

PINE ORCHARD ASSOCIATION
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD
Monday, January 8, 2024, at 7:00 p.m.
180 Pine Orchard Avenue and via the Zoom Application

Agenda Item 1: Call to order. The meeting of the Pine Orchard Executive Board was called to order at 7:03 p.m. The following members were present: Vincent Giordano, John Grathwol, Karen Jubanyik, Matt Barez, Andy Ruff, Tom Roche, Peggy Haering, David Silverstone. Absent: Curtis O'Connor, David Scheer, Niall Ferguson, and Seth Hershman.

Agenda Item 2: Approval of Minutes. Upon motion and second, the board unanimously approved the minutes from the November 6, 2023, Executive Board Meeting.

Agenda Item 3: Officer and Committee Reports

By Laws –John Grathwol reported that the amendments to the bylaws were approved and posted on the Association's website.

Budget Report–John Grathwol presented the Association's budget report and reviewed the budget process. Tax revenues of approximately \$97,000 have been collected. Our anticipated rental income is \$5200 per year, with \$3600 collected to date. For shoreline maintenance, we budgeted \$51,750. Approximately 53% of the budgeted amount is remaining. Expenditures to date include the work on Island View Avenue and stabilization of beach access at Crescent Bluff Avenue. Building maintenance was budgeted at \$9000; however, a racoon got into the building and caused \$14610 in damage, of which \$8400 was covered by insurance. The remaining large items on the budget for the year are legal expenses and shoreline maintenance.

Tax Collection: John Grathwol reported that 99% of taxes have been fully collected. The slight variance between the budgeted amount and the final number is due to the fact that bills were based on assessments before application of exemptions.

Zoning - Matt Barez reported that there has been no activity in the Whibey matter. There has been no action on the appeal of the summary judgment decision in Beachcroft vs. McBurney. The Zoning Enforcement Officer (ZEO) sent out three notices for violation of the short term rental ordinance. The complaint affecting one of the properties has been resolved, and the remaining two property owners pursuing appeals. The POA received six zoning applications: two for generators, three for additions and one special permit application, which was approved on Dec. 11, 2023.

Building Maintenance. Andy Ruff provided a summary of the operating expenses for the POA headquarters building. The average annual operating cost for the premises is \$13,500, which works out to \$1125 per month. From that amount, we would subtract the \$5200 annual rent paid by the Town of Branford, leaving a balance of \$8300 for the year. Andy estimated that it would cost the Association \$250-300 per month to lease offsite storage of documents and files, The monthly cost of leasing office space for the office manager and ZEO would be approximately \$700. The cost of arranging space for meetings (for the Board and ZBA) has not been factored in. Vin Giordano observed that this investigation had been undertaken as part of an inquiry whether it made sense for the Association to

retain ownership of the headquarters building. Matt Barez observed that there did not appear to be any cost savings for getting rid of the headquarters building. Upon motion and second the board decided to curtail further consideration of this issue.

Waterfront - David Silverstone reported that the railing at the end of Island View Avenue has now been replaced. Vin Giordano reported that based upon the complaint of a neighbor the DEEP had sent a notice of violation about the temporary steps that that Association installed on the Crescent Bluff access point to make entry to the beach safer. The Association has asked DEEP for a meeting to address the complaint and to seek an extension of time until June 1st for removal of the steps.

Office Manager – Peter Robinson reported that he installed the television in the meeting room and will seek to repair the system for meetings.

Agenda Item 4--Old Business Crescent Bluff update previously covered by Matt Barez under zoning).

Agenda Item 5--New Business (1) Route 146 corridor management—the State has set aside funds to enhance Route 146 between Branford and Guilford. There have been two public hearings thus far. The POA will submit comments to the State Department of Transportation (DOT) and will share this with the Town of Branford. In addition, the Association emphasize other areas that require attention.

This will include a proposal for installation of sidewalks between:

1.) Intersection of Elizabeth St at Pine Orchard Rd to Blackstone Ave; 2.) Intersection of Elizabeth St. at Spring Rock Rd to Yowago Avenue; 3.) Intersection of Pine Orchard Rd. at Blackstone Avenue to Young's Park; and 4) Youngs Park to Stony Creek Road.

The sightline issues to be addressed include: 1.) Reconfigure existing triangular intersection of Totoket Rd, Damascus Rd. and Stony Creek Road to improve difficult sightline up Stony Creek Road.

2.) Reconfigure Triangular Intersection at Totoket Rd. and Blackstone Ave. to a single T Intersection.

3.) At the Intersection of Pleasant Point Road and Totoket Rd., initially install parabolic mirrors in both directions. Additionally, consider realignment and straightening of the two directional curves.4.) The Intersection of Griffing Pond Road to Totoket Road.

We will propose reconfiguration of Totoket Rd. And Blackstone Avenue intersections and making Spring Rock Road near the Triangle one-way to improve turning onto Pine Orchard Road. We will also recommend addressing drainage issues that result in flooding in Pine Orchard. These would include repairing a pipe where Totoket Road meets Pleasant Point Road, installing new catch basins where Fillsmere Rd. meets Griffing Pond Road and at the foot of Blackstone Avenue to prevent flooding. We will also propose installation of cross walks at Spring Rock Road to address speeding.

Jean Miles, 22 Blackstone Avenue says that there is serious ponding at her house during storms. It is unknown whether the pipe that was installed to direct water away from her property is clogged or broken.

Neil Goodlad, 8 Pine Wood Avenue, says that he is a commissioner of Branford's Engineering and Conservation Committee. He is available to work with the Association on environmental issues arising from the work proposed.

Maura Sullivan, 7 Pleasant Point Road said that she has experienced water bubbling up from her basement during storms. The catch basins that were installed near her property do not appear to be

connected and her yard is filled with stagnant water following heavy rains. She has two sump pumps, and it has become intolerable to deal with all the water. .

(2) Branford regulations applicable to Pine Orchard. Vin Giordano read into the record Branford regulations applicable to dog owners who let their dogs roam at large.

(3) Stephanie Farber asked the Board to consider placement of a little free library in the Triangle. Stephanie said that she was willing to put up money for the structure and that she and others can provide books for the library. Peggy Haering said that she had researched the idea and that kits or fully built structures were available for as little as \$500. Board member Tom Roche offered to cover the cost of a structure and donate his services to build and install it. Peggy Haering asked whether we needed to seek any approval from the Town of Branford, as it is the owner of the park. Susan Dahill, the RTM member for the 7th District, volunteered to approach the Town of Branford to see whether permission might be needed. Upon motion and second the Board voted unanimously to proceed with the project.

Agenda Item 6, Public Comments. Neil Goodlad asked about recent arrests of children/adolescents involved in car thefts. Vin Giordano said that we asked the Police Chief about car thefts in Pine Orchard. The Chief said that there had been only one such theft in Pino Orchard during the prior year.

Agenda Item 7—Executive Session, Optional) [None]

Agenda Item 8--Public Comments Barbara Sagesse, 1 Crescent Bluff Ave. asked a question about dogs on the beach.

Agenda Item 9)--Adjournment. Upon motion and second the meeting was adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Margaret Haering, Clerk

Upcoming Board meetings

- Monday, March 4th, 2024
- Monday, May 6th, 2024
- POA Annual Meeting, Monday July 8, 2024

Documents received: Pine Orchard Association Budget