East Haddam
CONSERVATION
COMMISSION

Tuesday, December 5, 2023
Municipal Office Building Room #1

1. Call to order – Called to order at 7:03 p.m.
   In attendance: Joe Sina, Gary Wilson, Bernie Gillis, Cameron Beard, Alan Ponanski, Susan Pagnano, John Olin, David Walls, and Ruth Ziobron.

   Absent: Charlotte Gelston.

2. Alternate appointments (if necessary).
3. Approval of agenda
   Motion to approve the agenda as presented.
   Gillis/Pagnano Passed Unanimously

4. Approval of Conservation Commission minutes November 7, 2023.
   Motion to approve the meeting minutes with the following change(s)**.**
   -Under 6 iii, change to "Mr. Olin will be a panelist in a workshop for the Long Island Sound study about sustainable and resilient communities in December."
   Gillis/Pagnano Passed Unanimously

5. General announcements
   -Next year's meeting dates were filed with the Town Clerk's Office and emailed to Commissioners.
   -Town Beach- A high school student and father met with Mr. Sina and Gillis to review his Senior Project.
   -Mr. Wilson stated the East Haddam Fish and Game has expressed interest in planting apple trees and that he would give them Mr. Haglund's contact information.
   -Lower Connecticut River Land Trust will have an annual meeting on December 21st, 2023, 6pm – 7pm titled State of the Regions Forest and How you can help improve it.
   -Cameron Beard was appointed as a regular member of the Conservation Commission at the last Board of Selectman's meeting.
   -Tom Delventhal's resignation was accepted at the last Board of Selectman's meeting.
   -Gary Wilson, Susan Pagnano, and Bernie Gillis were appointed for two more years at the last Board of Selectman's meeting.

6. Presentations from the public
   Mr. Walls is interested in being an alternate member of the Conservation Commission. His application will be submitted to the Selectman's Office.

   Motion to recommend Mr. Walls to the Board of Selectman as an alternate member on the Conservation Commission.

Beard/Wilson Passed unanimously.

7. Old business
    a. Subcommittee updates

i. Stewardship & Forestry Management – Mr. Gillis

- Trails were cleared of trees/limbs, weed wacked and new directional posts were added.
-Chapal Farm needs directional post on the south trail and ADA ramp needs repairs.
-Nichols trails were painted, and kiosk installed.
-Mr. Gillis met with the Senior student to review his project at the Connor's path and overlook. He will level the area where the bench is.
-Lord Wellington- bog bridges were built over wet areas.
-Hatch Lot parking lot has a pothole needing repair.
-Mr. Beard warned of jumping worms in wood chips. They can destroy the humus layer under the soil.

ii. Outreach & Promotion – Mr. Wilson

-An article was published in the EH News explaining the difference between the Conservation Commission and the Land Trust.
-Future article ideas: Donating an easement to the CC, introduce new preserves (Lord Wellington/Hayward).
-An article about forest management will be written for review and publication in the Events Magazine.
-Springtime vernal pool educational walk was discussed.

iii. Climate Resilience –Mr. Olin

-Mr. Olin will be a panelist in a workshop for the Long Island Sound study about sustainable and resilient communities on December 7th.
-The Annual Connecticut Land Conservation Conference will be held March 23, 2024, at Wesleyan. Since the Conservation Commission is a contributor to the CLCC, they should get members' rates for anyone attending the annual meeting.

    b. Liaison Reports

i. IWWC Updates-Mr. Gillis
-Nothing new to report.

ii. P&Z updates – Mr. Gillis
- Reviewing RFQ for Moodus Village.

iii. Open Space updates-Mr. Sina
-There was an Open Space Public Information Meeting held on November 30th, 2023, at 7 p.m. The purpose of the meeting was to explain and discuss the Town's potential open space purchase of the Kronberg Property including the grant received from the Open Space and Watershed Land Acquisition Grant Program and the potential bond authorization for future open space acquisitions. It will go to the Board of Selectmen for resolution on December 6th, and to the Board of Finance for approval on December 11th. There will be an official Town Meeting held on January 17th, 2024. Referendum date will be January 30, 2024. Mr. Gillis explained that bonding for open space was an approval for future purchases and not increasing the amount borrowed by the Town. He stated future purchases would still need Town approval through the referendum process.

iv. Eightmile Committee updates – Mr. Beard
-Grants for environmental projects for properties lying within the watershed are available.
-There are preliminary discussions about developing an ADA compliant trail from the Senior Center to Oak Grove.

c. Planting/existing garden updates – Mr. Wilson
-Mr. Wilson discussed seed germination of Black Cherry and Winterberry for next year's plantings.
-Consider getting a garden plot at the Community Garden for seedlings as a nursery.
- Salmon River Overlook-Mr. Wilson suggested planting pine and red oak trees placed within the mug wort which could serve to protect the tree seedlings from deer browsing.
-There was a brief discussion about starting Oak seedlings.

d. Reserve Monitor Discussion -Ms. Gelston sent an email update.
-Reserve monitors were found for Rose Farm and Lord Wellington. Hayward Preserve needs a reserve monitor.

8. New Business

a. New bills

Motion to approve the bill(s) as presented:
-$90.90 Amazon invoice #111-7640388-741228 dated October 10, 2023, for supplies.
-$189.14 Shagbark invoice dated 11/25/23 for supplies.

Gillis/Ponanski Passed unanimously.

Ms. Pagnano is investigating printed tablecloths with the Conservation Commission's information on them and will report back at the next meeting.

Motion to contribute $250 to the Connecticut Land Conservation Council.
Beard/Gillis Passed unanimously.

Mr. Beard suggested asking for signs to be posted on state roads for some of the town's better-known preserves. For example, having a sign for Chapman Pond on Town Street, under the existing sign at River Road that points to Gillette's Castle. Mr. Ventres will be contacted for further discussion.

b. Facebook page plans
-Commission members discussed starting a CC Facebook page. Maureen Gillis has offered to monitor it. Town Facebook falls under the Freedom of Information Act. Matthew Hall, IT Director, will be included as an administrator.

c. Goals for 2024-initial ideas
-Commission members reviewed and edited a draft 2024 Goals.

9. Announcements and other discussions. There was none.

10. Public Comment (can be sent via email to: ccchair@easthaddam.org) -There was none.

11. Next meeting: Tues. 02 Jan 2024 7:00 pm, Room #1

12. Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn at 8:53 p.m.
Gillis/Pagnano Passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

E. Ruth Ziobron
Recording Secretary