

**East Haddam
Conservation Commission**

March 19, 2015

Adopted April 7, 2015

1. Call to Order

The Special Meeting of the East Haddam Conservation Commission was held on Thursday, March 19, 2015, at 7:36 PM at the River House. The Chairperson being in the Chair and the Secretary being Present.

a. Roll Call

Rob Smith, Marilyn Gleeson, Joe Zaid, Sue Merrow, Paul Sienna, Todd Gelston, Charlotte Gelston.

2. Approval of Agenda

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

3. Approval of Conservation Commission Minutes for 2/3/15

Motion by Ms. Merrow to approve the minutes as presented. Second by Ms. Gelston and unanimously approved.

4. Approval of Forestry and Stewardship Sub-Committee Minutes for 2/26/15
3b adjusted to note that Mr. Smith is sending a letter on behalf of the EHLT.
3d changed sentence for readability.
3e changed guides to maps

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

5. Old Business

a. Subcommittee updates

Forestry and Stewardship sub-committee: Weather has not cooperated to allow any work to be conducted yet.

Outreach and Promotion: Ms. Gleeson highlighted she has the ability to add color to the text portion of the trail maps. She has the ability to use different colors if desired. Mr. Smith asked if there is additional costs; Mr. Zaid noted that since color is already being used, there is no additional costs. Ms. Gleeson determined how to make the margins stay as formatted when converting the document to a PDF file. Ms. Gleeson will ask Mr. Zaid's wife about folding options. Ms. Gleeson changed the font to calibri instead of papyrus for readability. Ms. Gleeson has done all the work that she can do for now without the additional items that need to be completed. Ms. Gleeson contacted Ms. Matthewson at the school, who noted she has acquired 15 GPS units with a recent grant. Ms. Matthewson offered to lend out the units to the CC. Ms. Gleeson will arrange to pick up the units from Ms. Matthewson.

Volunteer Activism:

b. IWWC and P&Z updates

IWWC – Mr. Gelston did not attend the most recent meeting. IWWC denied Mr. Casner’s application to build a house on Warner Road and AP Gates Road at the prior meeting.
P&Z – The 32 Main Coffee shop wants to expand to include dinner with beer and wine. No report on Shagbark and it’s zoning violation. Grandview campground wants to expand and include 9 additional sites.

c. Update on open space purchases

There is an open space vote next week on March 24. Mr. Gelston noted how important it is to encourage those interested in preserving open space to vote. Ms. Merrow noted that it is very important to spread the word and encourage people to vote. Mr. Smith noted that ~1% of the town’s expenditures are used for open space, ~66% of the total town budget is for education. Every property that the Open Space Commission looks at has a soil sample test done and an engineer review to see how many houses could be placed upon the acreage. The acreage up for open space referendum this month is located on a road that is not within the area of improvement noted within the Plan of Conservation and Development.

d. Linear Trail update

Mr. Smith noted as soon as Bob Weaver comes back into town, he will address the bridge needs as the engineers are set to finalize the bridge plan and just need his information. Once done, the monies have been requisitioned to build the bridge on Chapal Farm and materials can start to be purchased. The Eightmile committee requested a second grant to construct another 10 mile connection into Salem River, using open space and lesser used town roads, which then connects with the airline trail continuing all the way into MA.

e. Trowbridge Road property discussion

Mr. Smith noted Mr. Ventres wrote up a lengthy explanation of the whole situation on the Trowbridge property swap request and forwarded it to the town attorney. The CC is waiting for the town attorney to comment.

f. Scouting update

Mr. Gelston has not heard from any of the Scouts with updates on the Scouting projects. Mr. Gelston contacted Mr. Buhl and invited him to the March meeting to discuss his son’s Eagle Scout project.

g. 2015-2016 Budget

Mr. Smith discussed the budget submitted to the Board of Finance. \$5000 has been reduced out of the capital budget, but Mr. Walter committed at the request of the Board of Finance to provide Public Works’ support to the CC’s capital projects.

6. New Business

a. New bills

No new bills to review.

b. Public Comment

No public attended to provide public comment.

c. Disc Golf

Mr. Gelston noted the focus is to put Disc Golf on the Nichols property, which may not be the best property as it's rocky, wet and has quite a bit of activity upon it already. The FFA is very excited about this proposal though. The CC will review the site with Park and Rec's Tiffany Quinn, Mr. Ventres and the Disc Golf people once the snow melts and property evaluation can be done much more easily.

7. Next meeting – April 7, at The River House.

8. Announcements and other discussion

The EHLT has one additional ticket for the upcoming CLCC meeting for anyone who's interested. Ray of Light closed on its purchase of the property, so Mr. Smith will contact them to discuss the horse trail addition to connect their trails into the trails on Rose Farm Homestead.

Ms. Gleeson asked if it would be a good idea to put together a spreadsheet of the activities allowed on each property and trails, and post that on the website.

Mr. Smith also noted that several properties will need to be added to the list of areas plowed next year by Public Works to encourage winter usage of open space.

Council of Environmental Quality issued its report. Their report can be reviewed on their website.

Ms. Merrow asked for topics to write an article for the next Events magazine. She will interview a person, as she did last time, and spotlight another CC member.

9. Adjournment

Motion by Mr. Gelston to adjourn at 9:34 pm, seconded by Mr. Sienna, unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Shannon A. Goyette
Recording Secretary

- 2015 Connecticut Land Conservation Conference
- The Habitat Winter 2015, volume 27 number 1
- Equalized Mill Rates FY 2011