

Conservation panel debates aquifer designation

By Robert Morton-Ranney

At its March 13 meeting, the Conservation Commission welcomed guests Ellen Winsor and Pat Bolger, who again asked for the support of the commission in their attempt to have the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) designate Conanicut Island as a Sole Source Aquifer (SSA).

Winsor said their goal is to protect Jamestown's water supply. She reported that 43 percent of the island's population rely on the municipal water system, and 57 percent are on wells.

Chairman Christopher Powell pointed out that many Jamestowners don't realize that all Jamestown water comes from the same source. They think the municipal water supply comes from one source and the well water from another, but this is not the case.

Winsor and Bolger stressed the importance of the educational component that SSA designation would bring, along with the aid of federal review when considering future projects undertaken with federal monies.

Powell said he has asked Town Administrator Bruce Keiser to check with other communities that have the designation, especially Block Island, Nantucket, and Martha's Vineyard, to find out what impact it has had.

Winsor said she has spoken with officials on Block Island and Nantucket herself. Indications were that there was "no downside" and that there have been "no federal surprises."

A Block Island councilwoman sees it as protecting the interests of their permanent residents because, in her view, people who are new to their island don't always have the same attitude about water, Winsor said.

Powell asked Winsor and Bolger to request that the text describing the heart of the proposal be posted on the town website for all to read.

In response to this issue, Commissioners Mark Baker and Cathy Roheim said they want to know more about the proposal, but wonder whether there might be unintended consequences.

Roheim said she worries about extra regulation. "It's awfully hard to undesignate," and she wonders

about long-term issues around communal development needs.

Roheim noted Massachusetts' legislation barring solid waste sites in SSA-designated communities and wondered whether Rhode Island might follow suit and what it would mean for the Jamestown landfill.

"How does Nantucket deal with solid waste?" she asked. Bolger replied that he was sure they "take it off," the island. Commissioner Jennifer Talancy said she is currently in full support of the designation, especially if the education portion plays out as described. Commissioner Carol Trocki agreed, but also wondered why the designation is needed if the main goal is education.

Bolger replied that "the town is not taking action to move toward massive education and restrictions" that are town-wide and not just village-wide. He added that one of the biggest draws on water is the use of sprinkler systems on the north end and on Beavertail.

Powell noted that prior education efforts have not been as vigorous in recent years.

Winsor and Bolger both stressed that "naming it makes a difference," and adds credibility to the entire enterprise.

Commissioner Patrick Driscoll addressed the long-term aspects of the designation. He also said he wondered what the linkage was between the push for an SSA designation and the other issues of the highway barn location and possible landfill closure. Powell said these had been linked in earlier correspondence.

Driscoll added that he knows an attorney who does work related to water conservation on Block Island and he sees the designation as "a positive."

The commission will consider the question further at its next meeting. Powell pointed out that he and Trocki are also members of the Water Resource Protection Committee, and it will certainly be addressed there as well.

The commission is finalizing plans for the Earth Day Shoreline Cleanup, on Saturday, April 21. Jamestowners will be invited to meet at the community center at 8:30 a.m. Driscoll is coordinating.

The Conservation Commission:

heard from Roheim that she will draft an advertisement to remind everyone about Rhode Island's Farm, Forest, and Open Space Act, intended to conserve undeveloped land by reducing the tax burden of owners.

Powell said "the last thing we want is people having to sell their property because they can't afford their taxes."

The non-development commitment is 15 years. Once this period is complete, it can be renewed or development can be undertaken without penalty.

Driscoll suggested tracking properties previously in the program to see what happened afterward.

In other business, the commission:

- Learned from Talancy that mesh has been installed under the observation platform in the Sanctuary. She noted that the trails are very muddy and may require irrigation bars. Powell suggested the dispersal of wood chips in some places, as well, and thought the

scouts would be glad to help out.

- Heard from Trocki that final word has not been received on the commission's application for funding for the Round Marsh Restoration Project, but "we should know in the next few weeks."

