

CAMDEN CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETING

Minutes of meeting held May 30, 2012, 7-9 PM

PRESENT: Members of the Commission - Doug Johnson, John Evrard, Carla Ferguson, Barbara Melchiskey, David Kern, Robin Kern

Non-members - Nancy Caudle-Johnson (Tree City USA and Arbor Day coordinator)

Doug Johnson began the meeting as acting chairperson, stating that the Camden Conservation Commission (CCC) is in need of a new chairperson (and mentioned that consideration should be given to electing a vice-chairperson also), a secretary and a new member. Later during the meeting, Doug Johnson was unanimously elected chairperson and Robin Kern was unanimously elected secretary, a position that will be combined with her current position of treasurer.

Doug Johnson stated that Bob Gasset had resigned as chairperson of CCC and noted with appreciation the wonderful work that Bob had done for CCC during his tenure as chairperson.

Nancy Caudle-Johnson had prepared the minutes of the last meeting of April 25th (as Doug, who had been secretary, was absent from that meeting); the minutes were read and approved unanimously.

As a preliminary to the agenda, Doug opened for discussion David Kern's email sent to CCC members on April 28th, in which David proposed six steps to be taken to facilitate a more orderly, efficient and productive meeting process. For example, he suggested that the agenda should be circulated well in advance of the meeting, and that agenda items should be listed with a time allotted for discussion of each item. All members approved of these steps as pointing to a direction well worth taking.

The agenda was then duly addressed:

-Nancy Caudle-Johnson, as Tree City coordinator, gave a report that highlighted and described the many ways that trees and issues involving trees are becoming of interest to more and more people, as individuals, as town officials and as members of various organizations. She described the successful Arbor Day celebration held in Camden (about which she prepared a press release), at which, significantly, Camden's town manager, Pat Finnigan, read the proclamation. Such burgeoning interest, Nancy suggested, can be harnessed for many varying projects, such as a project involving heritage trees.

-Robin Kern, as treasurer, gave an update on her attempt to gain a complete picture of CCC's finances and mentioned that she had been helped greatly by Camden's finance director Carol Sue Greenleaf, who printed out the complete financial records of CCC going back to 2005. It is clear now that there are two accounts for CCC: one has a balance of \$23.00 and the other, created in 2009 and termed

a reserve account, has a balance of \$2,396.00. Robin will continue to pursue this matter, in particular, to find out the nature of the reserve account.

-Finally, there was a broad discussion of the Tannery project and all that that project has come to mean. Discussion centered on the pros and cons of town versus CCC responsibility for the walk along the river that now exists (employees of the town's parks and recreation department mowed this area prior to May 30th), a walk that is flanked by trees donated by various parties (such as three hop hornbeams grown from seed by Richard Schneller) and continued to be tended to by various people (Doug protected the trees from mowing by placing stakes around them, and Richard Schneller recently fertilized the hornbeam). Discussion then focused on the difficult problem of the knotweed, which John Evrard had researched and will continue to research as to the various methods of control (rather than eradication) and in the hope that pesticides will never be used. Doug suggested a meeting that would gather together all those potentially exposed to the knotweed in the river, in particular, those landowners who live downstream. No specific policy as to the knotweed could be arrived at during this meeting. Yet, it was clear that as the problems of the river walk and the Tannery area are addressed and because of the significant work done in the past, this river walk and this Tannery project have life and shape already.

-In conclusion, the date of the next meeting has not yet been set.

These minutes are submitted by Robin Kern as an accurate representation of the major topics discussed and agreed upon at this meeting.