

**East Haddam
Conservation Commission**

January 7, 2020

Adopted February 4, 2020

1. Call to Order

The Regular Meeting of the East Haddam Conservation Commission was held on Tuesday, January 7, 2020, at 7:32 PM at the Municipal Office Building. The Chairperson being in the Chair and the Secretary being present.

a. Roll Call

Gary Wilson, Marilyn Gleeson, Joe Zaid, Bernie Gillis, Sue Merrow, Charlotte Gelston, Thom Delventhal

Others present: Rob Smith – arrived 7:39, Aidan Behilo – departed 7:59, Ellen Behilo – departed 7:59, Chris Behilo – departed 7:59

2. Appointment of Alternates

No alternates appointed as all members were present.

3. Approval of Agenda

The Eagle Scout update will be discussed first.

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

4. Approval of Conservation Commission Minutes for 12/3/19

8. Fixed Mr. Smith's name

5a. added s to ferns

5c. changed tense of been to be

5d. changed projects to properties. Added a before "grand opening". Added Eagle Scout to the last sentence

6b. added about before the \$17,000 balance

Motion by Mr. Gillis to approve the agenda as amended. Second by Mr. Wilson and unanimously approved.

5. Old Business

a. Subcommittee updates

Stewardship and Forestry Management sub-committee: Given Mr. Gelston resigned from the CC, he resigned as the sub-committee chair. Ms. Gleeson asked for interested CC members to be a new sub-committee chair. Mr. Gillis is interested in the sub-committee, as is Mr. Zaid. Ms. Merrow suggested that Mr. Zaid and Mr. Gillis will discuss working together on the sub-committee. Mr. Gillis will reach out to Mr. Gelston to discuss what he had done in the past. Mr. Gillis noted that he will chair the sub-committee. Ms. Goyette will request phone numbers from the CC and provide to the group for their use for upcoming CC events. Ms. Gelston also brought a reminder from Mr. Gelston that the planning for the spring Stewardship event needs to start.

Outreach and Promotion: Ms. Merrow noted that her focus has been writing articles and press releases. The Events Magazine deadline is January 10th, and the topic is charcoal circles. She is willing to write about the events and provide press releases for things that the CC needs publicized. The deadline for the next Events magazine will be late April, so if the CC wants to cover the Davison Eagle Scout project, the ribbon cutting would need to happen prior to that.

Volunteer Activism: Ms. Gleeson asked everyone to think about ideas as to how we can get more volunteers. There was a chair for this sub-committee but that person resigned from the CC a few years ago. There will be a deeper discussion on how to solicit more volunteers.

b. IWWC and P&Z updates

IWWC – Ms. Goyette provided an update on the IWWC meeting, given that Mr. Gelston has resigned, and no one has been appointed to replace him. Ms. Gleeson volunteered to be the liaison.

Ms. Goyette provided an update on the Shugrue property IWWC application to create a parking lot and create trail crossings. The application has been approved *“to create a parking lot in the upland review area and create crossings for hiking trails with stepping stones and no added impediments in 2 intermittent streams.”* Ms. Goyette also provided an update on Lakeside Dan’s.

P&Z – Mr. Zaid noted that the preschool has been approved to move to the old church.

c. Update on Eagle Scout project(s)

Mr. Behilo provided an update on his Eagle Scout project to the CC. His project took 8 months and 21 days to complete and had 41 people involved. In terms of his budget, he was \$4.22 off his original estimate. He walked through his project completion report and provided photos of the work parties as well as before and after photos of several areas of the site. Ms. Gleeson asked him to walk through what went well. He noted how he raised money, sending out letters to local businesses and also used a GoFundMe account to raise money. He raised \$1700 total, and spent more on the kiosk and tables than originally planned. For what was challenging, he said it was the Post Office Zip code he used was for East Haddam instead of the Moodus zip code, which caused some confusion regarding the letters he had sent. He noted that there were a large number of dead and falling trees that required cutting and removal. In terms of current standing dead trees, they have been addressed on the trail. He walked the trails recently and noted that everything looks great on the trail. Mr. Zaid noted that the kiosk will need to be stained, and he (Mr. Zaid) will address that now that the project is complete. The CC expressed their thanks for working on the project. Mr. Behilo also provided some observations. While the vista is in good shape, there are additional trees that should to be cut down to keep the vista open. Ms. Gleeson noted that the CC will plan a small event, inviting the East Haddam News, to celebrate the completion. Ms. Merrow noted that it would be lovely to have a ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the completion of the work. Ms. Gleeson will work on a date and reach out to Mr. Behilo with suggestions on the date and details. Mr. Behilo will get signatures from the CC, then his scout master, then the state council and then he has to present to his Troop 22 board. He is focused on getting those events completed by March or April. Mr. Behilo ended by thanking the CC for their support and help.

