission amend the agenda to address item E. as the next topic.

Flanders moved, Johnson seconded; motion carried: “To further amend the agenda and have the Commission discuss item E. – Tree Board at this time.”

**VOTE:** Dickinson – aye                      Loomis – aye                      Flanders – aye  
                    Gates – aye                      Johnson – aye

E. Tree Board

Rex Eberly, Town Parks Superintendent was present to discuss the upcoming ‘America The Beautiful’ grant application. Mr. Eberly noted that the twenty eight red pine trees planted when Tuckertown Park was built are either dead or dieing as a result of pine bark borer infestation. To date ten trees have been removed and four other trees are dead.

Discussion ensued regarding submission of an ‘America the Beautiful’ grant requesting funds to replace at least some of the red pine trees at the park. Mr. Flanders briefed the members on the particular submission requirements for a successful grant application. He noted that purchase and planting of tree stock is an eligible activity given DEM’s emphasis on establishing and maintaining a sustainable tree management program. He suggested that the Town apply for funds to both remove the dead trees and purchase new stock.

Mr. Flanders further noted that it would be important to develop a detailed timeframe for development of the Town Tree Nursery prior to submitting the ‘America The Beautiful’ grant application. Staff will contact Mr. Flanders and Dr. Maynard regarding drafting such a timeframe.

#### D. Renewable Energy Resources

Mr. Gates and Mr. Nickerson informed members that neither the South County regional group nor the municipal application for grants under the Renewable Energy Fund Program were awarded funds. Mr. Nickerson noted that discussions with RIEDC staff indicated that the State focused this grant round on hydroelectric power projects. As such, no wind power project applications were selected. There was general agreement that the unsuccessful applications, submitted by the South County regional consortium and the Town could be updated and re-submitted for RIEDC consideration in the next grant round.

Mr. Loomis suggested that the Town investigate the potential to use photovoltaic technology at some municipal buildings. It was noted that both Matunuck and West Kingston elementary schools depend solely upon electricity for heating. Mr. Nickerson will discuss this matter with the Director of Planning.

Mr. Nickerson provided a brief overview of the present ARRA funding scenario. Mr. Gates inquired as to whether some of the available competitive ARRA funds could be used to fund those projects for which Renewable Energy Fund monies had been applied for. Mr. Nickerson will discuss this matter with the Director of Planning and report findings back to the Commission.

#### F. Wastewater Management

Mr. Loomis inquired as to the status of the mandatory OWTS inspection program. The Principal Planner will research this matter and report findings to the Commission at their next regular meeting.

#### G. Correspondence

Mr. Nickerson summarized the following correspondence: the Town Council resolution of 1/11/10 appointing William C. Wallace as Tree Warden; the Town Council resolution of 12/15/09 regarding Chris O'Brien's resignation from the Conservation Commission; the Town Council resolution of 1/25/10 appointing Jeanne Wettlaufer to the Conservation Commission, and; the DEM announcement of 1/4/10 regarding the Grants Request for Projects under the 'America the Beautiful' Program.

#### H. Other Matters / Comments

Mr. Nickerson distributed copies of the Notice of Violation from the Building Official to the owners of that property located at 2541 Ministerial Rd. Mr. Flanders suggested that staff from DEM – Division of Forest Environment be contacted regarding the proposed tree replacement planting scheme for that property.

Mr. Dickinson inquired as to the extent to which the Town should develop a more comprehensive re-cycling program. Mr. Flanders noted that he toured the Central Land Fill site in Johnston. Mr. Flanders provided a brief overview of the Central Land Fill operation noting that re-cycle materials are separated but some are not processed, such as plastics #3 - #7, because there is a lack of market for their sale.

Mr. Nickerson noted that the Town has hired Laura Pointek to coordinate recycle efforts. Members were in agreement that staff should invite Ms. Pointek to a future meeting of the Commission to discuss recycling in South Kingstown.

#### K. Adjournment

Flanders moved, Johnson seconded; motion carried: "To Adjourn".

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.