

**East Haddam
Conservation Commission**

December 4, 2018

Adopted January 8, 2019

1. Call to Order

The Regular Meeting of the East Haddam Conservation Commission was held on Tuesday, December 4, 2018, at 7:32 PM at the Municipal Office Building. The Chairperson being in the Chair and the Secretary being present.

a. Roll Call

Rob Smith, Paul Sienna, Marilyn Gleeson, Charlotte Gelston, Todd Gelston, Gary Wilson, Sue Merrow – arrived 8:35 via phone. Others present: Jim Ventres – arrived 8:29, departed 8:58.

2. Appointment of Alternates

Mr. Wilson appointed as alternate member until Ms. Merrow arrived.

3. Approval of Agenda

Under New Business, added Discussion of Open Space parcels with Land Use Administrator

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

4. Approval of Conservation Commission Minutes for 11/4/18

Added Attachments section and included “Gary Wilson’s application for the Conservation Commission”

6b. added s to clarifications

7d. Updated the second sentence to “a little over a year ago”

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

5. Old Business

a. Subcommittee updates

Stewardship and Forestry Management sub-committee: Mr. Smith noted there are no updates on Forestry. He noted that the weather has not been cooperating, but the CC has made inroads to building the bridge over Hemlock Valley Brook on Rose Farm. This Sunday is the next work party, and will focus on continued bridge work. After that work, the CC will move to Roaring Brook as per past discussion. Mr. Wilson noted that the next stage of work will require at least 4 people to help given the work that needs to be done.

Outreach and Promotion: Nothing to report.

Volunteer Activism: Nothing to report.

b. IWWC and P&Z updates

IWWC – Mr. Gelston was unable to attend the last meeting and therefore no updates were provided.

P&Z – Mr. Zaid was not in attendance at the CC meeting so could not relay any P&Z information. Mr. Smith did note that he attended the site walk on the site that is under proposal for zoning changes on Mount Parnassus.

c. Potential future Eagle Scout projects

Mr. Sienna noted that the Boy Scout leader he talked to was gathering a list of who may be interested in or need an Eagle Scout project. The CC discussed potential projects which include:

- Davison property – research and document history of airplane observation tower, restore the World War II observation tower, fix the path up the hill, clear another vista and install a picnic table and benches to allow hikers to take advantage of the vistas
- Gelston easement on Daniels Road – trail installation and bench/picnic table installation on the vista there
- Chapal Farm – install picnic tables on either side of the river
- Hatch Lot – enlarge parking lot and improve the campsite
- Sabine – add picnic tables under the grove of white pines
- Harris – if the connection between Harris and Dean is established, there will be additional trail work needed to connect the properties
- Build tent platforms on various properties

Mr. Wilson asked if the CC could get a written description of what constitutes a good Eagle Scout project.

d. Using Public Works/budget discussion

Mr. Smith noted that he discussed using Public Works with the First Selectman and noted that the CC is going to have to pay for some of the work the CC needs. Mr. Smith noted that he reminded the First Selectman that the CC cut the budget several years ago due to the promise of the ability to use Public Works. Mr. Smith reviewed the current budget with the group for discussion around what the next fiscal budget submission should be. Discussion ensued. The CC suggested putting in an additional \$5000 to the budget to cover what Public Works will not/cannot support. Mr. Smith noted that he has the details around what the request covers.

e. Update on appointment of newly recommended Conservation Commissioner

Mr. Wilson has been voted in to the Conservation Commission by the Board of Selectmen.

6. New Business

a. New bills

No new bills.

b. “Add an event” section of the Town website

Ms. Goyette received an email from Linda Z in the First Selectmen’s Office outlining the ability to post events to the Town’s website. She can add posting events to the Town’s website if the CC would like to do that. Mr. Gelston noted that any opportunity to get the word out, the CC should use it. The CC members noted that having a flexible informal policy

around posting events would be good to have in place. Mr. Wilson will draft up a policy for posting events on the Town's website. Mr. Gelston noted that there should be a statement that a preliminary work plan is in place before any event is posted.

c. Town's FaceBook page

The Town's FaceBook page can be updated with a link to the events on the Town website if so desired. There is no commentary that can be provided.

d. Discussion of Open Space parcels with Land Use Administrator

Mr. Ventres joined the meeting and explained the easement on Banner. The regulation is from the 1970s and is related to providing open space on new development. There is a mechanism through zoning that is statutorily allowed, and there is now a conservation easement on the property that allows public access. Mr. Smith noted that the CC understands that this type of transaction is allowed under the law but would like to have earlier notification as they are the future stewards of this property. Statutorily towns are not allowed to pull out financial support for the open space. There were a number of public meetings held to provide public notice. Mr. Smith noted that it would be helpful to have notice that there is a desire to add open space to the town such that the CC could weigh in on the stewardship support.

e. Public Comment

No one joined from the public.

7. Next meeting – January 8, in Meeting Room #2, Municipal Office Building.

8. Announcements and other discussion

Mr. Wilson noted that the Master Gardner program has over 60 interested people, and that may be a source of volunteers. Mr. Smith noted that he would like to get an acre of wild flowers planted on one of the properties and that may be a good suggestion as a Master Gardner volunteer projects. Mr. Gelston suggested that the back field of Harris could also be seeded with milkweed, clover or wild flowers.

There is a possibility for a grant from the Master Gardner Association, which Mr. Wilson noted he can submit a proposal for projects once he joins. Mr. Smith noted that any grant proposal must receive approval from the Board of Finance.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:25 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Shannon A. Goyette
Recording Secretary

Attachments:

- General Government: Conservation Commission budget information