

**East Haddam  
Conservation Commission**

March 4, 2008  
Adopted April 1, 2008

1. Call to Order

The Regular Meeting of the East Haddam Conservation Commission was held on Tuesday, March 4, 2008 at 7:05 p.m. at the River House. Cynthia Matthew being in the Chair and the Secretary being present.

a. Roll Call

Cynthia Matthew, Susan Merrow, Jon Russell, Peggy Carlson, Paul Stuhlman – departed at 7:30, Nancy MacKinnon, and TJ Tarbox – departed 8:45.

2. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Mrs. Mackinnon to approve the agenda. Second by Mrs. Carlson and unanimously approved.

3. Approval of Minutes for 2/5/08

Remove February from the reference to the next meeting.

Motion by Mrs. Merrow to approve the minutes with the one above change. Second by Mrs. Mackinnon and unanimously approved.

4. Old Business

a. Updates:

i. Stewardship – TJ

The Urbanik and Sabine property have their boundaries marked in total by Mr. Tarbox and Jim Ventres. Mr. Tarbox will keep Mr. Ventres informed of the Conservation Commission's (CC) work and ask his advice as to what property to mark next. Mr. Tarbox will document all notes on the properties and provide to Mrs. Merrow. Going forward the property files will be known as the Property Logs as they track ongoing discussions, work and meetings.

Urbanik property – There are several land stewards who have stepped forward to monitor the property - Duane Schwab, the Dentes family and State Trooper Turner. Mr. Tarbox will be contacting 2 or 3 other neighbors to discuss stewardship with them as well.

Sabine property – Two old logging roads can be used to create a trail. Mr. Ventres believes a loop is possible. Where the two roads met, the property is bifurcated by a private parcel of land. Mr. Ventres would need to request a 25-foot easement, this is under consideration. As the property was logged within the last 8-10 years; Mr. Ventres suggests requesting funds from the Board of Finance for a Forester and biologist to map out a 6-10 year forestry plan. Income generated over the long term will more than offset the expense.

Nichols property – Regarding the work party on Saturday, March 1, Mr. Tarbox will inform Mr. Ventres of the work completed. Mr. Tarbox has discussed the presence of garbage on the property with the Land Use office, and the Public Works department will be notified to clean it and close the gate. Cynthia and John Matthew and Mr. Tarbox will finish the trail marking on Saturday, March 8.

Marking procedures – As the EHLT removes bark to apply paint, pests can be introduced. Mrs. Mackinnon suggested discussing blazing technique standards with the Adirondack Trail Association and the Connecticut Forest and Parks Association to ensure that the most responsible methods are used.

Materials – Tags, signs and nails need to be ordered. A handheld GPS device could be useful to mark the boundaries, especially when the pin is not easily found. The CC will determine if the Land Use Office has a device that can be borrowed. If not, the CC will need to determine if one is needed and then purchase one. The last issue of *Connecticut Association of Conservation and Inland Wetlands Commission* discussed how GPS coordination through NEMO and UCONN is becoming a very useful tool. If GPS is used, findings can be forwarded to NEMO for inclusion in their record. Further consideration is warranted.

Stewardship – Mr. Tarbox indicated he is still trying to determine senior community service project needs to engage students in the CC's work. He will continue to pursue the matter and report back to the CC.

ii. Newsletter article – Nancy

Mrs. Mackinnon provided a copy of the article for the East Haddam Events newsletter. All contacts will be listed in the article. She will try to find a picture to include. The hike is scheduled for June 7<sup>th</sup> at 11am; rain date is the following Saturday, June 14<sup>th</sup>. Directions will to be included as well as parking and meeting instructions. Mr. Stuhlman agreed to be the contact for stewardship. The CC stewardship portion of the hike will take place at 9am prior to the hike. Mrs. Mackinnon will invite Martha Tonucci or Ralph Lewis to attend the hike as they offer fascinating information and attract a crowd. The article will be entitled "Conservation Corner: Hiking the Patrell."

iii. Resources and materials - Peg

Purchasing *Managing Conservation Land* was tabled last meeting for purchase. *Conservation Easement Stewardship Guide* was also highlighted as another good book to purchase. Motion by Mr. Tarbox to buy both books; seconded by Mr. Russell. The group requested that Mrs. Carlson determine if there is a CT equivalent of *The Conservation Easement Stewardship Guide* prior to purchasing it. Motion unanimously approved.

