

**East Haddam
Conservation Commission**

July 1, 2014

Adopted August 5, 2014

1. Call to Order

The Regular Meeting of the East Haddam Conservation Commission was held on Tuesday, July 1, 2014, at 7:35 PM at the River House. The Chairperson being in the Chair and the Secretary being Present.

a. Roll Call

Sue Merrow, Marilyn Gleeson, Paul Sienna, Peggy Carlson, Todd Gelston, Charlotte Gelston. Others in attendance: Joe Zaid

2. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Ms. Merrow to approve the agenda as presented. Second by Ms. Gleeson and unanimously approved.

3. Approval of Conservation Commission Minutes for 6/3/14

Added “t” to at on the note at the top of the page about approval.

10. Adjournment – added the “o” to Ms. Gelston’s name.

6.d. Noted permission granted by Richard H. Goodwin, Jr. to use Mr. Goodwin’s name.

7a. Removed “an” and added an “s” to Eagle Scout projects as each boy must lead his own project.

7b. clarified the sending of the logo to Ms. Gleeson.

7e. clarified about the need to coordinate signage and communications.

9. Added June 21 to the Shagbark solar demonstration.

Motion by Ms. Merrow to approve the minutes as amended. Second by Ms. Gleeson and unanimously approved.

4. Approval of Forestry and Stewardship sub-committee minutes 6/26

Added “t” to at on the note at the top of the page about approval.

Motion by Mr. Gelston to approve the minutes as amended. Second by Ms. Gleeson and unanimously approved. Mr. Smith and Mr. Sienna abstained.

5. Old Business

a. Subcommittee updates

Forestry & Stewardship – The Rose Farm Homestead east side trails have all been cleared, up to the point of the brook (given the boundary nearby). The next steps include trail marking and doing a bit more clearing. On the west side, a bulldozer has been rented to clean up the trails there, which will allow for trail clearing, tagging and marking. The Hatch Lot has received IWWC approval to install the 20’ bridge for the east side of the property. The parking lot approval was also provided, due to the concern about the closeness of the vernal pools, the CC will install some type of barrier to prevent the public from driving into those areas (and thus getting stuck). Joe Zaid joined the CC meeting, and Mr. Gelston noted that he is now the official steward for the Petticoat Landing preserve and the Rose Farm Homestead.

Mr. Smith is working on getting the cradles to hold the parking lot log barriers in place. Mr. Zaid provided a map of the Petticoat Landing preserve, and it looks like the property is fee-simple owned, versus a conservation easement. Ms. Merrow noted that the CC is looking for stewards to be the eyes and ears of what is happening on the town owned open space, and to keep the CC informed if there are any encroachment issues that need to be addressed.

Volunteer Activism – nothing to report.

Outreach and Promotions – Ms. Gelston collected \$6 and Ms. Carlson collected \$18.50 for the trail guides. Ms. Merrow noted the Grandview Campgrounds need more trail guides, which Ms. Carlson will address.

b. IWWC and P&Z updates

P&Z – Ms. Gleeson noted there is going to be a public hearing on July 8th, for Dutch Oil and Propane’s proposal to install 2 30,000 propane tanks in Moodus. Another topic discussed is the need to create regulations for drive through windows, for multi-unit parking and for helipads. The beaver dam was breached near Shagbark spilling 2M gallons into Succor Brook. There was discussion around the flood within Nathan Hale Pharmacy. The new veterinary hospital is now being located on Grist Mill Road, and there will be a public hearing on July 8th to discuss. P&Z are looking into regs for free-standing solar panels. There is also an application submitted and approved on subdividing the Lena property. Ms. Gleeson will ask at the next meeting when the hearing will be scheduled to discuss the proposed upcoming Agriculture regulations.

IWWC – Mr. Gelston noted the Hatch Lot permit for bridge and parking lot has been approved.

c. Update on open space purchases

There is nothing new on the two properties being reviewed. Information on monies being provided by the State is due sometime in October. The 2 properties are the Lena property for over 200 acres, and another 40 acre property on Sara Baker Road, with 7/8 of the property touched by Nature Conservancy – who has committed to allowing a trail, if acquired. There is another property being considered for purchase. It’s 24 acres (currently owned by Ronnie Bernstein) and adjoins the EHLT to touch Falls Bashan. It contains the turbine from an old mill, and there is an option to revisit that area for producing 300KW of hydro power. The difficult part is there is a potential liability issues. There is a very large dam on the property with a 30’ to 40’ sheer face and topped with concrete. One section is curved, and it’s beautiful stone work, with the spillway intact, but there is significant liability with the dam currently as it may not be structurally sound. One of the values of this property is as a possible source for hydro power, and another is that it would become part of continuing protection of the Moodus River corridor. If a hydro plant were established there, this could be another way to bring money back into the town. This area is an ideal location as it is at the natural end of any historic fishery, thus a dam will not destroy any historic fishery/spawning grounds.

d. Linear Trail update

Nothing new to report, but there is \$15,000 available to build the bridge for the trail on Chapel Farms. Mr. Smith is going to walk the trail with East Lyme in late July to get the last section of the trail finalized. Ms. Merrow noted that when this trail is ready for public use,

there is a need for a public campaign to announce it. Mr. Smith also noted that when that campaign happens, he will work to see if the Goodwin family can attend.

