

**East Haddam  
Conservation Commission**

September 10, 2013

Adopted October 1, 2013

1. Call to Order

The Regular Meeting of the East Haddam Conservation Commission was held on Tuesday, September 10, 2013, at 7:18 PM at the River House. The Chairperson being in the Chair and the Secretary being Present.

a. Roll Call

Rob Smith, Marilyn Gleeson, Sue Merrow, Peggy Carlson, Todd Gelston, Charlotte Gelston, Paul Sienna. Others present: Humphrey Tyler (departed at 8:15), Emmett Lyman, Cynthia Matthew (arrived at 7:34)

2. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Tyler will speak first for the New Business section.

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

3. Approval of Minutes for 8/6/13 and 8/16/13

8/16/13 minutes – changed the location of the meeting from the River House to the Gelston residence.

Motion by Mr. Gelston to approve the 8/16/13 Special meeting for the Forestry/Stewardship sub-committee minutes as amended. Second by Ms. Merrow and unanimously approved.

8/6/13 minutes – 4. e.i. added “noted” after Mr. Gelston. 4.e.ii. added “s” to subcommittees. Also changed “are” to “is” in the same paragraph.

Motion by Ms. Merrow to approve the 8/6/13 minutes as amended. Second by Mr. Gelston and unanimously approved.

4. Old Business

a. Subcommittee updates

Forestry & Stewardship– Mr. Gelston provided a handout that summed up the 8/16 sub-committee meeting and the four main goals and objectives of the sub-committee. Several points were discussed during the conversation. Mr. Smith noted the smaller signs that satisfy the DEEP requirements are posted. Mr. Smith noted that permission from the Town and permits for the State roads must be received before the larger ones can be posted. Mr. Lyman suggested Mr. Gelston reach out to Arthur Sykes for information on announcement signage that may help drive volunteering. 66 man hours are needed to address the priority land identified by the sub-committee. Mr. Sienna suggested having a work party to see if the pins can be located on Davison property. The CC noted that the overall plan is very good. The next meeting will be at the Gelston residence at 6:30pm on Sept. 20.

Volunteer Activism – Ms. Gleeson provided an outline of some thoughts about how to recruit volunteers. The Town bears the liability if someone gets hurt, but Ms. Gleeson will conduct some research to determine the extent.

Public Relations – Ms. Merrow volunteered to be the regular writer for the Events magazine (next deadline is Sept. 20) and will outline the volunteer activities and such. Ms. Gleeson will provide support to Ms. Merrow as needed.

b. IWWC and P&Z updates

IWWC – Mr. Gelston attended the meeting and was requested to ask the CC to attend the CACIWC class on invasive species. The class is on 9/21 in Norfolk, CT.

P&Z – Nothing to report as Mr. Gelston has not attended. There are proposed changes to the P&Z regulations. Mr. Gelston will attend the meetings but noted the CC members must attend any public hearing, and he will keep the members informed about dates for those meetings.

c. Update on open space purchases – Roaring Brook and Moodus River property update

Roaring Brook has not closed but is close to closing. Thirty years after the EHLT outlined the goal to protect property along the Moodus River, the goal has been achieved with the closing of the Bogan property, totaling 44 acres, on Aug. 29, to much excitement for the EHLT!

Much thanks to John Matthew who worked countless hours to help close the deal.

d. CC Vision/Strategy

i. General Discussion: Goals and objectives

Ms. Merrow noted the CC has come a long way in turning the brainstorming ideas into tangible ideas and plans. The goals must be revisited each meeting to ensure things continue to move along. Mr. Gelston noted that there will be another meeting of the Stewardship and Forestry sub-committee soon to discuss the next steps within the plan. Mr. Gelston also noted the safety criteria must be documented along with the list of qualified tools. This must be also included in communications. Ms. Gleeson will think about how to develop a “Friends of the Conservation Commission” group.

ii. Establish FY goals for Subcommittees

Discussed under i.