*Last Child in the Woods* was also highlighted as was a 14-minute video about wetlands are and how to protect them.

iv. Open space inventory – Sue

The project has not progressed rapidly due to Mrs. Merrow's availability, however Kathy Klein has agreed to help with the project once she returns on April 1. Mrs. Matthew will build the log on the Nichols property. Mr. Tarbox will provide materials/information on the Sabine property.

Mrs. Merrow will create a list of the 11 open space properties that are over 4 acres at Mr. Tarbox request.

Mrs. Matthew will request the most recent map of Town-Owned open space and Mr. Tarbox will ensure that it is displayed in the River House.

v. Open space committee – Cynthia

At the recent meeting, there was discussion of the committee and its structure. It is a committee, not a commission, as there are no state statutes to guide it. All town boards have representation on the committee. There is no governance structure and no by-laws. The group discussed creating by-laws as it plays an important part in the town. While the committee has done some wonderful work in acquiring properties that townspeople can enjoy, some of the issues facing it now are questions of priorities for selection of open space. A formula was created in the POCD; the group needs to determine if it should be adhered to, revisited or upheld.

b. Review/revisions to existing stewardship documents

The Stewardship Policies and Procedures documents under review are post-1996.

Statement of Purpose – Mr. Russell will make the intentions a bulleted list and revise the language to be clearer. The last sentence will include a reference to the CC. The group determined that education should be included in the mission statement but not in the stewardship intentions. Recruitment of East Haddam citizenry should be included in the stewardship statement of purpose.

Policies – Mr. Russell saw no significant changes to this section other than to clarify what deed restrictions references (relates to the land that's been acquired for the town properties, not abutted lands).

Mr. Russell will include references the Town Ordinance and state statutes and an approval date when approved.

Mr. Russell asked all members to send revisions to him prior to the next meeting as a revised version will be presented after that point for review and approval of Revisions to the Prior Stewardship Policies and Procedures.

5. New Business

i. Hanks subdivision application on Orchard Road.

Mr. Tarbox is recused from discussion of the Hanks subdivision as he previously signed a petition for a public meeting on the subdivision.

CC has received notification of a controversial subdivision application, known as the Morgan property and belonging to Alan Hanks. The property is 27 acre property with one house on it; there is a conservation easement of 6.5 acres. Mr. Hanks has submitted a subdivision plan outlining 7 new houses and a private access road.

Primary issues potential impact on an existing vernal pool and storm water management from runoff of the access road into a local brook. Property abutters (Mike Harris, Peg O'Brian and Dan Oates) have expressed concern and requested to be interveners following state law. Inland Wetland Committee Public Open Hearing is scheduled for March 20. The CC was not invited to the property walk, the CC needs to request access to view the property. Mrs. Matthew will determine if another site walk is scheduled now that the application has been filed. A wetlands assessment by an

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ecologist in Essex (hired by the property owner) has been conducted and revealed 2.48 acres of wetland on gently sloping terrain. Several species were highlighted. The Application for Inland Wetlands and Watercourses and maps were also provided to the CC and are available in the River House for member review.

According to the Sept. 11, 2007, CC meeting minutes, a vote was held on suggesting an ERT for the Morgan property. The outcome of the vote was that the ERT was recommended to be made available to the land owner. The land owner was notified of the offer and declined. Planning and Zoning and Inlands Wetlands will be made aware that an ERT was discussed and declined.

Mrs. Matthew will review the ER materials to determine the applicability now that a submitted subdivision application is filed.

Mrs. Matthew will determine if and when a property walk is scheduled. Based on that information, she will call a special meeting as needed to create recommendations to Planning and Zoning and Inland Wetlands.

6. Confirmation of next meeting: April 1, 2007, Jon will be unable to make the meeting.
7. Other discussion  
Mr. Tarbox indicated that CC has not been invited to any subdivision walks that the Planning and Zoning for notice of a walk. Mrs. Matthew will request that the CC be included in all walks again.
8. Adjournment  
Motion by Mr. Russell to adjourn, seconded by Mrs. Merrow, unanimously approved. Meeting was adjourned at 9:14pm.

Attachments:

- Conservation Commission: Stewardship Policies and Procedures
- Newsletter draft
- The Green Plan: Guiding Land Acquisition and Protection in Connection 2007-2012
- Jordan Cove: Urban Watershed Project
- Responsible Growth Not Easy
- List of Subdivisions that could have be purchased for town open space
- Anatomy of a subdivision in East Haddam 2008