

**East Haddam  
Conservation Commission**

July 12, 2011

Adopted August 2, 2011

1. Call to Order

The Special Meeting of the East Haddam Conservation Commission was held on Tuesday, July 12, 2011, at 7:25 PM at the River House. Cynthia Matthew being in the Chair and the Secretary being Present.

a. Roll Call

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

2. Approval of Agenda

Change the date from 1012 to 2012.

Add Land use update under approval of minutes.

The next meeting was not included

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

3. Approval of Minutes for 06/07/11

Section 4. Change Audobon to Audubon. Change who's to whose.

On Attachments, changed symols to symbols.

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

4. Land use update

Mr. Mackinnon noted that at the town meetings (IWWC, P&Z), the focus has been on homeowner-related items – septic system replacements, building of decks, etc. Soon Banner expansion will be a topic of discussion, but that is not being addressed right now.

Mr. Gelston noted that he and Ms. Maeder provided CC input to the IWCC on the remediation of a 2-acre clear cut property on Moodus Reservoir as well as provided input on a Lake Hayward property owner request.

5. Subcommittee for 2011-2012

Mr. Gelston, Ms. Merrow and Mr. Tarbox noted they would like to continue working on the Forestry Subcommittee.

Mr. Tarbox noted that the Boundaries and Trail Subcommittee still has boundaries to be marked.

Mr. Mackinnon noted he would like to continue to work on this committee. Mr. Mackinnon noted there are ways to use surveyors to do the “heavy lifting” such that the subcommittee can then mark the boundaries very quickly.

Mr. Mackinnon would like to be involved in the Forestry subcommittee but is not sure if there is any room on the forestry committee.

Mr. Gelston noted that the CC needs a strategy on what trails need to be cleared next to continue to make the trail guide more and more people-friendly and useful. The danger with trails is that if they are not maintained, they become dangerous and look bad. Mr. Gelston suggests adding this scope to the Trail Guide Subcommittee.

Ms. Matthew suggested adding an Education, Outreach and Promotion subcommittee. The subcommittee would be a broader committee that encompasses several of the 2010-2011 subcommittees.

Ms. Mackinnon suggested that the Boundary Subcommittee be expanded to be Boundaries, Marking and Trail Maintenance Subcommittee. Mr. Smith noted that this subcommittee needs to be very vigilant to get out on each new property as it is added to open space. This will ensure that the public has immediate access to the property.

Ms. Mackinnon noted that the Plant and Bird inventory would be combined within other subcommittees. Mr. Tarbox felt the CC must ensure there are not too many activities included within any one subcommittee.

Mr. Gelston suggested each subcommittee come back to the CC with a 1, 2 and 5 year plan to allow the CC to discuss/determine the number of volunteers needed to help with property management.

Ms. Matthew noted that Mr. Gelston's suggestion is an excellent way to think about the planning for each subcommittee and asked the CC members to discuss these as they discuss their subcommittees' plans.

Ms. Maeder suggested that anyone involved in the Education, Outreach and Promotion subcommittee would be responsible for hiking the trails and ensuring the trails are in good shape.

The CC determined the three committees for 2011-2012 are:

- 1) Stewardship Subcommittee to handle boundaries, markings and trail maintenance (formerly known as the Boundary and Trails subcommittee). Mr. Tarbox and Mr. Mackinnon will continue to work on this subcommittee.
- 2) Forestry Management Subcommittee to address the forestry work that is already underway. Mr. Gelston, Ms. Merrow and Mr. Tarbox will continue to work on this subcommittee with Mr. Mackinnon joining.
- 3) Education, Outreach and Promotion Subcommittee, in which trail guide is subsumed. Volunteer recruitment would be included in this subcommittee. Ms. Matthew, Ms. Mackinnon, Ms. Maeder, Ms. Carlson are involved in this subcommittee.

Goals and objectives will be addressed at the next meeting.

6. Subcommittee standards and practices

Given the work that is currently underway and the public interactions and promotions that are taking place, Ms. Matthew suggested the CC discuss subcommittee standards and practices to govern each subcommittee.

Mr. Mackinnon suggested each subcommittee now post agendas and keep minutes for its meetings. In addition, each subcommittee now has enough to cover that it makes sense to have separate meetings to discuss subcommittee business outside of the monthly CC meeting.

