**Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes**
**Date:** Tuesday, July 7, 2026
**Time:** 7:00 PM
**Location:** Municipal Office Building, Room #1

**1. Call to Order**
The meeting was called to order at 7:04 PM by Chair Joe Sina.

**2. Roll Call and Alternate Appointments**
**Members Present:** Joe Sina, Barry Bernard, Pat Capel, Bernie Gillis
**Members Absent:** Cameron Beard, John Olin, Susan Pagnano, Alan Ponanski, David Walls.
**Guests:** none
**Alternate Appointments:** Mr. Bernard and Mr. Capel were seated as alternates.

3. **Approval of Agenda**
**Motion** to approve the agenda as presented.
**Capel/Gillis Passed Unanimously.**

4. **Approval of Conservation Commission Minutes from June 2, 2026.**
**Bernard/Gillis : Passed Unanimously.**

**5. Presentations from the Public:** None

**6. Chair's Updates**

- Mr. Capel is interested in taking classes on invasives and woodlands. The classes are $500 each, and one of the requirements is that participants should spread the information. Mr. Sina suggested that he confirm that at a meeting the month before the classes start and say how it will benefit the Commission so that the Commission can pay for it.
- Susan Pagnano wants to continue as a member of the Commission. She will soon have more time to attend meetings.
- Mr. Beard provided an update on the Resilient Practices Forestry Grant which Mr. Sina read to the Commission. Mr. Beard said that, after working with a

forester and analyzing the tasks to be performed, they could not find a way to complete the necessary tasks within the fifteen-month period during which the grant required full completion. In addition, more herbicide applications would be required, which are expensive and not covered by the grant. The grant requires that the town pay the costs and then get reimbursed, which made the application more complicated. We will receive a bill from the forester who walked the Shugrue property and analyzed the project materials. Mr. Beard sent an email to the DEEP representatives letting them know that we will not be applying for the grant and thanking them for their time and effort.

- Mr. Capel is the Agriculture Commission's representative to the Eight Mile River Committee.

**7. Old Business**

a. Subcommittee Updates

i. Stewardship and Forestry Updates – Mr. Gillis
Cleared trees from Kronberg with Mr. Bernard, marked trails.
Mr. Ventres got a request from a resident near Hayward preserve stating that a tree fell on his property and he would like it removed. Mr. Gillis cut it up, more needs to be cleaned up.
Harris Preserve- a lot of heavy growth and trees down
Mr. Bernard reported trees on a trail at Rose Farm
Shagrue – Mr. Gillis started marking the white trail with white plastic squares. Hurt his back laid up for a few days
Went to Salem Overlook to lock the gate, someone left it open.
Went to Harris, cut back some brush on the orange trail.
Dean Easement - cut brush on both ends.
Kathy Gregory reported a tree over the ADA trail.
Robbie Road was OK
Patrell Preserve - large cluster of trees on the ADA trail, will need some help with that, Mr. Bernard said he can help
Gelston Preserve –Mr. Sina said the orange trail across from Anderson's is closed in and trees are down
Mr. Bernard checked Shugrue and cleared some weeds.

ii. Outreach and Promotion – Mr. Sina
Nothing ready for the EH News but we will have an article in Events Magazine.

iii. Climate Resilience– Mr. Olin's report to Mr. Sina
a. Succor Brook flood control project: on June 24 DEEP informed Mr. Ventres that East Haddam was not awarded a grant from the DEEP

Climate Resilience Fund. The town may be considered for an award on a rolling basis in the future. Mr. Ventres responded that the Town wants it's projects to be considered in DEEP's rolling review basis.

b. The Lifeforms team (Eight Mile River and East Haddam Middle School Project) will meet on July 25.

b. Liaison Reports

i. IWWC Updates – Mr. Walls report to Mr. Sina
Mr. Casner withdrew his application for a mixed-use development across from Shagbark. He brought a preliminary layout to Planning and Zoning for feedback but is not moving forward.

ii. P & Z Updates – Mr. Gillis
No update, the commission is focused on reviewing the new housing regulations from the state. We may need to tweak our regulations.

iii. Open Space Updates – Mr. Sina
Sprecher swap and Urban Farms (King) were approved at town meeting on June 30. Mr. Bernard said there is a private cemetery there behind the house. Mr. Sina is donating a conservation easement to the town.
No update on the golf course property.

iv. Eightmile Committee Updates – Mr. Beard
Mr. Gillis and Mr. Capel went to a meeting about the Eight Mile River Watershed plan. Lyme, Salem, and East Haddam are in the watershed. The top priorities in the plan are invasive species, microplastics and PFAS in the water. These were not in the original plan. Autumn olive changes the soil chemistry and native plants cannot survive in it.

v. Sustainability Committee– Mr. Ponanski no update

8. New Business (b)
   a. New Bills none

   b. Discussion from Commission members
   We need more trail monitors, no replies to Mr. Sina's recent emails to them. Communication helps so that Mr. Gillis knows if someone has been there. Mr. Capel talked about the Agriculture Commission and the community garden. Mr. Gelston is going to find out who is in charge of the garden (not the Conservation Commission). Water is supplied to the garden by a water truck, but there is a question about who to call when it is empty. Rochelle

Davis (Agriculture Commission) has a plot at the community garden. She has set up an email account so that the gardeners can communicate. Mr. Gelston says there is a well on the property and it may be possible to get hand-pump for it.

9. **Public Comment** (can be submitted via email to ccchair@easthaddam.org
   None.

10. **Next Meeting:** Tuesday, 4 August, 2026, 7:00 PM, Meeting Room #1

11. **Adjournment**
    Motion to adjourn at 7:55 PM
    **Bernard/Gillis – Passed Unanimously.**

Respectfully Submitted,
Martha Hansen
Recording Secretary