

Town of Hamden

Hamden Government Center
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THE NATURAL RESOURCES AND OPEN SPACE COMMISSION, Town of Hamden, held a Regular Meeting on Wednesday, July 26, 2023 at 7:30 p.m. in the third floor conference room, Hamden Government Center. The following items were reviewed:

Commissioners in Attendance: Mr. Horn, Mr. Bailin, Mr. Doheny, Mr. Bell, Mr. Nista, Ms. Larke

Commissioners Excused: Mr. McManus

Others in attendance: Ms. Tobin, Clerk

1. Call to order

Mr. Horn called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

2. Public Comment

There were no members of the public present.

3. Review: Minutes of the May 31, 2023 meeting.

There were no additions or corrections to the minutes. Mr. Horn asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the May 31, 2023 meeting. Mr. Bell so moved. Mr. Nista seconded the motion. The vote was six in favor, one abstention. The minutes were approved.

4. Continuing Business

properties of interest: The Maselli Property – no updates on the Maselli Property
The Log Cabin Property – no updates on the Log Cabin Property

5. New Business

Olin Powder Farm – a.k.a. 5 Lakes Park a.k.a. 6 Lakes Park
June 29, 2023 meeting at Keefe Center

Mr. Horn attended the June 29th meeting at the Keefe Center regarding the above property. There were at least 100 people in attendance. At least once every year for the past 20 years we have asked about the Olin Powder Farm property. We decided years ago that we should keep this item on our agenda, but knew that we had to wait until the parks and residential Newhall area clean up was completed before anything would be done at the Olin property. It was our hope that we could get the people at Olin Company to pay for remediation at that park. Many people felt the same and have approached the State and Olin who might be amenable to remediation. The cost of remediation in 2000 was \$55,000,000, which would cover a full remediation. That was the only remediation available at that time. Mr. Horn let the people at the meeting know that we would be willing to help if they want our assistance.

Mr. Bailin asked if it would have to be a full remediation, but it is too early to determine that. This Commission has been hoping for remediation for passive recreation at a minimum. Mr. Horn said the Regional Water Authority might be willing to help because the property drains into the RWA system. He said people from the DEEP were at the meeting. They might want to void the old Consent Order and come up with a new one. Mr. Bell said this is a very difficult issue with lots of moving parts. We don't own the property, Olin does. They probably want to give it away, but who would want to take on the lingering risk. The Town and the RWA won't want to because it is too much liability. The cost of the cleanup would depend on the amount of remediation that would be required.

Mr. Nista asked if there were any Federal dollars available, like has been used to remediate superfund sites. There was additional discussion.

Mr. Doheny reported that there is nothing going to happen with the Wilbur Cross tunnel except for cosmetics such as lighting and replacing tiles. He also mentioned that ten acres have been added to the West Rock Ridge State Park. The restoration of the Farmbrook dams is on hold. The West Rock Ridge Park Association received \$1 million for work on West Rock. They will take down the old RWA house on the property and that area will become a parking lot.

Mr. Doheny reported that the State is trying to get fifteen more people for the Parks Division, which is down to about 50. Security is beginning to slip. We are in the Sleeping Giant Unit with over 8,000 acres. There is currently one superintendent and one maintainer. Response time varies from ½ hour to the next day. Mr. Horn remarked that two years ago he reported shot guns fired near the eagles. It took 1.5 hours for someone to respond. There is also concern about bears in the park. There was a proposal, which failed, to allow people to bear firearms in the park.

Mr. Doheny also mentioned the Mayor's proposal to put a dog pound on Main Street. SA75-80 Section 4b says that the land has to be offered to the State first. He has called the Mayor's Office about this, but no one has returned his calls. He explained that any land in the conservation area has to be offered to the State first. The Town owns 12 acres where Benham Street meets Main Street.

6. Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss, Mr. Horn asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Doheny so moved. Mr. Nista seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Submitted by: _____
Gerry Tobin, Meeting Clerk