

**East Haddam  
Conservation Commission**

February 5, 2019  
Adopted March 5, 2019

1. Call to Order

The Regular Meeting of the East Haddam Conservation Commission was held on Tuesday, February 5, 2019, at 7:30 PM at the Municipal Office Building. The Chairperson being in the Chair and the Secretary being present.

a. Roll Call

Rob Smith, Sue Merrow, Gary Wilson, Marilyn Gleeson, Paul Sienna, Todd Gelston, Charlotte Gelston. Others present: Aidan Behilo – departed 8:02, Ellen Behilo – departed 8:02

2. Appointment of Alternates

No alternates needed, as all regular members were in attendance.

3. Approval of Agenda

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

4. Approval of Conservation Commission Minutes for 1/8/19

6a. New bills – removed extra bullets (b. & c.) as they are not needed, to show that all bills are under the a. New Bills section.

5a. changed “is” to “will” in the 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence under Stewardship and Forestry Management.

5a. Added “property” to first sentence under Volunteer Activism. Also changed Aidan Behilo to spell his name correctly.

5d. Last sentence, added “Patrell”

6a. Added “headlock” to the 3<sup>rd</sup> bill to further describe the bill paid.

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

5. Old Business

a. Subcommittee updates

Stewardship and Forestry Management sub-committee: Mr. Smith noted there has been on and off work being done on the Rose Farm bridge, due to the weather not cooperating.

Mr. Smith received permission from the town to put the gravel down on the road to the bridge through Ray of Light as discussed at the last CC meeting. Mr. Hedler and Mr. Smith already discussed, and Mr. Hedler has the work on his plan. Mr. Smith also noted that he discussed with Mr. Hedler that the first portion of the red trail and the center of the yellow trail both have water and need gravel. Mr. Hedler will use the stockpiled gravel that the CC has on both properties.

Outreach and Promotion: Already covered under other topics.

Volunteer Activism: Ms. Merrow submitted the article to the latest Events magazine. It is about invasive species and the serious threat that they are. She also reported that she was going to meet with East Haddam Youth and Family Services around promoting healthy outdoor activities. They would like to partner with the CC on different events, particularly events like the April Stewardship event. He would like to create a pinpoint town map to link people to the maps online. The links are on the town website and are easily accessed. Ms. Gleeson also created a map of all the properties around town that may be useful to him. Mr. Smith noted that at another Youth and Family Services event last week, they discussed wanting to increase youth's engagement with the outdoors; Mr. Smith volunteered to lead a monthly hike for youth going forward.

Mr. Smith noted that Sue Smith, the new EDC coordinator, has written an article for the Smithsonian that touted the 20 towns to see and highlighted East Haddam's large number of trails as well as the Wild and Scenic on the west side of town and the IBA on the east. Sponsored by the Eightmile Wild and Scenic is Wander our Watershed, a program that focuses on the watershed but also includes a focus on the businesses in the 5 towns within the watershed. It will be an interactive map that will tell of the businesses and what they offer. Mr. Gelston suggested that a sub-committee be formed to plan the April Stewardship event. Mr. Sienna and Ms. Merrow volunteered to join the sub-committee. Mr. Gelston will provide an announcement of the sub-committee meeting shortly.

b. IWWC and P&Z updates

IWWC – Mr. Gelston was unable to attend but noted that there is not much going on within IWWC these days, their last meeting was 14 minutes long.

P&Z – Mr. Zaid was unable to attend the CC meeting so no update.

c. Using Public Works/budget discussion

There are no changes to report from the last CC meeting update.

6. New Business

a. Eagle Scout Project Proposal

Motion by Mr. Gelston to discuss this topic as the first agenda item. Second by Mr. Sienna, unanimously approved.

Mr. Behilo introduced himself to the committee. He provided some information around his Eagle Scout project idea, including a color presentation. The property he would like to focus on is the Davison Property. He outlined what he would like to do to clear the property and clean it up. The first part of the project is to fix the hill, clean up the trail and then develop the vista at the top. He would like to install a kiosk containing the history of the site and the family. He is conducting research on both the family and the history of the site. Mr. Smith noted that the military usually takes pictures of sites, and that site also had a telephone, so there are likely some records around the work order for the telephone as well as a roster of who worked there. He would like to put picnic tables at the top on the vista as well. There was discussion related to the need to have gravel laid out on the hillside. He is planning to engage 12-15 kids from his troop to help with the project; the work will be intensive from a manpower perspective. Ms. Merrow asked about cost estimates, which he had pulled together. The vista table and benches must be chosen based on the size of the vista. Mr. Behilo has

plenty of time to complete an Eagle Scout project prior to his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday. Mr. Gelston asked for a plan to be created around the vista plans. Mr. Gelston also noted that Mr. Behilo needs to talk with Mr. Hedler from East Haddam Public Works around drainage on the trail to ensure the water that currently runs down that hill is addressed. Mr. Sienna noted that Mr. Behilo is really operating as a general contractor as there are a number of entities engaged in getting the work done, with the CC as his customers. Mr. Smith will provide the kiosk plans. Mr. Smith also noted to the CC and Mr. Behilo that Mr. Hedler is an Eagle Scout himself and is highly interested in helping out on this project. Ms. Gleeson suggested taking before and after photos and showcase the project in the East Haddam News. The CC asked Mr. Behilo to provide an update for the March meeting to Mr. Smith, and to attend the April meeting to further discuss. As a side note, Mr. Gelston noted that the CC needs to get the vista brush cut.

Motion by Ms. Gleeson to approve initial presentation on Aidan Behilo's Eagle Scout project. Seconded by Ms. Gelston and unanimously approved.

b. Guidelines for public posting of CC events

Ms. Goyette will make a file within the Land Use Office and print out all the policies created over the year.

Motion by Mr. Gelston to adopt the guidelines as the CC policy. Second by Ms. Gleeson and unanimously approved.

c. New bills

\$770.39 bill for Shagbark, lumber for the bridge project

Motion by Mr. Sienna to accept and pay the bill as noted. Second by Ms. Gleeson and unanimously approved.

d. Public Comment

No comments from the public who joined.

7. Next meeting – March 5, in Meeting Room #1, Municipal Office Building.

8. Announcements and other discussion

Mr. Wilson noted that there are 58 people enrolled in the Master Gardener course, and are potential volunteers given their need for projects. Ms. Gleeson will go discuss the possibility for volunteer activities with the Master Gardener coordinator, Gail Reynolds.

Mr. Wilson noted that he cannot join the March meeting. As a reminder, Mr. Delventhal will not be at the next meeting either (he noted this at the January meeting).

Mr. Gelston noted that the Hartford Courant had an article about the Green Fund, the enabling legislation to allow up to 1% conveyance tax dedicated to open space and brown field clean up. It also allows towns to pay down their bonding for open spaces already purchased and to fund stewardship on said open space. The Selectmen signed on in support last year and it is up for discussion at the upcoming Selectmen's meeting. Studies have shown that in towns that have instituted this bill, house value increased. Houses within an easy walking distance of open space have higher value than ones that do not.

Conservation Commission Meeting, Town of East Haddam, February 5, 2019

Mr. Wilson asked about the CLCC conference, Mr. Smith noted that every year the CC sends members to attend. Mr. Smith suggested that Mr. Wilson enroll to attend and request reimbursement at the next meeting.

Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 8:54 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Shannon A. Goyette  
Recording Secretary

Attachments:

- Davison Property Development Eagle Scout Project by Aidan Behilo (on file)