

Commission on Conservation & Agriculture
MINUTES

Regular Meeting of June 18, 2019

Present	Absent	Public	Staff
Elisabeth Holder Kate Miller Barbara Schukoske Bob Daniels James Miller Brian Gartner Ellen Lukens Michael Thomas	David Bauer	David Brown	Christine Raczka Marquis

A. Call to Order—Meeting called to order at 7:01 p.m.

B. Accept the Agenda

The Chairwoman asked to move items D and C. Brian Gartner made the motion and the motion was seconded by Barbara Schukoske. The motion passed unanimously.

D Approval of Minutes

The Chairwoman asked if anyone on the Commission wanted to make any changes to the minutes. There were no changes. Barbara made a motion to accept the minutes. The motion was seconded by Brian and passed unanimously.

C. Public Forum

David Brown, Executive Director of the Middlesex Land Trust, introduced himself to the Commission and discussed his experience helping other towns develop wording for open space bonds.

Chairwoman Elisabeth Holder opened the discussion around the wording and also provided some broad topics for the Commission to consider. These included broad wording, not require a match for any purchases, a management fund, and also passive recreation.

Kate Miller said that Joe mentioned not saying passive recreation or recreation because the Commission cannot anticipate all the situation that might arise. For example the Commission might be able to purchase the development rights but not be granted full access to the property.

David Brown agreed with Kate's statement he also said that management would most likely not be allowed under the bond language criteria but improvement would be allowed.

The Commission agreed that maintenance of open space properties is an issue and would become more of an issue in the future.

Brian and Kate suggested to the Commission that they ask the Economic and Development Commission (EDC) to remove the match requirement and instead soften the language to say that where possible the City will use matching grant funds but it is not required due to the timely nature of these purchases.

The Commission discussed bond language that would require that CCA be included in any purchase or when the bond funds are used. The Commission also discussed including the ranking system as a requirement for purchasing properties.

Kate Miller suggested that the Commission use the wording when possible properties will be selected in consultation with the CCA.

The Commission discussed funding the management of open space and developing a fund to up keep the properties through things like timber sales. Commission members Elisabeth Holder and Jim Miller stated that they would like to see the fund go to purchasing properties and not be used for improvements/management of properties.

Kate Miller said that she would like to make sure that theirs money for investments in the open space properties to make them accessible to residents.

Elisabeth Holder proposed updating the first section of the previous bond language to five million because the rising real estate costs, changing the matching funds language to where possible matching funds will be sought, adding that the CCA will be included in purchases, and including improvements to open space properties.

Chairwoman Elisabeth Holder suggested that the Commission vote on the following ideas:

1. 5 million bond
2. Where possible or appropriate matching funds will be found
3. Properties selected in consultation with CCA
4. That 1-4 be removed from the bond language

Ellen made a motion that Elisabeth would write a letter to Jerry Daley, Chairman of EDC, about these points. The motion was seconded by Kate and passed unanimously.

The Commission discussed including another clause for improvements.

Kate Miller asked the Commission if they would like to have a maximum percent on the improvements section of the bond. The Commission discussed how this portion of the bond would be used. Kate Miller suggested using language that stated that the intent is to ensure safe access to open space property for passive recreation and/or ecological protection and/or agriculture uses.

Kate made a motion to include improvements in the bond wording. The motion was seconded by Brian. The motion passed with six votes for the motion and two votes against the motion.

E. Request for Comment

Christine Raczka Marquis updated the Commission on the status of various Commission member's term renewals.

F. Officer and Committee Reports

1. **Chairman's report**
 - i **Events Publicity**

The Chairwoman discussed the timeline that is necessary to advertise events. All advertisement materials will be sent to Christine Raczka Marquis four weeks before the event. This is so they can be edited, reviewed, and approved by the Mayor's office. Once the materials are approved their will be no changes made.

- ii. **Update of POCD**

The Chairwoman gave an update on the POCD and the listening sessions schedule for later in the summer.

iii Commission Vacancies

The Chairwoman reported that Judy has applied to be on the CCA and her application is in the Mayor's office under review. She also asked the Commission to see if they knew of anyone else who would like to be on the Commission since there are several vacancies.

iv Open Space Management Proposal

The Chairwoman suggested that the Open Space Management Committee work with the Trails Committee until there is funding for open space management. The Commission was in agreement.

v. Livingston Update

The Chairwoman and Christine gave an update on the Livingston appraisal.

2. Trails Committee

i. Trails Work

Their were no updates

3. Agriculture Committee

i. Farm Market and Stand Ordinance Update

Christine reported that the Mark DeVoe, the City Planner, was working on updating the Farm Market and Stand Ordinance.

4. Outreach Committee

The Outreach Committee updated the Commission on the successful Trails Days event. The event was well attended. The Committee also discussed future events that they would like to host such as a cleanup at Veterans Park as part of Source to Sea. Brian also requested more participation for the Commission

5. Open Space Management Committee

No Report

6. Open Space Acquisition Committee

NA

G. Old Business

Staff updated the Commission on the Landfill Trails grant

H. New Business

Ellen Lukens would like to write a letter to object to lights on the Arrigoni Bridge. She requested that the Chairwoman draft a letter.

I Member Forum

Nothing to report

J. Adjournment

Motion made by Barbara Schukoske and seconded by Jim Miller. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 10:00 pm

