East Haddam
CONSERVATION
COMMISSION

Conservation Commission Meeting Minutes
Date: Tuesday, August 4, 2026
Time: 7:00 PM
Location: Municipal Office Building, Room #1

1. Call to Order
The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Co-Chair Bernie Gillis

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

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

4. **Approval of Conservation Commission Minutes from 07 July 2026.**
Motion to approve the minutes as presented.
Capel/Bernard: Mr. Walls and Mr. Beard abstained. Motion passed.

5. Presentations from the Public: None

6. Chair's Updates

- Mr. Capel has been accepted into a Master Woodland Management class. He presented a receipt for $100 so he can be reimbursed for the cost. He is required to put together a woodlands survey at the end of the class and asked for suggestions from the commission about which area to survey.
- Mr. Walls wrote an article for Events magazine on trail and preserve maintenance.
- The East Haddam Land Trust will hold a fundraiser "Nutmeg 40" on October 11. It is a 40-mile off-road bike event on three town preserves. We need to

make sure the trails to be used are open and clear. The Land Trust's annual Musical Bridges concert fundraiser will be held on August 24, on the Goodspeed lawn.

- Mr. Sina said that after this meeting he will be stepping down as Co-Chair. Bernie Gillis will remain as Co-Chair. Mr. Sina asked how effective the goats were at removing brush on the Ayers Preserve. Mr. Beard responded that the goats ate a lot of the green leaves, which will make it easier to remove the woody stems. They did not eat the stilt grass.

7. Old Business

a. Subcommittee Updates

i. Stewardship and Forestry Updates – Mr. Gillis

Trees removed, trails cleared on the following:

Patrell Preserve – a huge tree fell on the ADA trail.
Harris blue trail
Gelston Easement
Lefebvre Reserve, trees down on red and blue trails
Rose Farm
Davison Reserve
Chapel Farm, two trees down, Carter family helped clean up.
Goodwin trail six or seven trees down
Roaring Brook
Kronberg - several trees down.
Lena

Sabine was hit hard by the July 4 storm. Lots of trees down, it will take a lot of work to clear them.
Weed whacked at the entrance to Gelston, put in a small bog bridge.
Silas Holmes – weed whacked around the kiosk.
Lena – weed whacked around the kiosk and into the two trails,
Robbie Road was OK.
Volunteered for set up and clean up at the town's America 250 event.
Volunteered for the Eight Mile summer program at Devils Hopyard
Cameron Beard is working on maps for Kronberg.

ii. Outreach and Promotion – Mr. Sina

Barry Bernard wrote an article on fungi, including pictures, for EH News. The article pointed out that there are many things we see that deserve a closer look. Gary Wilson talked with Amalia Shaltiel about more articles in the future with seasonal information, like what is in bloom, and partnering with the Sustainability Committee.
Cameron Beard said that we got some points towards the town's Gold Star award by helping East Lyme with their portion of the Goodwin Trail. As a

representative of the Conservation Commission, and Ralph Chapell as land steward of the Land Trust, they helped Lyme clear trails in Hartman Park. This should be reported to Amalia so she can add it to her list of regional cooperation. There is a bog bridge on Goodwin that is low in the middle and sinks when walked on. Installing swamp feet could help. Check with Ralph Chapell.

iii. Climate Resilience– Mr. Olin's report to Mr. Sina

a. Succor Brook and Village Flood Plain grant applications are pending reconsideration and reapplication in the coming months. John thanked Mr. Sina for his able chairmanship of the Conservation Commission over the past 2 years.

b. Liaison Reports

i. IWWC Updates – Mr. Walls/Mr. Capel
Mr. Walls said that the IWWC considered applications for a shed, a deck, a screened porch, and a few other things.

ii. P & Z Updates – Mr. Gillis – nothing new to report.

iii. Open Space Updates – Mr. Sina
As of July 21, the town has closed on the King (Urban Farms) and Sprecher properties. Jim Ventres needs to have several properties appraised and has found only one appraiser. DEEP sent him a list of appraisers and all but one has retired.
Mr. Sina is donating a conservation easement to the town - "Wally's Woods". He found an appraiser for it.

iv. Eightmile Committee Updates – Mr. Beard
DEEP's representative from the recreational trails division said they will be announcing recreational trail grants in early September. The Land Trust applied for a grant. Eightmile may be offering a tree felling course in late October.

v. Sustainability Committee– Mr. Ponanski no update

8. New Business (b)

a. New Bills

Motion to approve the bills as presented:
Shagbark Total $154.64. ($85.96 for chainsaw blade, pruners, silicone; $68.58 for pushpins, EGO chainsaw bar, fuel)

Reimbursement of $100 to Pat Capel, for the Master Woodland Management program.

Beard/Sina - Passed unanimously.

b. Discussion from Commission members – we hope to open the Rob Smith Trail tomorrow.

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

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

11. **Adjournment**
Motion to adjourn at 7:35 PM
Walls/Bernard – Passed Unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,
Martha Hansen
Recording Secretary

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