Ms. Mackinnon suggested that now that monies are attached to decisions the subcommittees are making, transparency is very important to provide information to the public.

Mr. Mackinnon suggested that for ongoing subcommittees, posted agendas and minutes are a good way to ensure the public is aware of what is going on.

Mr. Gelston suggested that holding official subcommittee meetings for several of the subcommittees could be impractical.

Ms. Merrow noted that she can take notes within the Forestry Subcommittee. Including the public could become a bit hard to accommodate given that the subcommittee meetings sometimes happen very rapidly and posting agendas could hinder progress.

Motion by Mr. Mackinnon that subcommittees post agendas and keep minutes. Second to Ms. Mackinnon. Motion tabled to next meeting.

7. Trail guide promotion/distribution plan

Ms. Maeder noted that the trail guide is very close to being printed. There is a 2<sup>nd</sup> proof now, and once Ms. Maeder and Ms. Matthew meet with the printers, printing will commence within a week of that meeting. Minor technicalities have blocked the guide from being printed until now, but they have been addressed.

Ms. Maeder noted that by the next meeting, the guide should be printed and ready for distribution. The number printed has been discussed and is in previous minutes.

Extra color was put on the front cover. The .jpg file will be provided to be included on the website.

One issue that was mentioned at the last meeting – funds from the special fund will be used and therefore a donation of \$2 will be requested to cover the cost of the trail guide. Payment has already been addressed for the printer. Collecting the donations from the distribution sites will be handled by the subcommittee.

The group discussed possible locations for distribution: libraries, town hall, distributed through events, EDC, Bishops Gate Inn, Nathan Hale Pharmacy, Shagbark, businesses that are connected with hiking (North Cove Outfitters), and schools.

Mr. Smith noted that businesses can be reluctant to take donations as cash management can be an issue.

Mr. Tarbox volunteered to make a donation box for Town Hall and the two libraries. Other businesses can purchase them and then sell them to their customers.

Mr. Tarbox suggested that the Reminder be called to be notified about the new trail guide release.

Ms. Goyette will call and update Mark Walter, who held a conversation with her asking for updates on the trail guide. Ms. Goyette asked Ms. Maeder to provide a sample of the guide to Mr. Walter for him to see it.

Ms. Mackinnon suggested that the cover be used to create a poster to promote it and post where they can be picked up.

At the next meeting, the CC will have the trail guide and firm up distribution plans.

8. Announcements and other discussion

Mr. Tarbox noted that all property owners around Nichols property have received a letter explaining that logging will be completed and inviting them to a walk on 7/13, at 7:00pm, to show where the logging will occur and the objectives of it (at the access of the old stump dump). Mr. Ventres will be in attendance to answer any questions the property owners have.

Ms. Matthew mentioned that all of the CC is working very hard, volunteering and working together as a team. She suggests that the CC members call each other and get clarification to get support each other as needed to ensure solidarity among the commission.

Ms. Matthew asked Ms. Goyette to post a notice if a Regular CC meeting has been changed so that people do not show up for a Regular meeting when it has been moved.

Mr. Tarbox attended an Invasive Species program and walked a property where a hands-on demonstration of barberry removal was done.

Ms. Matthew spoke with Heidi Pease and Cheryl Mathison and received a copy of the grant they received monies for. They are very interested in working with the CC and understand that the CC needs to see the plan. Conducting an event like the Pepsico event with students piqued their interest. Ms. Matthew pulled together the list of requests for Public Works projects and provided to the Board of Selectmen. It is in the works to be completed.

Ms. Matthew noted all reappointments have been approved with the exception of Charlotte Gelston's recommendation. The BoS felt having 4 family members on the CC could influence the vote. For example, if there were a quorum of 5 and 4 of the members present were all related, it could be seen as open to challenge. There is an alternate opening. Mr. Gelston noted that Ms. Gelston is still interested in providing support in the Treasury area.

Mr. Smith noted that the trail guide has 2 trails on Nichols that are not in existence yet. Mr. Smith volunteered to mark the trail with tape so that there is some marking in case people walk them. The Stewardship Subcommittee accepted his offer.

9. Next meeting – August 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7:15pm at the River House

10. Adjournment

Motion by Mr. Mackinnon to adjourn, second by Ms. Maeder, unanimously approved. Meeting was adjourned at 9:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Shannon A. Goyette  
Recording Secretary

Attachments: