East Haddam Conservation Commission

July 6, 2021

Meeting Minutes

Approved August 3, 2021

1) Call to Order – Roll Call
   a) The Regular Meeting of the East Haddam Conservation Commission was held at the Municipal Office Building on Tuesday, July 6, 2021, at 7:30 PM. The Chairperson being in the Chair.
   b) Roll Call at 7:37 PM. (Bernie Gillis (via phone), Charlotte Gelston, , Marilyn Gleeson, Gary Wilson). Thom Delventhal, John Olin and Susan Pagnano were absent.
2) Appointment of Alternates: No alternates were required to be appointed.
3) Approval of Agenda
   a) Approval of agenda as presented by Mr. Gillis; seconded by Ms. Gelston.
   b) No changes to the agenda suggested.
4) Approval of Conservation Commission Minutes for 6/1/2021.
   a) Motion to approve the 6/1/2021 minutes as presented by Mr. Gillis; seconded by Ms. Gelston.
   b) Changes/corrections to the minutes as follows:
      i) Section 5 a (6): Change “and the Master Gardener intern” to “Ms. Pagnano, and Ms. Bryson”.
   c) Motion to approve the 6/1/2021 minutes as amended by Mr. Gillis; seconded by Ms. Gelston. Motion passed unanimously.
5) Old Business
   a) Subcommittee updates
      i) Stewardship & Forestry Management
         (1) Mr. Gillis switched maps on kiosks at Harris Reserve
         (2) Mr. Gillis started marking red trail at Gelston CE; cleared more there and marked the blue trail to complete the loop.
         (3) Mr. Gillis went to LeFebvre and marked borders on west side with markers and tags to the bottom of Jones Hill Road.
         (4) Mr. Gillis went to Lena Reserve and cleared red trail; blue trail needs mowing; Town will be notified.
         (5) Mr. Gillis cleared red, white, and yellow trails at Rose Farm. Kiosk has bypass trail that leads to yellow and wondered if we should mark and paint it and add to map. Gets a lot of use as starts at kiosk. We will consider it.
         (6) Mr. Gillis at Patrell; painted red trail and started on orange when had back issues.
         (7) Mr. Gillis attended demonstration with herpetologist at Hartman Park, Dennis Quinn, put on by Eightmile group. Caught snakes and turtles. It was a nice day and educational.
         (8) Mr. Gillis spoke to Lynn Wilkinson who is looking for Master Gardeners to help at Gillette’s Castle. They want work at the outside and inside gardens for weeding and watering. Mr. Wilson will ask the other Master Gardeners if they are interested.
         (9) Tanks at Patrell are in good shape; better than ½ full.
      ii) Outreach & Promotion
         (1) Events Magazine article is on Patrell gardens. Was drafted by Mr. Wilson and will have picture of pollinator garden.
         (2) EH News article is on Lena Reserve. Dr. Hugh Lena wanted the property preserved and when he died his children had their realtor approach the Town to buy it which went to referendum and was passed by the Town. Town did get an OSWA grant as well.

(3) We need to think about future EH News articles. Will have one when we open the ADA trail officially and can always do ones on properties. Urbanik was suggested so that will likely be the next article. Ms. Gleeson will take this on.
(4) Once the LeFebvre map is completed we will do an article on that. The parking lot gravel has been leveled. We will scrub the white trail as it is not needed. Ms. Gleeson will GPS the red and blue trails and Mr. Gillis will accompany her.
(5) We need to advertise for stewardship help.

b) Liaison Reports
   i) IWWC updates
      (1) Mr. Delventhal was not at this meeting, so no report was given.
   ii) P&Z updates
      (1) Mr. Gillis reported that they continue to work on the Moodus regulations. Hope to make it more walkable and vibrant. It would have to go to a public hearing. It would become its own district with its own regulations. It goes from the Post Office to the old 7-11 building.
      (2) Banner Lodge is looking to convert the Club House to 20 units, 6 of which would be affordable housing.
   iii) Open Space updates
      (1) The referendum for the O'Connell Road Ext. property will be at the end of August. It will be together with the Centerbridge referendum which was delayed because of the budget re-do.
      (2) This town can do development and can have open space as well.
   iv) Eightmile Committee updates
      (1) Mr. Gillis reported they are moving forward with RiverFest at Devil's Hopyard in October. Will start meeting on it next week. EHCC usually has a table at RiverFest.
c) Planting/existing garden updates
   i) Mr. Wilson said all of the plantings on the ADA trail have been mulched. Mulching on the Black-eyed Susans and lower Sunflowers is needed. He mulched the Coneflowers. Used cardboard under the mulch to kill some of the grass. He picked up scrap landscape fabric he could use as well. Also mulched Serviceberry and Summersweets. Lost a Coneflower. Couldn't find the Common Milkweed but got some from a gardener at the Community Garden so will eventually transplant those when they are ready.
   ii) Mr. Wilson has Shining Sumac he will eventually transplant those as well. We need Great Rosebay Rhododendrons, one Dogwood and one Sourwood tree to purchase. Ms. Gelston has milkweed in her fields she is willing to give as well. We have $80.00 remaining from the Master Gardener grant to use.
   iii) The Swamp Azaleas are blooming and doing really well. The Spicebush is also doing well.
   iv) Needs more deer repellent.
   v) Urbanik gardens are doing well.
   vi) Salmon River Overlook plants need to have 3' circle around them and be mulched as they are being buried by invasive plants. Need to stay 6" away from stem and keep mulch high. Mr. Wilson will order mulch/chips for this. Can get it delivered through the gate. He will also use cardboard underneath.
   vii) Running out of bird brochures. Ms. Gleeson mentioned Dr. and Mrs. Mirer did an inventory at Lena of birds. They agreed to do this at other properties next year when it is a better time to do it. We might ask them to do a bird talk at Salmon River Overlook at some point.
   viii) Ms. Gleeson has the plant markers. They will be given to Ms. Pagnano

6) New Business
   a) New Bills

i) Balleks-$264.60 for mulch. Motion to pay by Mr. Gillis; seconded by Ms. Gelston.
ii) Shagbark-$99.97 for paint. Motion to pay by Mr. Gillis; seconded by Mr. Wilson.

b) Other: East Haddam Land Trust is attempting to purchase land off Honey Hill Road; Diana K. Saunders property. They are applying for an OSWA grant and have requested a letter of support from EHCC. Ms. Gleeson read a draft letter. Motion to submit letter of support to EHLT by Ms. Gelston; seconded by Mr. Wilson. Motion unanimously accepted.

c) Budget: We had $2,347.82 remaining. Some of that will be used to pay for the survey on the open space on Robbie Road. We have not received that bill as of yet. This survey was intended to provide a trail to connect to the Monica's Woods EHLT property. As an update, the Town discovered that there is more road frontage for EHLT on Southwinds than originally known. The 'as built' deed was never filed with the Town, and it shows about 17' for frontage. One of the pins was knocked over so it will need to be confirmed by a surveyor, but this frontage will allow EHLT to provide access to the Bloch Preserve which will give them easy access to Monica's Woods. This will give us more time to work on a trail on the Robbie Road open space trail which may need IWWC approvals.

7) Public Comment-no comments were submitted by the public.
8) Next meeting: Tuesday, August 3, 2021.
9) Announcements and other discussion: n/a
10) Adjournment: Motion to adjourn made by Ms. Gelston; seconded by Mr. Wilson. Motion passed unanimously. Meeting was adjourned at 8:46 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:
Marilyn Gleeson
Chair, East Haddam Conservation Commission