MINUTES

Conservation Commission meeting, Town of East Haddam, April 5, 2022

1. Meeting called to order at 7:02
   In attendance: Gary Wilson, Susan Pagnano, Bernie Gillis. John Olin was dialed into the meeting, providing a quorum. Thom Delventhal arrived at 7:26 pm
2. No alternates were required.
3. Motion to approve agenda: Ms. Pagnano; second: Mr. Gillis. Unanimous approval.
4. Discussion of CC minutes from 3/1/22. Several small amendments noted by Mr. Wilson including

   -Item 5C was changed to indicate the seedlings had been ordered, but not yet received

   -Item 7 corrected the spelling of the Friends of Machimoodus contact, Tanya Bourgoin

   -Motion to approve 3/1/22 minutes as amended: Mr. Gillis, second: Ms. Pagnano. Unanimous approval.
5. Old Business
   a. Subcommittee updates

   i. Mr. Gillis' update on stewardship:
   -Gelston Easement- Trees were tagged by the water of the Daniels Road repainted Pond, Leaving Conservation Property, and old blazes were

   -Patrell- the knocked down handicapped parking sign was re-installed -
   Hatch/Dean- Downed trees were removed
   -Roaring Brook- a Reserve sign was added at the Florida Road entrance, and 2 difficult trees were removed with aid from the Land Trust. A heavy rope was installed on the steep slope leading down to the new footbridge across Roaring Brook

   -Sabine- A kiosk was installed at Daniel Peck Rd.
   -Hayward property- Mr. Gillis walked the property with Mr. Ventres. The State requires an A-2 survey which is estimated to cost 25K. Discussion with Mr. Ventres indicates the cost will be subsequently covered by a grant, release State funds for the seven pins were found during the above-mentioned walk and that this survey is required in order to property.

   -Lena had several downed trees removed

-Mr. Gillis mentioned that several classmates of the young man who recently died in a car accident want to develop some trails on Town property above the Town Beach. Mr. Ventres subsequently put Mr. Wilson in touch with these young men and they will be given time in the next agenda to present their idea to the CC.

ii. Mr. Wilson's update on promotion and outreach:
1. Stewardship event is set for Sat April 23 - 4 yards of mulch have been delivered to

cover the weedy patch under the trees in the ADA. Any remaining mulch can be used to freshen up other 3 areas to focus on weeding invasives below the pond outlet, and between the new ADA trail and agreed sandwiches triangle and other plantings. The pollinator garden, clearing out invasives in the triangle and the existing blacktop trail. The group would be obtained for lunch from the Hadlyme Market as that is the closest food vendor. Mr. Wilson will bring a cooler with drinks.

2. Publications in EH News and Events magazine: Messrs. Delventhal and Olin collaborated on an article on Sabine/Moodus Reservoir which was submitted for the next Events Magazine. Mr. Wilson had placed a short “mark your calendar” notice in the EH News about the Stewardship Saturday on the 23rd. Mr. Delventhal offered to prepare another article on the Chapal Farm properties to solicit greater interest in the event.

iii. Mr. Olin’s update on climate resilience:
Mssrs Olin and Gillis met with several members of CIRCA (Connecticut Institute for Resilience and Climate Adaptation) on Mar 8, which is a branch of UConn. Mr. David Murphy of CIRCA presented a slide show. The First Selectwoman also attended the meeting, which was reported by Mr. Olin in detail in the Mar 24 edition of the EH News. The State has designated 5 million dollars to be used to make towns more resilient against climate change events. The two main thrusts of preparation are anticipated increased precipitation and increased temperature. This coming fall will start the project phase. One potential area of concern is the beaver pond along Daniels Road. This is currently maintained by had a man-built dam as the water was used to mills. That dam has fallen into disrepair. The dam itself property, but on property owned by a private individual. Beavers, although formerly power downstream is not on town discussions around possible solutions included removing the beaver dam, although it was thought more beaver would return and the problem would be recurring, or build another dam with additional diversion ponds or relief valves to operate during times of heavy rainfall. A member of the public, Mr. Joe Sina, who owns a large portion of the land covered by the pond, was in attendance and invited to speak. He agreed that State funding to study the problem in depth, including all stakeholders, would be a good idea. He mentioned there used to be a secondary impoundment for the beaver pond overflow, and that an environmental engineer could provide more input regarding all the upstream sources potentially contributing to downstream problems. Mr. Olin requested input on a future roundtable meeting with CIRCA. Suggestions/questions included what would be the purpose of the meeting? Who would participate? What can individuals do re: climate change? Who are the stakeholders who need to be involved? Mr. Wilson asked what feedback Mr. Olin had received on the Mar 24 publication. He reported it was mostly anecdotal, but generally favorable. Mr. Wilson reported one comment to the CC Chair email, which was a request for the background documents previously provided to the CC by Mr. Olin in Jan and Feb, which, upon advice from the town administration, were provided.

