

East Haddam
Conservation Commission
Plan of Conservation and Development Sub-committee

June 16, 2020
Adopted July 7, 2020

1. Call to Order
The Special Meeting of the East Haddam Conservation Commission Plan of Conservation and Development Sub-committee was held on Tuesday, June 16, 2020, commencing at 9:02 AM.
2. Roll Call
Gary Wilson, Marilyn Gleeson, Bernie Gillis
3. Discussion of execution of the POCD activities the CC is sole lead on

Mr. Wilson began the meeting by explaining the purpose of the meeting based on state statute that each town have a POCD to incorporate the public's input to their community, as described in the introduction of that document, and inviting any viewers of the proceedings to attend future CC meetings, once the township buildings were opened to the public. Discussion will follow each of the 12 topics discussed at this meeting

Goal 2.5 Develop plan for a linear park along the Moodus River, including methods to target acquisitions or easements, and a phasing plan for development of public spaces as properties are secured by the town.

Mr. Gillis reported that this aspirational goal is carried over from the town's 2008 POCD, and that the town and the EH Land Trust (EHLT) continue to work toward acquiring or gaining easements for two other properties along the Moodus River, but presently there is no connectivity that would allow the development of a linear park. Ms. Gleeson added that she will advise the EHLT and the Open Space Commission (OSC), both of which she is on, that this is a priority for the CC. She added that perhaps an article could be written on this park, once any progress on obtaining the desired connectivity has been achieved.

Goal 2.6 Continue to support community efforts to increase public and private use of renewable energies.

Ms. Gleeson suggested we hold off on this until the full CC establishes its priorities.

Goal 2.6 Continue to educate East Haddam residents on the positive environmental and fiscal benefits of recycling and waste reduction, smart design and green energy.

Ms. Gleeson said we could consider an article on recycling in one of our local publications. Mr. Wilson said Ms. Pagnano has started a "lasagna garden" at the Harris lots community garden that could be an educational tool for other gardeners at the site. Mr. Gillis suggested a town wide composting program to which all residents could bring their compostibles, and

both Ms. Gleeson and Mr. Gillis suggested a lasagna garden in an open space on town property would be more accessible to the public.

Goal 3.1 Include locations of identified bridle, foot, and bike paths on a map that can be easily shared through paper or online media to connect residents with additional recreation opportunities.

Ms. Gleeson stated most of the foot path maps also indicate if horses or bicycles are permitted, Mr. Gillis reported Ms. Gelston has created a list of the town's bridle paths on public property that we could use as a basis for an article that Mr. Olin could write. Mr. Gleeson offered to take the lead on this objective.

Goal 4.1 Educate landowners on water quality issues and techniques for protecting water quality-removal of invasive species; maintenance or creation of vegetated buffer strips along lakes and streams; use of non-chemical fertilizers and pesticides; septic design and maintenance.

Ms. Gleeson believes this was also a carryover from the 2008 POCD. Mr. Gillis indicated the 8mile organization had financed a small buffer strip program designed to keep geese off the beach, and the PZC adopted the Eightmile Management plan and has mapped an overlay zone to protect the Eightmile and small tributaries that does not permit mowing to the waters edge keeping contaminants from flowing unimpeded into the water effecting its quality. Mr. Wilson reported he has previously obtained brochures from the Connecticut River Coastal Conservation District (CRCCD) on invasives plantings, and that he would contact the Director of that organization to learn if they had any print material that we might use regarding water quality issues, aimed at homeowners. There was additional discussion on the CC developing its own website or Facebook page. Ms. Gleeson will check with Mr. Smith regarding this, and Mr. Gillis will check with 8mile re their FB page. Further, the group discussed that the CC did not need to accept all objectives as falling within its purview, specifically the part about septic design and maintenance, as the town has its own requirements for this. Once annually in Jan, the CC is able to request modification to the POCD.

Goal 4.1 Act in partnership with the Eight Mile River Wild and Scenic Watershed Stewardship Committee in implementing the Eight Mile River Watershed Management Plan to protect and enhance the watershed's Outstanding Resource Values (ORV).

Ms. Gleeson and Mr. Gillis are both members of the 8mile Commission and will bring any issues requiring CC input or participation back to our CC.

Goal 4.1 Continue to support the mission of the Salmon River Watershed Partnership (SRWP) and Salmon River Watershed Conservation Compact in order to protect its waters.

Mr. Gillis is on this Commission and mentioned it has just purchased an \$80,000 ECHO harvester to remove invasive aquatic plants. He will bring any issues requiring CC input back to the commission.

Goal 4.1 Continue working with EHLA and other lake groups to educate the public on issues facing East Haddam Lakes.

Mr. Gillis said both the 8mile and SRWP liaise with the EHLA, and the CC could educate the public thru available print media. Ms. Gleeson will check with Mr. Smith regarding any town rep assigned to coordinate with the EHLA.

Goal 4.3 Encourage proper management of privately owned forests and the maintenance of wooded linkages between large tracts of forest land.

Mr. Gillis indicated there were regulations on harvesting timber, and print media could be used to emphasize good environmental practices. Mr. Wilson mentioned the Coverts program which is offered yearly in Ct. and is designed to help land owners learn how to manage their forests. He believes it is sponsored by DEEP. Ms. Gleeson Ct. Audubon provides information on maintaining healthy forests for the bird life.

Goal 4.3 Support groups working on conservation issues through educational programming, recreation, and stewardship activities.

It was agreed that the COVID pandemic has impacted activities involving groups and so this will have to await the opening of schools and group meetings. Mr. Gillis stated 8mile has teachers to go to schools in EH and the Lymes and they discuss topics such as microinvertebrates, and run programs at Devils Hopyard, for instance. The SRWP also has programs on water assessment. Ms. Gleeson has worked with students in school environmental clubs. Our role may be to act as facilitator, knowing who the experts are that we could approach to address these needs.

Goal 4.3 Partner with East Haddam public schools and environmental non profits to increase awareness and appreciation for open spaces, trails and waterways.

Discussed in combination with the above objective.

Goal 5.3 For town roads that meet the scenic road standards, continue to encourage the designation as such.

Mr. Gillis said such designation is usually brought forward to the town by landowners, as if granted it includes some protections against overdevelopment. Ms. Gleeson started Ms. Gelston had worked on a designation for Sims Road and could help us understand the process.

4. Adjournment

Motion by Mr. Gillis to adjourn. Second by Ms. Gleeson and unanimously approved.

Meeting adjourned at 10:13 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Gary Wilson

Sub-committee chair