5. New Business – Humphrey Tyler from Lyme Land Conservation Trust and Land Trust Exchange

a. Conn River Cleanup

There is an annual cleanup of the river, and last year, the event’s volunteers pulled over 100 tons of trash and debris from the river. In the past, most of the cleanup has been done north of the Massachusetts border. There is now a passionate member focused on cleaning up the CT portion of the river. There is a cleanup scheduled for Oct. 4 and 5. Jacqueline Talbot is now focused on it. Any interested people can contact her to get involved.

b. Regional Conservation Partnership undertaking to identify critical landscape scale lands that should be preserved

CREPA merged and is now part of the Lower CT River agency (River COG [Council of Governance]). Under the auspices of the River COG, the Land Trust Exchange, which has been in existence for 4 or 5 years, has crafted an initiative to create a regional inventory of those properties that are of most importance to the ecology and economy of the area(s) and

should be preserved. There are about 20 initiatives across New England to get this type of information, called Regional Conservation Partnerships. It is a cooperative effort of all the conservation groups within a given area who pool their resources and determine which lands are critical to preserve. The National Parks Service has offered to lend the Land Trust Exchange one of their experts to undertake an initiative like this. The expert will help create a set of criteria to identify various critical environmental or ecological lands that should be saved. Marine biologists, foresters, experts in wildlife and soil scientists will be part of this work, all who will help create metrics to be used to determine which lands are most important. Whale Bone Cove is an excellent example of an area that should be focused on for preservation. The second step is to sit down with all local groups involved and figure out a way to apply all the metrics to a given area; the outcome will produce a list of those areas that should be preserved. Towns and local conversation groups can use this to determine what to preserve. One of the hopes is that this study will attract monies from outside the area to protect land within the areas. Mr. Smith noted the EHLT has committed two members to the process; Mr. Tyler noted that Lyme Land Conservation Trust has also. Mr. Smith suggested that it may make sense to have a member of the CC be involved in the process.

6. Next meeting – October 1, 2013 at The River House

7. Announcements and other discussion

Mr. Gelston had 2 take-aways from the last meeting that he provided an update on:

1. Mr. Gelston noted that the picnic table at Nichols field is being used as noted by verifying with the Transfer Station as well as visible use marks. Trees must be trimmed around it though.
2. Mr. Gelston determined the authorized number of people to sit on the CC. There are 6 regular members and 3 alternate members. All members are to serve 2 year terms.

Ms. Matthew joined the meeting. Mr. Smith noted that he, along with the rest of the CC, is grateful for her many years of service. Ms. Merrow noted that since Ms. Matthew has always offered her gratitude freely, the CC wanted to make sure that she knew how much the CC appreciated all her efforts and support. Mr. Gelston noted that she was chairperson since 2006 and a member since 2005. She has been instrumental in revitalizing it and bringing it to its current level of momentum and enthusiasm.

The Events magazine deadline is Sept. 20 and will cover volunteer opportunities. Ms. Merrow will ask volunteers to email if they want to be made aware of the various volunteer opportunities. Mr. Gelston will do some research to determine where good signs can be created.

Motion by Ms. Merrow to move Ms. Gelston from an alternate member to regular member. Second by Ms. Gleeson and unanimously approved. Mr. and Mrs. Gelston both abstained.

8. Adjournment

Motion by Ms. Merrow to adjourn at 9:30 pm, second by Mr. Gelston, unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Shannon A. Goyette  
Recording Secretary

Conservation Commission Meeting, Town of East Haddam, September 10, 2013

Attachments:

- CACIWC Summer 2013 “The Habitat”
- Legal Notice Special Town Meeting, March 19, 2003
- Conn River Source-to-Sea Cleanup Oct. 4 and 5 flyer
- Stewardship and Forestry Sub-committee Report – 9/10/13
- Example of Hilltop Farm signage – showing where signage can be effective to recruit volunteers.
- Volunteer Activism outline