



# TOWN OF ELLINGTON

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**CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
TUESDAY, JULY 2, 2019, 7:00 PM  
TOWN HALL ANNEX, 57 MAIN STREET, ELLINGTON, CT**

**PRESENT:** Chairman Rebecca Quarno, Vice Chairman David Bidwell, Regular Members Sean Dwyer, Robert Zielfelder and George Nickerson, and Alternate Ann Harford

**ABSENT:** Regular Members James Gage and Laurie Burstein

**STAFF:** Lisa Houlihan, Town Planner and Acting Recording Clerk

**I. CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Rebecca Quarno called the meeting to order at 7:02 PM

**II. PUBLIC COMMENTS** (On Non-Agenda Items): None

**III. ACTIVE BUSINESS:**

- 1. Determination of open space for a 11.7 acre parcel for a two lot subdivision, Hoffman Road, APN 121-003-0000, Rural/Agricultural Residential (RAR) Zone, Curt & Jena Luginbuhl, owner/applicant.**

Eric Peterson of Gardner & Peterson and Curt Luginbuhl, owner, were present. Mr. Peterson reviewed the location of the proposed subdivision and the general layout of the development plan. They propose to meet open space requirements through an easement over land along Bahler's Brook located on the western portion of the property. Mr. Peterson explained how the proposed easement links to an existing conservation area over the Sullivan property to the south and to connect to potential open space over the Eastwood land to the west. The proposed easement will allow public access.

The Commission questioned the likelihood of the Eastwood land to be developed. Mr. Peterson explained his company was hired by the Eastwood's to design a residential development plan for their land off of Jobs Hill Road. The Eastwood's have received wetlands approval for a road crossing and there's an application pending permit from the Army Corp of Engineers. Given the amount of commitment already made by Eastwood, a plan to subdivide is expected. The Eastwood plan includes a right-of-way from the proposed new road for public access to open space that will connect with the Luginbuhl land.

**MOVED (DWYER) SECONDED (ZIELFELDER) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO RECOMMEND TO THE PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION A CONSERVATION EASEMENT ALONG THE WESTERN PORTION OF ASSESSOR PARCEL 121-003-0000 WITH PERPETUAL RIGHTS FOR PUBLIC ACCESS TO MEET OPEN SPACE REQUIREMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH A TWO LOT SUBDIVISION OF 11.7 ACRES, HOFFMAN ROAD, IN A RURAL/AGRICULTURAL RESIDENTIAL (RAR) ZONE, FOR CURT & JENA LUGINBUHL, OWNER/APPLICANT.**

- 2. Sustainable Ellington Initiative**
  - a. 2.5 Create a Natural Resource and Wildlife Inventory**

The Commission reviewed the City of Meriden's Natural Resource Inventory. They discussed other inventories found online ranging from basic to more extensive ones. The inventory from Meriden was prepared by a third party. They agreed to develop a basic inventory that can be expanded in the future if needed.

Vice Chairman Bidwell suggested seeking assistance from the Natural Resource Management division at UCONN. Commissioner Dwyer discussed the possibility of developing an inventory as a class project. Both Chairman Quarno and Vice Chairman Bidwell are UCONN alumni. Ms. Houlihan will contact the UCONN faculty about seeking their assistance with the project.

**b. 2.7 Provide Education on Water Conservation**

- **Email from Sean Dwyer dated June 12, 2019**
- **Email from Rebecca Quarno dated June 12, 2019**

Last month the Commission discussed organizing a booth at an upcoming Farmers' Market to promote water conservation. They discussed partnering with other organizations that specialize in water conservation and purchasing promotional items as booth giveaways. Ideas from Commissioner Dwyer and Chairman Quarno were discussed. The Commission reviewed the Eco Promotional Product, Inc. website. They support personalizing bookmarks and coloring books as booth giveaways. Booth materials should focus on residential water conservation topics.

