

**East Haddam
Conservation Commission**

February 10, 2011

Adopted March 3, 2011

1. Call to Order

The Special Meeting of the East Haddam Conservation Commission was held on Thursday, February 10, 2011, at 7:05 PM at the River House. Cynthia Matthew being in the Chair and the Secretary being Present.

a. Roll Call

Cynthia Matthew, Peggy Carlson, Sue Merrow, TJ Tarbox, Scot Mackinnon, Nancy Mackinnon, Todd Gelston. Others present: Clair Maeder, Rob Smith

2. Approval of Agenda

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

3. Approval of Minutes for 01/4/11

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

Removed the extra #7 from underneath #6.

Changed Mr. Mackinnon to Mr. Tarbox under #9 Other discussion re: discussion of Dylan Mackinnon's suggested naming.

#4 Removed the extra "to".

4. Announcement of newly appointed Land Trust Officers – Rob Smith

Mr. Smith noted that at the Annual Meeting of the East Haddam Land Trust, two new Board members were elected – Wickes Helmbolt and Bob Ballek. Mr. Smith also announced that Shannon Hawkins has been elected the new Land Trust President, and Peggy Carlson has been elected as Secretary.

5. Subcommittee workgroups, updates and considerations

Forestry update – The forester's work has been impacted by the weather; she could not get onto the properties to conduct a review due to the amount of snow. However, with recent melting, she will be able to resume her work. She has already looked at the Nichols property and is finishing her analysis with a report due in 2-3 weeks. She finished her report on the Pizzini property with a report now due. In terms of cord wood harvesting on the Rose Farm Homestead, the wood cutter's wood has been buried in snow; therefore all harvesting has been suspended.

Plant and Bird inventory – The Pizzini property would be the next property to be inventoried. Wood cutting would be conducted in the May/June timeframe, and Mr. Gelston noted that if the inventory were conducted in the early spring and then reassessed after the harvesting to see if there is any change. Ms. Mackinnon noted that she would like to include April Poisson during the inventory. Ms. Carlson noted that she followed up with Martha Tonucci regarding getting the finalized inventory on

the Patrell parcel. Ms. Tonucci has finished it but has not provided it to the CC yet. There was discussion around including information within the trail guide and on the website.

Trail guide update – Ms. Hawkins and Ms. Maeder met and created a game plan to get the document ready for printing. Ms. Maeder will be meeting with printers within 2 weeks. Trail etiquette needs to be included and a sentence added related to hunting will be added. There are three more preserves that need to be added – Ayers, Ballahack and Urbanik. The goal is to get the guide printed within a few months and also post it to the website for the public to view.

6. Selecting a name of Heritage Brook Property

Two suggested names are Wolf Tree Preserve and Baron de Hirsch Preserve. Mr. Tarbox is particular to the Baron de Hirsch name as it honors the fund that helped immigrant families to emigrate from the cities to towns like East Haddam. Mr. Gelston noted that the name of the sub division, Heritage Brook, has no tie to the area. Ms. Mackinnon suggested that the property be named Wolf Tree Preserve and note the connection Baron de Hirsch fund.

Motion by Mr. Tarbox to name the property Wolf Tree Preserve with the signage to include a reference to the Baron de Hirsch fund. Second by Ms. Carlson, unanimously approved.

7. IWWC Applications and Issues of Interest

Ms. Matthew read a 18 January 2011, letter from the IWWC Chair, Randy Dill, noting the changes to the current IWWC ordinance that calls for a CC member to be a voting member of the IWWC as well as a voting member of the CC. Ms. Matthew noted that she has not received any agendas, meeting minutes or items. There is a new protocol that involves being informed of the IWWC materials. Ms. Matthew noted that with the new protocol, it would be helpful to have a subcommittee or volunteer who could review all the materials. Mr. Smith suggested that Ms. Matthew discuss with the Land Use Office to determine what the communication material typically look like. Mr. Gelston noted that it is very important to know what the process is as timely notification is important. Mr. Gelston asked that a response letter be written that clearly outlines the communications process. Mr. Gelston and Ms. Maeder volunteered to be the contacts for receiving materials regarding the IWWC. Ms. Matthew asked that the CC work together with her to provide a response that shows how the CC will make the process work. The CC will provide a representative, to be changed to another CC member on a quarterly basis, who will review the agenda, documentation, minutes, etc. The IWWC information will be sent from the Land Use Office to the CC chairperson. Ms. Matthew will discuss with Jan in the Land Use Office to determine the protocol and then will let the CC know, and will also determine when the town meeting for the proposed ordinance change.

