East Haddam
CONSERVATION
COMMISSION

Regular Meeting
Tuesday, June 7, 2022
Municipal Office Building Room #1

1. Call to order – called to order at 7:00
   In attendance: Gary Wilson, John Olin, Bernie Gillis, Thom Delventhal and Susan Pagnano.

   Alternate Member: Joe Sina

   Absent: Charlotte Gelston and Charlie Myer.

2. Alternate appointments (if necessary)
   Not needed as there is a quorum.

3. Welcome to new CC members and guests
   Alternate Member: Joe Sina

   Of note, Wyatt Martin and Jonas Delauro were given the wrong date for the meeting. They were prepared to present their proposal for the new trail on Thursday, May 5, 2022. This information was not caught prior to the meeting.

4. Approval of agenda
   Motion to approve the Agenda: Susan Pagnano, Second: Thom Delventhal. Brought to vote, passed unanimously.

5. Approval of Conservation Commission minutes May 3, 2022

   Second Page; Stewardship & Forestry Management; fifth line: "Mr. Gillis blazed a bypass along the red trail at Gelston Easement due to high water." Should read *"Mr. Gillis blazed a bypass along the red trail at Gelston Easement due to mud."*

   Motion to approve Minutes: Bernie Gillis, Second: Gary Wilson. Brought to vote, passed unanimously.

6. Old Business

   a. Subcommittee updates

      i. Stewardship & Forestry Management – Mr. Gillis (10 min)
      May 9, 2022 – Mr. Gillis and Mr. Beard went to Burnham Brook to look at making a connection trail but would need to get approval from Nature Conservancy. Should put on top of To Do List as Mr. Gillis believes that this will be popular.
      May 10, 2022 – Mr. Gillis moved a carousel for the map holder to the shed from Rob Smith's house. Once a place is found, then it will be put there.
      May 12, 2022 – Mr. Gillis moved some material from Rob Smith's house in preparation for the Robbie Road trail.
      May 16, 2022 – Mr. Gillis, Ms. Pagnano and Mr. Pagnano installed a trellis at Patrell.

      A short discussion ensued regarding the privacy screen at 11 Baker Lane. Mr. Wilson left a message for Mr. VanDerStand to discuss same. Mr. Wilson also indicated that he advised Mr. VanDerStand that there needs to be a mix of native plants and mix of shrubs that will take full sun. This will be discussed further.

      May 17, 2022 – Mr. Gillis and Mr. Beard went to the Wetlands Commission meeting and presented the bog bridges that the CC would like to put on the Robbie Road to connect Monica's Woods. This was approved.
      May 19, 2022 – Mr. Gillis spent an hour working on the brush mower at the shed behind the old Town Hall.
      May 20, 2022 to May 27, 2022 – Mr. Gillis and Mr. Beard spent 11 hours working on the bog bridges on Robbie Road. This project has been completed. Materials provided by Rob Smith and The Land Trust, other than some fasteners that needed to be purchased.

      A short discussion ensued regarding Robbie Road and Monica's Woods. Mr. Gillis spoke with Mr. Ventres and he has indicated that no hunting would be allowed on this Town property as it is so close to the Elementary School. There is approximately two miles of trails in this area. There are several bog bridges that give access to Monica's Woods. Including Town property, it is a total of 99 acres of protected land. There will be a joint work party on June 18, 2022, between CC and the Land Trust to complete this project.

      May 28, 2022 – Mr. Gillis, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Sina, and Janice Sina went to the Town Beach to cut a trail in for Connor who passed in a car accident. Some classmates also helped.
      June 4, 2022 – Mr. Gillis and Mr. Sina returned to the Town Beach and continued work on the trail for Connor. Blazed the trails and finished this project. Marked

with paint and installed the chair that Connor's father built at the overlook. There is a spot on Mott Lane to park one car but there is easy access to the trail from the Town Beach. Connor's father offered to make another bench and it was Mr. Wilson's suggestion to place where Connor's family and friends would like it to go if in fact another is made and donated.
June 3, 2022 and June 6, 2022 – Mr. Gillis and Mr. Wilson went out to Lefebvre as two of the Reserve Monitors, Mr. and Mrs. Charbonneau, had reported to Ms. Gelston that a large tree had fallen. Tree was cleared and the trail walked and no other issues.
June 7, 2022 – Mr. Gillis and Mr. Olin went out to Hatch and cleared 5-6 trees along the blue and green trail. Spent approximately 3 hours there.

Mr. Wilson began a discussion regarding the trail for Connor and the need for a kiosk for maps.

ii. Outreach & Promotion – Mr. Wilson (10 min)
1. Stewardship Event – Mr. Wilson suggests that the trail making at the Town Beach property should be recorded as a Stewardship Event as there were so many members of the community that came together as well as the CC. He also suggests discussing the need for a kiosk for maps at this location. This can be discussed in the future.
2. Next CC article in EH News and Events magazine - Mr. Wilson suggests that a write up in the EH News about what the group did at the Beach Property and in the Events magazine, Mr. Wilson suggests putting a picture of the bench, the erratic and the overlook. Submission for the Events magazine is due July 1, 2022. The bench plaque should come in this week. Mr. Gillis advises that the EH News was at the second event, and they are already writing an article on this.

A short discussion ensued regarding the kiosk for the maps. A determination needs to be made as to if it should be on Mott Lane or at the Town Beach. Mr. Gillis thinks it would be best at the Town Beach as this is where the trail will be mostly used. Also, a map needs to be built. Once Marilyn returns, the CC will approach her to find out if she would be interested in doing same or if she can show Mr. Delventhal how to use the GPS.

Mr. Delventhal begins a discussion regarding the possibility of an article on Monica's Woods, Robbie Road and bog bridges. A member from the audience has indicated that there isn't a parking lot yet. Mr. Wilson suggest that maybe this can be an article for the next Events magazine and EH News.
Discussion goes back to Mr. Delventhal contacting Katia Porter at the EH News to ask for approximately 300 words for the Events magazine. Mr. Delventhal advised that he would edit what she is writing in the EH News. Audience member suggests that the article read something to the effect of Coming Soon:

map, kiosk and parking. Trails are blazed. Bench out there and people can come out. Mr. Gillis indicates that he will get signs for the area.

A short conversation ensued by Mr. Wilson regarding the article that Mr. Delventhal wrote regarding Stewardship Saturday. It was very well done.

iii. Climate resilience - Mr. Olin (10 min)
Mr. Olin begins a discussion regarding articles on climate vulnerability review and it should be ready later this summer. There have been discussions regarding the invasive species and mosquitos. Now there is Beech Leaf disease. Once the CIRCA report is complete, Mr. Olin indicates that he can do a write up to include all these items. He doesn't believe that this would be finished until mid to late September.

Mr. Olin begins a discussion that approximately 3-4 weeks ago, Mr. Ventres, the Land Use Administrator, sent a letter to all Commissions and Committees as part of their annual review of the Planning Conservation and Development followed by a meeting on May 24, 2022. Mr. Olin attended the meeting. Mr. Olin spoke to Mr. Ventres prior to the meeting to let him know that the CC would be reviewing some proposed additions to the relevant sections of the POCD. Mr. Ventres indicates that he will take the suggestions and bring them to the Planning and Zoning Commission on June 14, 2022. Mr. Olin then opens for discussion regarding the additions.

Mr. Sina begins a discussion on how to properly format the document. He believes that if bullets were used then it would be more effective. He feels that the subsections being brought too far forward, it is pointing out that these items are the most important. This is showing that this takes priority over some of the other issues. A discussion ensues on how to property format the document. Mr. Olin explains that he followed the POCD's format when drafting and continues as to why it was put together this way and most of the wording is taken from the Hazard Mitigation Plan which includes the piece about climate change.

Mr. Olin continues to explain Mr. Sina how the CC was endorsed and how the beliefs were brought together as he was not present at the meetings due to him just joining the CC.

Mr. Wilson begins a discussion on some of his ideas regarding this document. He recommends on Page 2, Item 4: "How to Get Recommended Strategies? Publish regular articles on climate impact." It is recommended to say, "*Publish articles on climate impact."*

Page 3, Item 7, Chapter 8: "Educate landowners on water quality issues including climate impacts." It is recommended to say, "*Educate landowners on water*

quality issues and techniques for protecting water quality." Mr. Olin responds stating that this is getting to the heart of the matter under goals. Specifically Goal 4.1 as this is the lead entity of responsibilities. The reasoning behind putting this in, is when talking with landowners, we can make the connection with the expectation with increase precipitation, we are going to see more runoff and more erosion necessitating more planting of vegetation and so forth. This is one example of talking about it and being conscious of what people already know.

Mr. Wilson indicates that he looks at this document in connection with the next four bullets, references the phrase "address climate impacts and these activities" and suggest that it be eliminated from Page 4 the first and third bullets and leave the phrase in for the second and forth bullets.

Mr. Wilson suggests under Goal 4.3, eliminate the first and the last, and keep the second. It is stated "Encourage proper management of privately owned forests including awareness of climate impacts. In the last, partner with the East Haddam Public Schools and environmental nonprofits to increase awareness foster awareness of climate impacts and resilience in these activities." Mr. Wilson believes that people will just overlook this. Mr. Wilson suggests keeping the second bullet, "Foster awareness of climate impacts and resilience in these activities."

Mr. Sina ensues a conversation, saying you look on Page 3, the two points that I think are important are educate and work with other agencies. Mr. Olin states POCD is written and wants to know where are we going and how are we getting there? This is what Mr. Ventres wrote about three weeks ago. The real responsibility of the CC is detailed in the in the Goals 4.1 and 4.3 so it moves from general to specific, and then gives us what our tasks should be with regards to climate change.

Ms. Pagnano questioned if these are being published or if this just for CC. Mr. Olin responds that this is for the Planning and Zoning. We are responding to a request from the annual review of the Plan of Conservation Development, that was sent out to all the Commissions and Committees. After tonight this document, will go to Planning and Zoning.

Mr. Delventhal ensues a conversation regarding the section on Page 4 regarding the Salmon River. He suggests leaving it in but putting a coma at the end and stating, "especially climate change."

Mr. Olin explains that the reason that it is so repetitive is because it is really a guiding document. As everyone know there is no enforcement but rather a wish list. He begins a short discussion as to the writing of this document and why.

Mr. Wilson suggests to Mr. Olin that he take another look at the document and the edits that he has suggested. Mr. Olin agrees.

Mr. Gillis advised Mr. Olin that there is no deadline for this document. It can be submitted at any time for approval. CC can get together later to discuss the document and come to an agreement.

b. Liaison Reports

i. IWWC updates – Mr. Delventhal – Mr. Gillis and Mr. Beard were there to deliver the presentation on bog bridges.
ii. P&Z updates – Mr. Gillis - only item in front of the Planning and Zoning is a 3 lot subdivision on the corner of Sara Baker Road and West Road – bordering Salem.
iii. Open Space updates – Mr. Delventhal – this has been tabled once again. Mr. Ventres is in the process of talking with two surveyors on the Hayward lot and it should be moving forward soon. Until survey is done, the State will not provide funding.
iv. Eightmile Committee updates – Mr. Gillis – nothing new to report. Moved into Burnham Brook and things are moving along. The Land Trust also moved in.

c. Planting/existing garden updates – Mr. Wilson

Already mentioned speaking with Mr. VanDerStad. A message was left for him, and this will have to be postpone until next meeting after the conversation. As discussed at the last meeting, if there is a share in the cost, and if CC can find someone willing to provide funds for the remainder, it would be beneficial to move forward. It was also mentioned to the tenants that the best time for planting is in the fall, and they are okay with it.

d. Reserve Monitor discussion, Ms. Gelston – Ms. Gelston was unable to attend the meeting.

Mr. Sina ensued a conversation regarding the Town Beach property suggesting that the CC approach Wyatt Martin, Jonas Delauro or one of Connor's parents regarding the possibility of being preserve monitors.

Mr. Wilson also suggests contacting Claudia at the Department of Children and Families, and provide her with the tasks of a preserve monitor, to see if she may have some suggestions to get more young people involved.

8. New Business Part B

a. New bills

Mr. Wilson has one bill for $22.51 for fuel for the brush mower.

Motion to approve payment of the bill: Bernie Gillis, Second: Thom Delventhal. Brought to vote, passed unanimously.

Mr. Wilson mentions that he received another message from Mr. Ventres, addressed to the Conservation Commission, Inland Wetlands and Watercourses Commission and the Planning and Zoning Commission from the State of Connecticut, asking if we would like to look at their plans for the Swing Bridge. These plans have tentatively been approved by the State and the Federal Government. Mr. Ventres sent two documents. In looking through them, there is a lot of engineering plans. Mr. Wilson indicates that he is not able to comment. Mr. Olin expresses interest in these documents and Mr. Wilson will get them to him.

b. New application for commission member

Linda provided a document sometime ago regarding vacancies and when they are filled. Mr. Delventhal, Ms. Gelston and Mr. Olin, your commission expires on June 30, 2022. Is there interest in extending your term for an additional 2 years. Mssrs. Delventhal and Olin indicates they are. Ms. Gelston is not in attendance, but Mr. Wilson will ask her.

c. Trail creation training proposed by Economic Development Commission

Mr. Wilson states that right after the last meeting in May, there was a Trail creation training proposed by the Economic Development Commission. Mr. Gillis reviews the plan for the proposed trail that was discussed at the last hearing providing the details and location of the trail. Mr. Gillis continues that this is being led by the Economic Development Commission and Connecticut Landmarks. The trail will go from Chester up to the Swing Bridge, up 82, down 82 towards Wolf's Den Campground, take a left down to Chapman Pond and follow that road down to the ferry landing from Gillette Castle. Long route with no place to pull off, bicycle path or hiking path. Mr. Gillis indicates that he believes that the intention is to put in sidewalks from Shagbark to Ray of Light Farm and then include some trails and bike trails that come up to the ferry and into Haddam. This is planning.

Mr. Wilson indicates that when he obtained the mail, there was a postcard from Aquarian indicating that they were giving grants up to $5,000 to various groups. When he received the postcard, it was on a Wednesday, and the request was due on Friday. An application for the grant was submitted

b. Adjournment at 8:34

Motion to Adjourn: Mr. Delventhal, Second: Ms. Pagnano. Brought to vote, passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,
Lenice Tripputi, Recording Secretary
East Haddam Conservation Commission