Ms. Houlihan reached out to Connecticut Water (ConnWater) and the Director of Public Affairs will participate in October. Ms. Houlihan will connect with ConnWater and extend an invite for them to attend the September meeting.

The Farmers' Market Green Day is on October 5, 2019. Commissioner Harford will contact the Farmers' Market and reserve a booth for October.

Chairman Quarno will research quantities and lead-time, and provide Ms. Houlihan with the information.

**3. Update – Ellington Hockanum River Committee: Harford/Nickerson – Leads**  
**a. Ad Hoc Ellington Trails Committee – Monthly agenda/minutes**

Tom Palshaw, 120 Pinney Street, was present to talk about the Hockanum River Committee. He's been assisting the Committee with trail maintenance for over 2 years. He explained the challenges of maintaining vegetation along the trails. Volunteers use a combination of tools to perform maintenance. The town-supplied string trimmer has been repaired multiple times and needs to be replaced. The mower is good on smooth areas, but not useful for rough area. Mr. Palshaw provided the Commission with a handout of DR Trimmer Mower. He explained it can be used on flat and rough surfaces and can handle tougher jobs.

Mr. Palshaw spoke with the Department of Public Works (DPW) about purchasing the DR Trimmer. They like the product, but note Town Policy regarding use of power tools by volunteers. Mr. Palshaw explained that the DR Trimmer is essentially another mower like other equipment volunteers use. He's looking for support to purchase new equipment and agreed that policy should be followed.

Commissioner Harford explained the Committee has the funds to purchase the needed equipment. Trail volunteers wear safety glasses, gloves, and proper footwear.

Ms. Houlihan suggested that the matter be discussed with the Board of Selectmen (BOS) since it relates to Town Policy.

Chairman Quarno supports the use of power equipment by volunteers, noting the importance of wearing proper personal protective equipment. The other commissioners agreed. She suggested volunteers work with DPW & BOS regarding Town Policy.

Commissioner Harford explained maintenance efforts along West Road, near Nutmeg Drive, and the Franklin Trails. She explained that some trails have been installed within the Windermere Village development.

**4. Report - Working Farmland Preservation Program: Gage/Staff – Leads**

There was nothing to report.

**5. Report - Open Space Preservation Program: Gage – Lead**

Last month the Commission discussed the open space presentation regarding the Arens parcel made to the BOS in May. The BOS heard the matter in open session, but tabled action. The Commission expected the BOS to continue discussion in June, but the item did not appear on their agenda. The non-action demonstrates lack of support.

The BOS expressed concern with gunfire on state land that surrounds the Arens' property. The Commission questioned the expressed concern. Hunting is a common occurrence on open space lands, noting the shooting range near the Batz open space.

They discussed the characteristics of the Arens' property and how it's an ideal parcel to preserve. The open space fund has adequate funds to purchase Arens. The Commission expressed discouragement and would like direction from the BOS explaining what type of open space they'd approve. They feel the Arens' proposal should be forwarded for vote by the public.

The Commission supports reaching out to Ellington Trails Committee to discuss the proposal. Vice Chairman Bidwell is working with the Trail Committee on another project and will discuss the Arens' parcel with them. Chairman Quarno will share the open space presentation materials with Vice Chairman Bidwell.

**IV. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:**

**1. FY18-19 Budget Expenditure Update**

There was nothing to report.

**2. Approval of the June 4, 2019 regular meeting minutes**

**MOVED (DWYER) SECONDED (QUARNO) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF JUNE 4, 2019, AS WRITTEN.**

**3. Correspondence:**

- a. Oakridge Times, June 20, 2019

- b. Right to Farm Ordinance: Public Hearing and Town Meeting to discuss and vote, July 8, 2019, 7:00PM, Ellington Town Hall, 55 Main Street, Ellington, CT.
- c. The Habitat Winter/Spring 2019

**V. ADJOURNMENT:**

**MOVED (HARFORD) SECONDED (BIDWELL) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO  
ADJOURN THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING AT 8:36 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

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Lisa Houlihan  
Acting Recording Clerk