

BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Water Shortage Ordinance Subcommittee
Tuesday, May 15, 2018
9:00AM-Simsbury Town Hall- Main Meeting Room
SPECIAL MEETING

PRESENT: Mike Paine

ALSO PRESENT: Maria Capriola Town Manager, Michael Glidden, Assistant Town Planner, Jeff Shea, Town Engineer, Tom Roy Director of Public Works, Donald Rieger

Absent: Chris Kelly, Margery Winters

Call to Order

Mr. Paine called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

1) Public Audience

Mr. Paine asked if there any members of the Public that wished to speak. No one came forward.

2) Review and Discussion of draft Water Shortage Ordinance

Mr. Paine summarized the meeting with Tarifville Fire District meeting and asked staff to discuss comments.

Ms. Capriola explained how staff started reviewing the proposed ordinance. She stated that a document has been prepared which illustrates some of the comments and/or concerns that the staff has developed. Ms. Capriola felt that because of a lot of the comments from the four staff members overlapped, she wanted to review these with the members and see if there was a way to address.

Ms. Capriola suggested that the group would review section by section of the proposed ordinance so that staff comments could be reviewed in detail. Mr. Paine agreed. Ms. Capriola explained that the staff will be reaching out to Aquarion and Connecticut Water to review the proposed ordinance with both utility companies so that the document is fully vetted by all groups. Mr. Rieger explained that some of the conservation measures outlined in the proposed ordinance were similar to those in the Town of Greenwich's ordinance. He felt that Aquarion would be familiar with these and that the company was thinking updating their conservation regulations.

Ms. Capriola began the review of staff comments with the group. Mr. Roy reviewed his comments in Section 157-1. He explained how changes were meant to clarify the language. He felt the proposed was too broad and potentially left to interpretation.

Mr. Roy explained how he edited the definition of threatened water supply to include consultation of industry experts. He felt the consultation would help the Town determine when there is an environmental issue which warranted conservation measures.

Ms. Capriola reviewed the next comment from Jeff Shea concerning the definition of potable water. Mr. Shea felt that clarification as to the definition of potable water needed to be provided.

He explained how there are wells in Simsbury which are not meant for drinking water. Mr. Rieger explained how if the source can be used for drinking purposes then it would be subject to the ordinance. Mr. Roy explained the example of many wells in the Northern sections of Simsbury which were compromised due to historical pesticides and some residents kept their wells for lawn irrigation purposes. Mr. Paine agreed and stated although he is from this section of Simsbury it is concerning that the Town would be enforcing these regulations on water company customers while neighbors would be exempt. Mr. Roy also agreed and explained how this could cause conflict.

Ms. Capriola stated the next comment was with water companies and community wells. She stated there are community wells in Simsbury. Mr. Roy and Mr. Glidden referenced community wells such as Ethel Walker School and Quad Hill which were not identified in the ordinance. Ms. Capriola discussed how in Mansfield there were several community wells which served areas of the community that worked with the town. Mr. Rieger felt these community wells would be managed by home owners and others which did not have the professional expertise that water companies have. He also explained that community wells were regulated by the State Department of Public Health. Ms. Capriola suggested that staff contact the State Department of Public Health and get a definition of a community well and provide information on how these are regulated by the state. Mr. Glidden volunteered to investigate this subject and would report back.

Ms. Capriola stated that staff would invite representatives of Aquarion to discuss the regulations. Mr. Roy stated he would coordinate these efforts.

Mr. Glidden asked how the proposed ordinance would affect golf courses such as Simsbury Farms which their irrigation ponds are fed by wells. He explained diversion permits from CTDEEP may have conservation restrictions and this ordinance would severely restrict irrigation practices. Mr. Rieger stated he felt the ordinance would not regulate golf courses.

Ms. Capriola reviewed the next comment from T. Roy concerning drought management plan referenced in 157-4. Mr. Roy felt that a drought management plan should be adopted or draft before the ordinance. He stated that having the plan in place before a time of crisis would better help the community. Ms. Capriola agreed. Mr. Rieger explained that he drafted a drought management plan and shared a copy with Ms. Capriola. He felt that the developing of such a plan should be tied to a specific event. Mr. Roy, Mr. Glidden, and Ms. Capriola expressed their concern with this section.

Ms. Capriola stated the next section 157-5 had several comments. Mr. Shea explained his comments regarding recreational uses and how these could apply to Simsbury Farms pool complex among others. Mr. Roy also explained his concerns on how the Town would asking for conservation from citizens and there would issues on how these similar measures could impact town facilities.

Mr. Paine noted that it was almost 10:00 am. Ms. Capriola apologized to the group but she explained that the group would have adjourn. She wanted to schedule a follow meeting with the group to finish reviewing staff comments. She inquired whether the group would be available for a follow meeting on Monday May 21st. Everyone present stated Monday would work. Ms. Capriola suggested that the group would meet at 10:00am however she would verify with Chris Kelly on his availability. She would follow up with the group on time for the special meeting.

3) Next Steps

Mr. Paine thanked everyone for their efforts and inputs in drafting the water shortage ordinance. Ms. Capriola asked that adoption of the meeting minutes from previous meetings be table until Chris Kelly is present. Ms. Capriola stated when the ordinance was ready for submission to the Board of Selectmen for adoption that a public hearing would be required because of the amount of changes and time since the Board started the process.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 9:59 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Glidden CFM CZEO
Assistant Town Planner