



# Town of Colchester, Connecticut

127 Norwich Avenue, Colchester, Connecticut 06415

Website: [www.colchesterct.gov](http://www.colchesterct.gov)

## COLCHESTER CONSERVATION COMMISSION

### Regular Meeting Wednesday, January 11, 2023 Town Hall, 127 Norwich Avenue Minutes of Meeting

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Falk von Plachecki, Chairman; Rebecca Meyer, Vice Chairperson; Susan Bruening; Michael Rogers; Michelle Kosmo; Mary Tremblay (alternate); and Carol Szymanski, Wetlands Enforcement Officer, and Mark Reynolds for the applicant, the applicant and other members of the public.

**A. CALL REGULAR MEETING TO ORDER**

Chairman von Plachecki called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:04 p.m.

**B. ADDITIONS TO AGENDA**

Chairman asked staff if there were any additions to the agenda. Staff replied that there were none. Chairman stated that we needed to add Elections under new business. Commissioner Rogers made the motion and Commissioner Meyer seconded the motion to amend the agenda and hold elections under new business. The motion passed unanimously 5-0.

**C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES—November 9, 2022**

Commissioner Kosmo made the motion to approve the minutes and Commissioner Rogers seconded the motion to approve the minutes of the November 9, 2022 meeting. The motion passed 3-0 with two abstentions.

**D. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

None.

**E. PENDING APPLICATIONS**

None.

**F. NEW APPLICATIONS**

Mark Reynolds appeared for the applicant, ARK distillery and stated that they need to fill 1,699 SF of wetlands in order to create 14 parking spaces in rear. Commissioners asked if shared parking was pursued and Mr. Reynolds stated that they choose to pursue locating all parking on their site for safety reasons. The business would close at 8 p.m. Chairman stated that a public hearing would be the next logical step given that is the best way to notify all abutters. Commissioner Meyer made the motion and Commissioner Kosmo seconded the motion to hold a public hearing and Commissioner Rogers amended the motion to hire a soils scientist to review the application proposal to fill in wetlands. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

**G. OLD BUSINESS**

RECEIVED  
COLCHESTER, CT  
2023 JAN 12 PM 3:08  
DALE FURMAN  
TOWN CLERK

Discussion of Commission letter to local paper celebrating 50 years of protecting wetlands.  
Commissioner Tremblay volunteered to work on the article.

**H. NEW BUSINESS**

Elections. Commissioner Von Plachecki and Commissioner Meyer both expressed interest in running again as Chairman and Vice-Chairman, respectively. Chairman Von Plachecki stepped down as Chairman and Commissioner Meyer took over as Chairperson and asked the membership for nominations for Chairman. Commissioner Kosmo made the motion and the Commissioner Bruening seconded the motion to nominate Falk Von Plachecki as Chairman. Commissioner Rogers made the motion and Commissioner Kosmo seconded the motion to close the nominations. The motion passed unanimously (5-0). Chairman Von Plachecki was again seated as Chairman. He asked for nominations for Vice-Chairman. Commissioner Kosmo made the motion and the Commissioner Bruening seconded the motion to nominate Rebecca Meyer as Vice-Chairman. Commissioner Bruening made the motion and Commissioner Kosmo seconded the motion to close the nominations. The motion passed unanimously (5-0).

**I. ENFORCEMENT**

Mark Reynolds appeared before the Commission to discuss tree cutting at 160 Old Amston Road. He believed that a permit was still valid on the property but was unaware that a new property buyer had to come before the Commission, pay a \$100 fee and receive written permission from the Commission itself in order to transfer the original permit. The Commission expressed a desire to have more evergreen trees planted to reinstate the buffer that nearby residences once had. Commissioner Rogers made the motion and the Commissioner Bruening seconded the motion to remove the Cease and Desist order issued by the WEO and to request that the present owner appear before the Commission to transfer the permit and present a planting plan which includes evergreens. Motion passed unanimously (5-0).

Commissioner Rogers made the motion and the Commissioner Bruening seconded the motion to remove the Cease and Desist order issued by the WEO and issue a Notice of Violation to the owner of the Norwich Avenue property where trees have been cut for a house. Motion passed 5-0.

**J. CONSERVATION**

Chairman asked staff to summarize the lectures booked at the library that will be co-sponsored by Conservation Commission and Open Space Advisory Committee. On April 27, Karen of the Three Foragers will be speaking on identifying mushrooms; On May 4, Yonghao Li will be speaking on backyard composting and Tractor Supply has generously donated a compost bin (soon to be displayed in library foyer for the public to interact with) for a raffle for one lucky lecture attendee; and On May 18, Paul Colburn will be speaking on Living with Backyard Wildlife.

**K. CORRESPONDENCE**

Staff stated a permit was issued to 181 Lakeview drive for a shed within 75' of lake where 100' is required. Commission was updated on the progress with a lake drawdown that the residents requested and the CT DEEP has not been able to manage since there appears to be a gate and/or equipment malfunction.

**L. ADJOURNMENT**

Commissioner Bruening made the motion and Commissioner Rogers seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:52 p.m.

Falk von Plachecki, Chairman