East Haddam
CONSERVATION
COMMISSION

Tuesday, January 2, 2024
Municipal Office Building Room #1

1. Call to order – Called to order at 7:02 p.m.
   In attendance: Joe Sina, Gary Wilson, Bernie Gillis, Cameron Beard, Alan Ponanski, John Olin, David Walls, Charlotte Gelston and Ruth Ziobron via YouTube.

   Absent: Susan Pagnano.

2. Alternate appointments (if necessary). Mr. Walls was appointed voting member for Ms. Pagnano.
3. Approval of agenda
   Motion to approve the agenda.
   Walls/Olin Passed Unanimously

4. Approval of Conservation Commission minutes December 5, 2023.
   Motion to approve the meeting minutes.
   Wilson/Beard Passed Unanimously

5. General announcements
   - David Walls was appointed as an alternate member of the Conservation Commission at the last Board of Selectman's meeting.
   -Wood chips will be brought from the Town's Mount Parnassus garage site for the Town Beach trail work by the High School student for his Senior Project.
   -Mr. Sina, Mr. Beard, and Pete Govert met with Akiebia Hicks via Zoom from DEEP to discuss trail signage for various properties on State and Town roads. Mr. Beard provided a draft signage short list for review.
   -Mr. Wilson's blue bird article was submitted to the Events Magazine.
   -The donation to the Connecticut Land Conservation Council has been completed.
   -Consideration for a donation to the Connecticut River Coastal Conservation District was mentioned, with the amount to be decided at the next meeting.
   -Mr. Wilson will contact the Selectman's office about obtaining a garden plot at the Community Garden for seedlings as a nursery.
   -Exploration of a high school work-study program and efforts to increase engagement on the Conservation Commission's Facebook page were discussed.

6. Presentations from the public-There was none.

7. Old business
   a. Subcommittee updates
   i. Stewardship & Forestry Management – Mr. Gillis

- Trails were cleared of trees/limbs/briars, weed- whacked and new directional posts were added.
-Detailed updates were provided on the progress of the ADA trail project.
-Lord Wellington bog bridges were completed.
-Nichols trail will need addition signage warning of flying discs from the disc golf course.
-Mr. Gillis noted downed trees were uprooted due to the wet ground conditions.
-There was discussion about getting a Commission Member the chainsaw certification, so there are two people out together when necessary. The chainsaw certification course will be offered this year.

ii. Outreach & Promotion – Mr. Wilson

-An article was submitted to the Events Magazine about blue birds. Blue bird boxes should be put up in February.
-Future article ideas: Donating an easement to the CC, introduce new preserves (Lord Wellington/Hayward).
-Table at the Machimoodus Spring Fling.
-Springtime vernal pool educational walk was discussed.

iii. Climate Resilience –Mr. Olin

-Mr. Olin reviewed the 2024-25 Conservation Commission Resilience Objectives.
-Concerns about the underutilization of the Everbridge alert system were raised.
-Collaborative opportunities were explored, including formulating recommendations collectively and joint presentations with other groups.
-The Conservation Commission's State mandates and statutes will be reviewed.
-Alignment with the Conservation Commission's core responsibilities were discussed.
-Insights from Mr. Beard at the East Haddam Land Trust on managing forests for climate change resilience were shared.

b. Liaison Reports

i. IWWC Updates-Mr. Walls
-Pavilion at Miller Pond by the Lions Club was approved.

ii. P&Z updates – Mr. Gillis
- Nothing new to report.

iii. Open Space updates-Mr. Sina
-Nothing new to report.

iv. Eightmile Committee updates – Mr. Beard
-Nothing new to report.

c. Planting/existing garden updates – Mr. Wilson
-Salmon River Outlook plantings were discussed.

d. Reserve Monitor Discussion -Ms. Gelston
-There were brief discussions on engaging trail monitors more actively.
-Additional monitors are needed.

8. New Business

a. New bills

Motion to approve the bill(s) as presented:
-$106.85 Shagbark invoice dated 12/20/23 for supplies.
Gillis/Gelston Passed Unanimously

-$259.08 reimbursement to Mr. Gillis for Lexan for kiosks.
Beard/Walls Passed unanimously.

b. Discussion from Commission members
-The 2024-2025 budget is due January 16th. Line items were discussed.
-Fees for QR codes verses printing materials were discussed.
-Investigate Geo Referencing.
-QR work may be utilized by engaging Seniors for their Senior Projects and the Work Study Program.

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

10. Next meeting: Tues. 06 Feb 2024 7:00 pm, Room #1

11. Adjournment

Motion to Adjourn at 8:36 p.m.
Gillis/Walls Passed unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

E. Ruth Ziobron
Recording Secretary