

**East Haddam
Conservation Commission**

April 3, 2012
Adopted May 1, 2012

1. Call to Order

The Regular Meeting of the East Haddam Conservation Commission was held on Tuesday, April 03, 2012, at 7:17 PM at the River House. Cynthia Matthew being in the Chair and the Secretary being Present.

a. Roll Call

Cynthia Matthew, TJ Tarbox, Peggy Carlson, Sue Merrow, Claire Maeder. Others present: Heidi Pease – departed 8:40, Charlotte Gelston, Rob Smith.

2. Approval of Agenda

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

3. Approval of Minutes for 3/6/12

Modified the bullet numbers and format structure to be more uniform.

Added an “e” to Ventres in last section.

Added “applicant” and “applicant’s architect” to the Others present section.

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

4. Old Business

a. Rob Smith official appointment to the Board

The CC officially welcomed Mr. Smith to the Commission.

b. Subcommittee updates:

Signage – Mr. Tarbox provided Ms. Maeder with the sign information, but she needs further information from Ms. Pease on what is needed for the Nichols signage. Regarding the two different components to the signage – the ones currently posted near the trail head are in good shape but the ones posted to be seen from a moving car require additional information. Mr. Tarbox has created a methodology for signs posted near the trail head. The group discussed that this signage (known as interior signage) works well. The discussion centered around signs that can be seen from the road. These signs (known as outer signs) must be perpendicular to the road, and in the 18x24 format. Mr. Smith suggested looking at the standards that the National Park Service uses for signage. He noted that 4 inch high letters would be the standard. In addition, the logo and Town of East Haddam would be in 1 inch letter. The group discussed that for Chapal Farm – that lettering would be 4 inches high with smaller lettering that notes the individual parcel names (Boot Rock, etc). Mr. Gelston suggested that the Nichols sign be redone so that it includes all the information. Mr. Gelston suggested focusing on putting up the outer signs for all the East Haddam Conservation Commission signage. Two signs are needed – one for each direction and must be perpendicular. Ms. Maeder will check with Mr. Ventres to

determine if there are any state or town-wide ordinances or commissions that must be adhered to or if there is required notification. Ms. Maeder asked how they will be mounted and posted. Ms. Merrow noted that when the 8-Mile River posted their Wild and Scenic River signs, they used either the Town's sign maker or Department of Corrections. Ms. Merrow will provide the signage contacts to Ms. Maeder. Mr. Smith volunteered to help with the signage. Ms. Maeder will check to determine the cost of reflective lettering. She recommended the coloring being green and white (the lettering will be white). Ms. Maeder will work on adding the logo as more of a label such that the color will be different than the rest of the sign.

Ms. Pease noted that given the grant money, the students/Ag Dept. would like to make a sign. Ms. Matthew asked Ms. Pease to work with Ms. Maeder and Mr. Tarbox to get the signage created, perhaps with the map and credit for who is involved. Mr. Smith noted that really only 1 sign is needed by the picnic tables, that tells who was involved.

Regarding the Nichols property, the group determined one sign is needed on the entrance road to replace the existing one by the picnic bench, one sign is needed across the street noting trail head, one sign is needed by the basketball courts (on Rt.149) with trail head and map, and then one other sign could also be placed on Trowbridge Road that says Nichols Field with the trail head and maps. At this point, the CC decided no sign is needed on Trowbridge Road given how tight traffic is. We should divert people to the parking lot off of Rt. 149. Ms. Pease and Ms. Maeder will connect with copy and logo that needs to be included.

Trail Guide – Ms. Carlson provided \$27 to Ms. Gelston. Ms. Gelston and Mr. Tarbox picked up the monies from other boxes. Total to date for trail guides is \$336, including the last \$27 Ms. Carlson provided. Ms. Pease noted that the FFA has not met to discuss the trail guide distribution.

Timber Harvesting/Forestry – Team looking at other parcels to log, but nothing has been picked yet.

c. IWWC and P&Z updates

IWWC – Nothing major has come to light that requires CC attention.

P&Z – Zoning Board of Appeals approved the zoning exception for the Somosky application on Creek Row.

5. Celebrating our collective work at Nichols April 20-21

Mr. Gelston noted there are number of things that must be done to complete the Nichols property: 1) clear the trails, 2) scratch the hard areas so seed with grow to cover the areas the skidder hard packed, 3) ask Town to fill trench made by the skidder that is very deep (Mr. Tarbox already discussed with the Public Works to fill the trench, Ms. Matthew will contact Mr. Walter to notify him of the event), 4) spread seed (Ms. Pease will contact the Forester regarding the seed to purchase for about an acre), 5) backrake the seeded area, 6) brush piles higher than 4 feet must be cut down, 7) add additional trail marking and stencil the blue trails (Mr. Smith will provide the stencil) where the trees were cut down, 8) start working on orange trail, and 9) roll the landing area after back raking.

Regarding the eating portion of the day, a count was provided on who can attend and noon lunch will be provided. Food is covered by the forestry subcommittee.

Event rain date is May 5th for the lunch, but the priority is to get the trails cleaned up and seeded so if it rains on Saturday, then the CC will celebrate their hard work on May 5th. All interested parties

should meet at Trowbridge Road, but the food will be served at the basketball courts. Ms. Pease will have the students hike to the Trowbridge Road area to avoid the fast moving traffic on that road. Ms. Matthew will contact Ms. Quinn of Park and Rec to ensure there is no issue with the CC using the basketball area. Mr. Gelston will provide details via email on what is covered for food and what is still needed. Ms. Matthew will call the finance director regarding covering the food with monies from the logging account. Ms. Matthew suggested providing information to the press as part of outreach and publication.

6. Pepsico program application for May 19, 2012 event

Ms. Maeder filled out the application and provided to the contact. Ms. Maeder is not positive that the CC will be a contender, but the Pepsico contact noted there is potential. She expects to hear from Pepsico shortly about if the CC will be picked.

Mr. Smith noted that the Harris property has a tremendous opportunity for trails to be built on it. Connecting the Harris and Dean property would be a great thing to get completed for the town and for that area of open space.

7. Next meeting – May 1, the River House

8. Announcements and other discussion

Mr. Smith announced that the River House has noted on its website that it is no longer pursuing the Land Swap.

Ms. Goyette noted that she has provided the Open Space Inventory information for posting on the CC website. She asked the CC to review and provide feedback on any changes that need to be noted. Mr. Smith, Mr. Gelston, Ms. Matthew and Ms. Carlson attended the NEMO training. This town is one of the state leaders of having environmentally friendly storm water drainage and rain gardens. Education and enforcement is needed though as people new to town do not know how to maintain. Ms. Matthew attended the 2012 CT Land Conservation Commission and attended a workshop on lessons learned with easements. Easement acceptance and management is important for the CC to consider, and the CC may want to become involved in the mechanisms to accept and review easements. Easements become the responsibility for the CC. Ms. Matthew suggested adding an Easement Subcommittee at year end, since it has been brought up a number of times. In addition, she attended an overview of the grants available for trail guides and such. She has further information for those interested.

9. Adjournment

Motion by Mr. Smith to adjourn at 8:45 pm, second by Ms. Maeder, unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Shannon A. Goyette
Recording Secretary