

**THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT CONSERVATION
COMMISSION MEETING**

**East Haddam
Conservation Commission**

November 4, 2014

1. Call to Order

The Special Meeting of the East Haddam Conservation Commission was held on Tuesday, November 4, 2014, at 7:31 PM at the Annex (moved from the River House due to the Registrar of Voters use of the River House in support of the election). The Chairperson being in the Chair and the Secretary being Present.

a. Roll Call

Rob Smith, Paul Sienna, Charlotte Gelston, Todd Gelston, Joe Zaid. Others in attendance: Dan Carbo.

2. Approval of Agenda

Move Disc Golf to the first order of business.

Motion by Mr. Gelston to approve the agenda as amended. Second by Ms. Gelston and unanimously approved.

3. Approval of Conservation Commission Minutes for 10/7/14

2. Removed Morrow/Gelston from next to Approval of Agenda.

2. Changed Ms. Morrow to Ms. Merrow.

4. Updated the funding to show that it's the CC that will help fund, not just Mr. Gelston and Mr. Smith.

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

4. Approval of Forestry and Stewardship Sub-Committee Minutes 10/15/14

4.e. Changed Mr. Smith to Mr. Sienna. Added "of" to the planned route.

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

5. Old Business

a. Subcommittee updates

Forestry and Stewardship sub-committee: Mr. Gelston noted quite a bit of work has been done on the Hatch Lot and Rose Farm Homestead, despite cancelled work parties due to the weather. The parking lot at Hatch Lot is now installed, and though it needs a few more loads of gravel to make it flat, it is much improved as it is. The parking lot signs are up at Hatch Lot. There is excess gravel still to be relocated, and a few trees that must be removed from the entrance of the parking lot. The gate at the Hatch Lot on the white and red trail needs to be moved to the east side of Rose Farm Homestead. Signs are up on both signs on Rose Farm Homestead. On other properties, the Sabine property boundaries need to be marked, and the original phase 1 list of properties and work still needs to be addressed fully. Mr. Gelston and

Mr. Smith will meet with Beth Lunt (of Public Works) and Mr. Walter with an immediate job list and a map of the locations and names of properties such that work can be fit into the existing Public Works' schedule. There has been 9 man weeks' worth of labor done to date on town open space, which is quite impressive. Mr. Sienna is meeting with the Cub Scouts to do some trail clearing at the Hatch Lot this weekend. Discussion ensued on the Boy Scout projects and if any progress has been made yet.

Outreach and Promotion: Mr. Sienna brought an example of a 3-ring binder trail guide as a suggestion for the CC's next trail guide.

b. IWWC and P&Z updates

IWWC – Mr. Gelston noted nothing major is happening. The drawdown of Bashan Lake is causing many residents to clean up their front lawns and repair their stone walls. Most stone walls are being allowed to be fixed if it not too damaged. Mr. Casner's application to build on the AP Gates property, that is mostly wetlands, was discussed. He requested the Public Hearing be postponed so that he can bring his lawyer to address the questions. The property has been noted in public records as open space.

P&Z – nothing to report.

c. Update on open space purchases

About 65% of the total cost for the Lena property and Zelsnicky property of about 226 total acres has been granted from the State. Another round of grants has been opened already as well.

d. Linear Trail update

Signs should be posted by end of next month.

e. Trowbridge Road property discussion

A new proposal has been provided to exchange equal parts of property on Trowbridge, with a right of way through it for the land owner. During the walk for the Disc Golf proposal, the CC will look at the area for the suggested property swap.

6. New Business

a. New bills

Nothing to report.

b. Discussion and presentation about Disc Golf

Mr. Carbo and a business partner are interested in opening up a Disc Golf course in East Haddam. Tiffany Quinn at Park and Rec has been approached, and she really liked the idea and is including money in next year's budget for this activity. Disc Golf is similar to ball golf – the goal is to throw a disc into a net in the fewest throws. Most courses are wooded, and it makes the game more challenging. Courses typically do not require much vegetation cutting, so open space is a perfect opportunity for this type of activity. It's a very family friendly activity, has very minimal construction to put into place, can use existing trails for the "course" and actually enhances trails as it helps provide additional signage, clearer pathways, etc. Nichols and Trowbridge (back of the school) properties are both potentially good spots for a course within town. The course would be 18 holes with good signage, a good tee box

and a good place to throw. Mr. Smith suggested Sunrise as a perfect place to do this, but Mr. Carbo noted that they had considered Sunrise but had not made much progress there. Mr. Smith noted the State Parks may be very interested in establishing this within Sunrise, as there is now quite a bit of interest about putting passive recreation activities within it than in the past. Mr. Smith suggested Mr. Carbo contact the State and have further conversation about it; he provided contact names and numbers to Mr. Carbo. There is no concern by the CC about using town-owned open space, as long as any course takes into consideration any horse trails. There are a number of options that could be considered, like Brainard Homestead, though not owned by the Town. Mr. Gelston noted the trail system is very passive use. A Disc Golf course can be much more active than just hiking a trail, with more noise and activity. The Trowbridge property on the back of the school is not as sensitive as Nichols. There are no trails on the property already in place. Mr. Gelston thinks it's an interesting idea to get people out into the woods for other activities. Mr. Carbo already mocked up an 18-hole course on Trowbridge, but would have to walk the property and lay out a better course taking into consideration all the property's nuances. In order to move forward, Mr. Carbo is looking for the CC's support so that he can provide further information to Park and Rec, to include appropriate monies in the budget for this activity. Typically 25 acres is a good amount of space for a course. Mr. Sienna and Mr. Gelston noted that having a dedicated space for the game would be a good idea. Mr. Smith suggested a walk-through of Trowbridge and then further discussion on it at the next meeting.

7. Next meeting – Dec. 2, at The River House.
8. Announcements and other discussion
None were discussed.
9. Adjournment

Motion by Mr. Gelston to adjourn at 9:17 pm, seconded by Ms. Gelston, unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Shannon A. Goyette
Recording Secretary

Attachments:

- State Parks Division, Roofless Regulation Sign
- State Parks Division, Covered Regulation Sign