8. Picture and materials of “Chapel Farm” sent by Bettina Lyons, former property owner of EMR Shoe Rock

Ms. Matthew showed the materials provided by Bettina Lyons that were sent regarding the EMR Shoe Rock property. Ms. Merrow noted that Ms. Matthew may want to discuss with the town historian to determine the best way to highlight the materials that Ms. Lyons sent. Ms. Matthew will send a letter to Ms. Lyons thanking her and letting her know that the CC will discuss document preservation for town records.

Given the materials provided, Ms. Matthew raised the question if the CC wants to rename Shoe Rock, Lyons and Patrell parcels to Chapal Farm.

Condition to approval from the Patrell family and the property purchase partners, motion by Mr. Mackinnon to rename the 3 properties to Chapal Farm Preserve to reflect its history. Second by Ms. Mackinnon, unanimously approved.

9. New Business:

- a. Application for open alternate seat – Claire Maeder
Ms. Maeder has applied to fill the open alternate seat.

Ms. Mackinnon moved to recommend Ms. Maeder to be the alternate. Second by Mr. Mackinnon, unanimously approved. Ms. Matthew will send a note to the Selectmen.

- b. EMR proposed trail – Rob Smith

Mr. Smith met with the DEP wildlife biologist to map out a potential trail that covers the Lyons property, a wildlife management area to the Salem Land Trust Darling Road Preserve or a Nature Conservancy property. This new trail would add another 1.5 miles of trails that would ultimately add to a trail running down to Powers Lake. There has been talk about making it a blue trail, but that would limit the trail to hikers only.

The East Haddam Land Trust has offered to spearhead trail creation, however, given that the trail would originate on East Haddam town land, before any work begins, the EHLT would like to ensure the CC is comfortable with the plan to build a trail. Ms. Matthew noted that the CC is very lucky to have the offer provided by the EHLT. The CC is comfortable with the EHLT taking the lead in getting the trail underway and will work with the EHLT as needed.

10. Next meeting – Special Meeting, Thursday, March 3rd

11. Other discussion

Ms. Matthew thanked all the CC members who attended the Selectmen's meeting regarding the proposed IWWC ordinance changes to the current regulation on the IWWC members.

Mr. Smith asked about the easement between Sabine and Jezek properties. Mr. Tarbox will follow up with Mr. Ventres to find out the status.

Ms. Matthew drew attention to an email she sent regarding Court judgments related to negative impacts on wildlife justifying the denial of a development application. Ms. Matthew sent the information to the CC, IWWC and Land Use Office.

National Trails Day is June 4-5, 2011, and Ms. Hawkins noted that the EHLT will host two hikes and noted that if the CC wants to host a hike, to let Ms. Hawkins know and she will send along the website for inclusion.

Mr. Mackinnon is attending a Yale Forestry presentation on how to preserve open space.

Ms. Merrow noted that the Community Lions are interested in helping with a spring community event so if there are any ideas, please let Ms. Merrow know. The Community Lions is still sponsoring a foot race and Mr. Mackinnon noted that it might be fun to sponsor a trail race.

Ms. Matthew noted that the CC needs a logo for all its correspondence. She asked the CC members to think on potential suggestions for a logo.

12. Adjournment

Motion by Mr. Tarbox to adjourn, second by Mr. Mackinnon, unanimously approved. Meeting was adjourned at 9:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Shannon A. Hawkins
Recording Secretary

Attachments:

- The Nature Conservancy letter dated January 21st addressed to Mr. Walter
- Connecticut Use Law for Municipal Land Use Agencies, Boards, and Commissions
- Letter from Nemergut Consulting dated January 24th, to the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection regarding Portable Classrooms at Franklin Academy
- Connecticut Federation of Planning and Zoning Agencies Quarterly Newsletter
- Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Commission letter from Randolph W. Dill dated 18 January 2011.