- Baker reported that he will correct "some small errors" in the final edition of the Trails Guide. Three thousand copies will be printed and the goal is to have them ready for the next meeting.

- Listened to a report from Powell that an Eagle Scout candidate is beginning the process of assembling the necessary plans, permissions and materials to carry out the Hull Cove right-of-way project.

- Heard from Driscoll that he will put an information packet together for the next meeting concerning possible changes at Fort

Getty.

The commission also made plans to pick up trash on the section of North Main Road, between Westwind Drive and the Rt. 138 overpass, for which it has this responsibility.

The commission has sent letters to Save the Bay in support of its proposed eelgrass transplantation activities around Conanicut Island, and to the Harbor Management Commission requesting that a scout be reimbursed for costs incurred in constructing a boat rack at Fort Getty.

It was also noted that a letter has been sent by the Coastal Resource Management Council to an owner of property on Decatur Avenue regarding the blocking of a designated right-of-way.

CHOPMIST CHARLIE'S

"Seaworthy Fare"

Fresh Seafood • Steaks
Chicken • Pasta

↓ ↓ ↓

Prime Rib Friday &
Saturday after 5:30

↓ ↓ ↓

40 Narragansett Avenue
423-1020
Open for
Lunch & Dinner

Jamestown Wine & Spirits

Weekdays 'til 9, Fri. & Sat. 'til 10 & Sunday noon 'til 6

Spring is Here!

Coors Light 30 packs.....\$19⁹⁹
Sam Adams 2/12 pk all types.....\$26⁹⁹

Famous Grouse Scotch 1.75.....\$29⁹⁹
Popov Vodka 1.75.....\$13⁹⁹

Robert Mondavi Private Select...\$10⁹⁹
Mezza Corona Pinot Grigio...2 for \$20
Clos Du Bois Chardonnay...2 for \$20

Wine Specials

2 for \$10 • 3 for \$10

Imported Beer • ATM • Ice • Lottery • Delivery Available
 30 Southwest Avenue • Jamestown
423-0100

KRISTINE S. TROCKI
Attorney and Counsellor at Law

KRISTINE S. TROCKI
RESOLVES DISPUTES IN
THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

- PERSONAL INJURY
- AUTO ACCIDENTS
- PRODUCT LIABILITY
- MEDICAL MALPRACTICE
- WRONGFUL DEATH
- LANDLORD/TENANT
- EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION
- WRONGFUL DISCHARGE
- MINOR CRIMINAL OFFENSES
- DIVORCE MEDIATION
- BUSINESS & CONTRACT DISPUTES
- COLLECTIONS

38 Narragansett Avenue, Suite D, Jamestown, RI 02835
tel 401.423.3390 | fax 401.423.3370 | kst@trockilaw.com

CHECKING plus rewards!

CHECKING... it doesn't have to be complicated. Pick the account that fits your lifestyle and needs...even **FREE CHECKING** with direct deposit! Plus, choose one of these GREAT \$25 gift cards!* Open any **CHECKING** account right over the phone, at **845.2265** or **877.709.2265** outside Newport County, or visit your branch for all your **CHECKING** details.

BANK NEWPORT
An OceanPoint Financial Partner
Focused on your success!
banknewport.com

*Available to new checking account customers only. Card selection based on availability. Offer good through April 30, 2007. The redemption value (\$25) will be reflected as a 100% item at your end. Minimum deposit of \$25 to open account. Offer may be withdrawn at any time. The Old Navy gift card can be used at all Gap, Old Navy and Banana Republic locations and online at Gap.com, OldNavy.com, or Bananarepublic.com. Only 2 gift cards are redeemable per online transaction. The Old Navy gift card is redeemable for merchandise only and cannot be replaced if lost or stolen. Gap Inc. and its related companies are not affiliated with or sponsors of this promotion. The Shell Gift Card can be used only for purchases of goods and services at Shell locations in the U.S. The Card cannot be redeemed for cash and no change will be given, except in those states that require redemption for cash. Shell Oil Products US and its related companies are not sponsors or co-sponsors of this promotion. Member FDIC.