

Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes
Date: Tuesday, April 1, 2025
Time: 7:00 PM
Location: Municipal Office Building, Room #1

1. **Call to Order**
   The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM.
2. **Roll Call and Alternate Appointments**

- **Members Present**: Gary Wilson, Bernie Gillis, Barry Bernard, and David Walls.
- **Members Absent**: Joe Sina, Cameron Beard, Alan Ponanski, John Olin, and Susan Pagnano.
- **Guests**:
- **Alternate Appointments**: Barry Bernard and David Walls were appointed voting members for this meeting.

3. **Approval of Agenda**
   Motion to approve the agenda as presented.
   Bernard/Walls – Passed Unanimously.
4. **Approval of Minutes**
   Motion to approve the Conservation Commission meeting minutes from March 4, 2025.
   Walls/Bernard – Passed Unanimously.

   Motion to approve the Conservation Commission Special meeting minutes from March 17, 2025 add Gary Wilson to attendance.

   Wilson/Bernard – Passed Unanimously.
5. **Chair's Updates**

- There was a walk with David Urban on the Hatch Lot and the Commission is awaiting a forestry report.
- The garden plot at the Community Garden has been renewed.
- Commission members were asked for ideas for bluebird box locations.
- There was discussion about the logistics of installing duck boxes around Daniels Road.
- The Commission reviewed a sample sign developed by the Land Trust to discourage unauthorized vehicle access.

- The grant application for Life Forms Inc. was signed and forwarded to the Eightmile River Board for consideration at their May 19 meeting.

6. Old Business

a. Subcommittee updates

i. Stewardship & Forestry Management – Mr. Gillis

Updates were provided on multiple reserves including Hatch Lot, Nichols, Sabine, and Roaring Brook. Repairs to trail benches, bridge railings and signs were repaired. Downed trees were removed, and trails cleared. A three-acre clearing is proposed at the top of the Hatch Lot for habitat restoration; quotes are being sought for mowing services. Participation in the recent CLCC conference was reported with sessions attended on forestry, climate change and LIDAR use.

ii. Outreach and Promotion – Mr. Wilson

- Commission members participated in the Spring Fling event that the Friends of Machimoodus State Park will be hosted March 23, 2025. Bluebird boxes were distributed.
- Articles are planned for publication on vernal pools and monarch butterflies.

iii. Climate Resilience – Mr. Olin

- There was no report.

b. Liaison Reports

i. IWWC Updates – Mr. Walls

- The bridge crossing at Honey Hill was approved.

ii. P&Z Updates – Mr. Gillis

- The focus is currently on the Moodus Redevelopment Plan.

iii. Open Space Updates – Mr. Sina

- There was no report.

iv. Eightmile Committee Updates – Mr. Beard

- There was no report.

v. Sustainability Committee – Mr. Ponanski

- There was no report.

c. Planting and Existing Garden Updates

- Cleanup was completed at the pollinator garden at Patrell. A nest of chicken eggs was discovered, mistakenly thought to be duck eggs.
- The potential to partner with the Master Gardener program for volunteer help was discussed.
- Mr. Wilson suggested propagating plants from seedlings on preserves instead of purchasing new plants.

d. Reserve Monitor Discussion

- No major updates were reported.

7. New Business

a. Bills

- The following bills were reviewed and approved for payment:

Motion to pay the following bills:
Shagbark Lumber $92.56
Shagbark Lumber for railing at Hatch Lot $46.68
CCLC Conference Admission: $125.00.
Rope puller tool $111.60.
Wilson/Walls
Passed Unanimously.

b. Discussion from Commission members

Mr. Gillis shared that at the Open Space Committee meeting, Mr. Ventres clarified that a 5.6 acre parcel at the corner of the Harris property would be exchanged for 2.2 acres along with a conservation easement that runs north and south along the Dean property. This exchange will connect the Dean and Harris properties, providing a continuous trail for hikers from Parker Road to the Hatch Lot, creating a full day hike experience. This plan has been in discussion for about 20 years.

8. Public Comment

- No public comments were received.

9. Next Meeting

- The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 6, 2025, at 7:00 PM in Room #1.

10. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn at 7:47 PM.
Wilson/Walls – Passed Unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,
E. Ruth Ziobron
Recording Secretary