

CHARLESTOWN CONSERVATION COMMISSION
February 23, 2016
Charlestown Town Hall
4540 S. County Trail, Charlestown, RI 02813

- I. **CALL TO ORDER:** The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by L. Arnold, Chair.
- II. **ROLL CALL:** Present: L. Arnold, G. Klinger, F. Safford, K. Simoneau and R. Thieke. Excused: C. Connery and H. Hultgren.
- III. **INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS AND PUBLIC COMMENTS:** Karen Jarret and Jane Burns from the Charlestown Land Trust attended to discuss the proposed acquisition of the Sprague property (Plat # 28, Lots 82 and 84) with money from yet unissued Town open space bonds and a grant from DEM with the Town holding title to the property and with DEM and the Charlestown Land Trust holding conservation easements. Karen discussed the property with us and offered to arrange for us to visit the site so as to be able to render an advisory to the Town Council by March 3rd. The Planning and Parks and Rec Commissions also will be asked to render advisories by then.
- IV. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Motion to approve the minutes of January 26, 2016 by F. Safford. 2nd: G. Klinger. Aye: L. Arnold, G. Klinger, F. Safford, K. Simoneau and R. Thieke. Nay: None.
- V. **OLD BUSINESS:**
- A. **Report on Charlestown Moraine Preserve**
 - a. Parking Lot – Public Works Dept. has completed the parking lot.
 - b. Trail – Completion of the trail was scheduled for March 19th starting at 9:00 AM
 - c. Kiosk and road sign – F. Safford will arrange with Public Works a time to install them.
 - d. Grand opening – tentatively set in the June timeframe and will combine this with the planting of a tree near the kiosk to observe, belatedly, Arbor Day.
 - B. **Report on Schoolhouse Pond Preserve**
 - a. Work Day – will set a date at our March meeting for some time in April.
 - C. **Potable Water Workshop Group**
 - a. H. Hultgren reported that the Group met on January 27th and his report is shown below.
- VI. **NEW BUSINESS:**
- A. **Sprague Property Advisory Opinion** – after checking calendars a date of February 29th at 9:00 AM, weather permitting, was set for walking this property. Karen Jarret has been notified and Mark Sprague will accompany us on the walk.
 - B. **RI Land and Water Conservation Summit on March 19, 2016**
 - a. K. Simoneau will attend.
 - C. **Well Water Workshop**
 - a. G. Klinger reported that she has scheduled this years' workshop for July 12th at 5:00 PM at the Cross Mills Library.
- VII. **MEMBER COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS:** None
- VIII. **ADJOURNMENT:**
Motion by F. Safford to adjourn. 2nd: K. Simoneau. Aye: L. Arnold, G. Klinger, F. Safford, K. Simoneau and R. Thieke. Nay: None

Meeting adjourned at 8:08 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Richard N Thieke, Secretary

Next Commission Meeting on March 22, 2016 at Town Hall at 7:00 PM

Report on the Potable Water Working Group

The PWWG met Jan 27 2016 to work on a brochure and Power Point presentation on a “Charlestown Recommended Landscaper Process” that would be presented at the Feb Town Council meeting. There was considerable discussion about the maximum amount of nitrogen that can be applied to meet the Charlestown “recommended” rate. RINLA, several landscapers, and some beach community residents were against such low amounts. Another point of discussion was the irrigation of lawns.

I provided input, based on university research, for both these areas and gave information on the nitrogen value of leaving grass clippings on the lawn. I also provided information on healthy lawn care practices. After the meeting Mr Gentz asked me to review and comment on the product that came out of the meeting. [I did not hear back on what the final product presented to Town Council]

The Town Council unanimously passed both the brochure and presentation with minor modifications at the meeting this week (I did not attend.)

After the meeting received an e-mail from the secretary of the PWWG with 3 enclosures - a letter from RINLA with their reservations to the “Process”; an e-mail from Lorraine Joubert (URI Non-Point Education of Municipal Employees head) who has been a part of the PWWG commenting on the RINLA letter; and a letter to the town from the South County Chamber with concerns about the “Process.” Lorraine had sent me a copy of her comments earlier and asked me to call her and discuss. Her input was “spot on” and supported the council with more scientific data supporting the maximum amount of nitrogen to apply.

I called Lorraine on Feb 11, 2016. We are in agreement about all her comments. Evidently Mr Gentz indicated that he had gotten different/conflicting information from “URI.” Since we agreed, we did not know what the difference/conflict was. Lorraine will respond.

Mr Gentz sent an e-mail to the members of the PWWG (forwarded with the e-mail from the secretary of the PWWG) with a statement of the cost of a soil test as being \$10. Since I had provided him with the precise amounts I sent him an e-mail with the test costs (UConn \$8 and UMASS \$15) and what a standard test would report and a hypothetical question that answers “what happens when you send a soil test to either UConn or UMASS and they recommended more nitrogen than the maximum of the Charlestown recommended rate?” Still pending...