Mr. Behilo will provide a check for the remaining of the monies raised but not used. Mr. Wilson suggested using those funds to plant native plantings to help control some of the erosion. Ms. Gleeson asked Mr. Smith if the monies can be accepted; Mr. Smith noted that donations can be accepted.

Ms. Gleeson noted that Ethan Kerr has begun his fund-raising for his Eagle Scout project. He is waiting for information on how to build the platform on the old dump site.

d. Budget discussion

The CC has 2 separate budgets – one that is a non-lapsing budget and one that covers all other expenses.

Ms. Gleeson provided an overview of the proposed budget, and walked through the changes she is suggesting. She provided her rationale as to her changes, and asked for comments and concerns. Ms. Merrow asked for clarification on “other supplies” – it covers tools and things like the brush mower (side note: while the brush mower is a high dollar purchase, to use the capital budget, the purchase would need be \$10,000 or higher. The Board of Finance created a non-lapsing budget to allow smaller purchases to be made that do not meet the capital budget criteria). Mr. Delventhal suggested adding a few more hundred dollars onto the conference line item. Discussion ensued; Ms. Gleeson noted that the budget needs to be held flat so to increase that line item, another line item would need to be reduced. The CC also discussed that conferences do not cost a large amount of money so increasing that line item is not needed.

Regarding the non-lapsing account, it is separate from the budget being reviewed by the CC at the meeting. For that budget, Ms. Gleeson suggested that the CC request an additional \$5000 to cover surveys needed on old properties, parking lots, etc.

Motion by Mr. Gillis to approve the proposed budget. Second by Ms. Gelston and unanimously approved. Ms. Gleeson will submit the budget to the Board of Finance.

e. Potential names for “the old dump site”

The “Salmon River Overlook” was suggested last meeting. Mr. Zaid suggested “Salmon River Vista”. Everyone liked the Salmon River part and suggested Vista, Pointe, Overlook, Lookout and Riverscape. Ms. Gleeson will reach out to Ethan Kerr to get his feedback on the name too. The decision has been tabled to the next meeting.

6. New Business

a. New bills

\$21.28 Shagbark gasoline

Motion by Mr. Gillis to pay the bill as noted. Second by Ms. Merrow and unanimously approved.

b. Review of subcommittees

Ms. Gleeson reviewed the sub-committees and asked the CC to think about if there are other sub-committees that are needed or warranted.

c. Next property focus

Ms. Gleeson asked for suggestions on the next property focus. Mr. Zaid suggested finishing up on Dean.

Shugrue still needs work – additional painting of trails on the blue and red trails for clarification on where they turn. The blue and red trail painting has been started. Mr. Zaid will work on that so that other properties can be addressed. A third trail needs to be marked still. The boundaries at Roaring Brook still need to be completed.

Ms. Gleeson requested someone to learn how to GPS a trail; Mr. Delventhal volunteered to learn that so that he can take that over from Ms. Gleeson.

d. Public Comment

No comment as no public attended this meeting.

7. Next meeting – February 4, at Meeting Room #1, Municipal Office Building.

8. Announcements and other discussion

Mr. Gelston's resignation also opened up the need for a CC member to be appointed to attend the Open Space Committee, which meets the 4th Monday of the month. Ms. Gleeson volunteered to be the liaison. Ms. Gelston offered to be the liaison if Ms. Gleeson does not want to do that.

Ms. Gleeson was contacted by another interested individual for an Eagle Scout project and would like to get help GPS the trail. The person does not need CC support for his Eagle Scout project, on the High School property, but does need help to GPS it. Mr. Delventhal will work with Ms. Gleeson to learn how to GPS and work with the student on that.

9. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:04 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Shannon A. Goyette
Recording Secretary

Attachments:

- Davison Property Development Eagle Project Completion by Aidan Behilo
- Navigating the Eagle Scout Service Project – information for Project Beneficiaries
- Activity Log
- Proposed budget