6. New Business

a. Eagle Scout project

No updates to report. The Mosig boys were not able to attend the July meeting. Mr. Smith and Mr. Gelston have not heard anything back on the campground Eagle Scout project by Griffin Shepherd.

b. Sandwich board

Ms. Gleeson brought a sandwich board for display. There needs to be an owner of the signage boards who is responsible for posting the announcements. The CC logo can be permanently posted at the top, which is why the larger boards were purchased. The signs will be used to announce work parties and events. Signage is needed in front of Town Office, the Grange or corner of Rt 82 and Town Street and Grist Mill with the last sign being placed near where the work party is happening. Mr. Gelston asked that one sign be posted immediately noting the 2 vacancies within the CC. Mr. Gelston volunteered to be the keeper of the signage boards.

c. Stewardship tracking spreadsheet

Ms. Goyette walked through the East Haddam Conservation Commission Open Space Inventory, and the addition of the last page will be added and maintained going forward.

d. New bills

Several bills were presented for payment.

Forestry Suppliers bill for about \$600 (exact amount is not on the invoice) to purchase paint, a backpack to hold a chain saw and its fluid, and flagging materials.

Motion by Mr. Gelston to pay the Forestry Suppliers bill in the amount based on what is actually billed, second by Ms. Gleeson, unanimously approved.

Two Shagbark bills for 2 bridges at Hatch Lot, materials for smaller bridges on Patrell and Rose Farm and sign post materials - \$1271.04 and the other is approximately \$1000. Total is approximately \$2300.

Motion by Mr. Gelston to pay the two Shagbark bills with the second bill amount to be based on what is actually billed, second by Ms. Carlson, unanimously approved.

Bill for D.H. Marvin rental of bulldozer for \$880.

Motion by Ms. Gelston to pay the D.H. Marvin bill, second by Ms. Gleeson, unanimously approved.

The new sign purchases have been made, for the properties that needed signs. These have a 7 year guarantee. Bill provided is approximately \$1500.

Motion by Mr. Gelston to pay the signage bill for the exact amount billed, second by Ms. Mellow, unanimously approved.

Gravel was purchased for \$1625, from Renz.

Motion by Mr. Gelston to pay the Renz bill, second by Ms. Mellow, unanimously approved.

Conservation Commission Meeting, Town of East Haddam, July 1, 2014

Sandwich boards were \$949, and as the amount previously authorized was \$800, the CC discussed the need to approve the higher amount.

Motion by Ms. Gelston to approve the extra expenditure on the larger sandwich signs, second by Ms. Merrow, unanimously approved.

7. Next meeting – August 5, 2014, 7:30, at The River House

8. Announcements and other discussion

Ms. Goyette will write the Annual report draft and provide to Mr. Smith. She will ask the Town Clerk for the form to fill out.

Mr. Smith read the thank you letters from the 3 students who participated in Government Day, with Mr. Smith and Mr. Ventres. Mr. Smith noted that the Town was able to create enough activities for every 6th grader to participate in Government Day.

Mr. Gelston noted that Cheryl Matthewson from the FFA outlined the update for the new trail work needed on the Nichols property. Mr. Smith will contact Ms. Matthewson to help with the needed work. The FFA is going to Kentucky and will be highlighting the work done on the Nichols activity in connection with a potential grant.

Mr. Gelston is proposing that the Ray FFA Nichols Trail project update be presented to the Selectmen's meeting, as well as the Cub Scout activity to ensure the Selectmen are aware of the youth involvement on town owned open space and their enthusiasm.

Mr. Gelston noted the Trail Guide update must be a priority. The trail guide does not have the Dean and Hatch Lot properties, and the first printing has been completely distributed. Ms. Gleeson asked Mr. Smith if the GPS is available yet; Mr. Smith has not heard anything about that at this point.

Mr. Gelston asked if Mr. Smith has had any further conversation with Mr. Simmons' work on an EDC plan to include information about open space; he has not. Mr. Smith noted that any real estate listing noting open space should be noted and provided to the Selectmen. Mr. Smith and Mr. Gelston will be meeting with the Selectmen to discuss the importance of open space.

Mr. Smith noted that Harvey Thomas has provided updated numbers on the amount of the budget for open space versus education.

Ms. Gleeson took an inventory of the Harris property and will provide a list for posting on the CC website.

The next Forestry and Stewardship sub-committee work party is July 12.

9. Adjournment

Motion by Ms. Merrow to adjourn at 9:29 pm, second by Ms. Carlson, unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Shannon A. Goyette
Recording Secretary

Attachments:

- The Habitat, volume 26 number 2
- East Haddam Conservation Commission Open Space Inventory
- East Haddam Conservation Commission active properties

Conservation Commission Meeting, Town of East Haddam, July 1, 2014

- Official notice from the IWWC of the application for creating a parking area and constructing a foot bridge.
- Ray FFA Nichols Trail Project update