After discussion on this topic was ended, Mr. Olin re-opened the topic during the discussion period at meetings end. He moved for a vote on scheduling a meeting on Sat, May 21, as an educational forum on climate change. Mr. Gillis seconded the motion. Mr. Wilson called for a Commission vote, Ms. Pagnano and Mr. Delventhal

voted yes. The Chair abstained. The motion carried. Mr. Olin will discuss the details of the meeting at the May CC meeting.

b. Liaison reports

i. Mr. Delventhal's update on IWWC: Items discussed at the last meeting included affordable housing on Town St down from Petticoat Lane, Consumer Reports moving ahead on a new driverless car test track, Berlin Fish and Game is changing its name, and a retention system for Lake Hayward was approved by the State and will be built by them.

ii. Mr. Gillis' update on P & Z: The State may change its rules to allow campgrounds in zone R4.

iii. Mr. Delventhal's update on the Open Space Committee: Mr. Delventhal walked the property the Committee has conducted executive sessions on, and will be moving forward with an appraisal of the property.

iv. Mr. Gillis' update on the Eightmile Committee: The Coordinating Committee will be moving into their new property at Burnham Brook Preserve in April.

c. Mr. Wilson's update on planting and existing gardens: The bayberry and elderberry plants, 25 each, were received very early this year in March, while in pots using plants until they can the ground was still frozen. Mr. Wilson has planted the bayberry his last years potting soil, and "heeled in" the elderberry be planted at the Harris Community Garden, where the CC will care for them over the summer. The intent is to plant them in the fall when there is less of a need to keep them watered several times a week. Existing planting along the ADA trail look good, with little browsing and no loss of plant material.

d. Reserve Monitor discussion. Ms. Gelston was not present to deliver a report.

6. New business a. New bills

-Maps for Gelston Easement from Essex printing, 109.50 Motion to pay the above bill: Mr. Delventhal, second: Mr. Gillis

-18 x 24 Hayward Reserve Sign, 215.00
Motion to pay the above bill: Mr. Delventhal, second Mr. Olin

-4 yds of mulch from Balleks, 209.70
Motion to pay above bill: Ms. Pagnano, second Mr. Delventhal
-3 bills from Shagbark for pressure treated lumber for the bridge at Roaring Brook and kiosks, 126.90/116.35/78.00. Motion to approve above bill: Ms. Pagnano, second: Mr. Delventhal. All bills were brought to a full vote, all passed unanimously.

b. Machimoodus spring fling - Mr. Myers was not present to discuss although Ms. Pagnano and Mr. Gillis, who also attended, reported the outreach was well attended and many maps of Town properties were handed out. Mr. Gillis suggested the CC purchase a banner of its own, and he will explore with Lighthouse Signs.

7. Public Comment: There were no comments submitted to the CC Chair.
Mr. Joe Sina raised an issue about the parking area at the Gelston Easement, where he is a Reserve Monitor. There is a dip which is often covered by grass that someone

could pull into and get stuck. He suggested a fence or markers to keep visitors from getting into trouble. Mr. Cameron Beard relayed that he is a member of the EH Land Trust, and he is looking forward to attending our meetings going forward, and working cooperatively on issues such as Monica's Woods, an EHLT property which can be accessed over town property on Robbie Road.

8. Next Meeting Tues May 3, 7:00 pm, room #1

9. Announcements and other discussion: Mr. Wilson requested CC members submit a summary of the hours they have spent in the first quarter on CC matters.
Mr. Olin reopened the discussion on climate resilience which is captured above in the main body of his report.

10. Adjournment. Motion to adjourn: Mr. Delventhal; second: Mr. Gillis Meeting adjourned at 8:27 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Gary Wilson, Chair
East Haddam Conservation Commission