



TOWN OF ELLINGTON

55 MAIN STREET – PO BOX 187
ELLINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06029-0187
www.ellington-ct.gov
Tel. 860-870-3120 Town Planner Fax. 860-870-3122

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, AUGUST 6, 2019, 7:00 PM
TOWN HALL ANNEX, 57 MAIN STREET, ELLINGTON, CT**

PRESENT: Chairman Rebecca Quarno, Regular Members Sean Dwyer, Robert Zielfelder, James Gage, Laurie Burstein and George Nickerson, and Alternate Ann Harford

ABSENT: Vice Chairman David Bidwell

STAFF: Lisa Houlihan, Town Planner and Barbra Galovich, Recording Clerk

I. CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Rebecca Quarno called the meeting to order at 7:01pm.

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

III. ACTIVE BUSINESS:

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

Ms. Houlihan contacted UCONN seeking student resources to help with creating a Natural Resource and Wildlife Inventory. She is waiting to hear back from faculty at UCONN. She received an inquiry from an Ellington resident that's attending Kingswood Oxford and is looking to complete a local project about natural resources/conservation. She provided the student with information about the Commission's initiative to see if it's a project he's is looking for.

The Commission reviewed the City of Meriden's Natural Resource Inventory. The Commission will review the introduction section next month. Ms. Houlihan will have an editable version of this section to work on during the next meeting.

- b. 2.7 Provide Education on Water Conservation

Ms. Houlihan confirmed that Dan Meaney, Director of Public Affairs from Connecticut Water Company will attend next month's meeting to discuss the booth they will host at the Farmers' Market Green Day on October 5, 2019. The Commission reviewed the Eco Promotional Product, Inc. website. They support personalized magnets and/or coloring books as booth giveaways. Ms. Houlihan will seek costs and provide the information next month.

According to Commissioner Harford, Ms. Diane Trueb from the Farmers' Market will advertise in next month's newsletter that the Conservation Commission will have a booth on October 5, 2019. The Commission needs to provide Ms. Trueb with a description of what their booth will highlight.

2. 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's efforts and challenges of maintaining vegetation along the trails. He showed pictures of the amount of vegetative growth along the West Road trail during peak summer months within a two to three week period of time. He explained that volunteers use a combination of tools to perform maintenance. He spoke about the Town's insurance policy restricting use of power tools by volunteers. Mr. Palshaw explained the DR Trimmer they are looking to purchase is similar to other equipment volunteers use. He's looking for support to purchase new equipment and a referral to the Board of Selectmen. He agreed that town policy needs to be discussed.

Commissioner Harford explained maintenance efforts are mainly performed by volunteers during the week.

MOVE (HARFORD), SECONDED (DWYER) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO REQUEST THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN TO AUTHORIZE THE PURCHASE OF A DR TRIMMER FOR USE BY THE ELLINGTON HOCKANUM RIVER COMMITTEE VOLUNTEERS FOR MAINTENANCE OF TRAILS.

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

Ms. Houlihan stated Oakridge Dairy has applied for a large portion of their properties to be under the Farmland Preservation Program. She explained that the bond authorization from 2007 has expired and requested a referral be sent to the Board of Selectmen asking for a renewal of the 2007 approval with a question on the November election ballot for the public to vote on.

MOVE (GAGE), SECONDED (HARFORD) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO SEND A LETTER TO THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN REQUESTING THAT A BOND ITEM BE PLACED ON THE NOVEMBER ELECTION BALLOT ASKING:

“SHALL THE TOWN OF ELLINGTON APPROPRIATE \$1,000,000 AND AUTHORIZE THE ISSUE OF BONDS AND NOTES IN THE SAME AMOUNT FOR THE ACQUISITION OF PARCELS OF LAND DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS, EASEMENTS, INTERESTS OR RIGHTS THEREIN FOR PRESERVATION OF WORKING FARMLAND?”

4. Report - Open Space Preservation Program: Gage – Lead

a. Sean Dwyer email dated 7-5-2019 – Shenipsit State Forest Trails System

The Commission reviewed a colored map of the Shenipsit State Forest and privately owned parcels around the forest they would like to recommend the town purchase when the property owners decide to sell. One of these parcels is the Arens property which the Commission recommended to the Board of Selectmen in May and they tabled action. The Arens property has direct access to Route 83 which could provide parking and a gateway into the state forest without citizens driving to another town to access the Shenipsit. The Commission discussed the Pearl and Brady parcels. Title issues are in the process of being cleared up for Pearl. The Brady's are asking too much money for their parcel.

Commissioner Gage is currently working on obtaining a grant through the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection Department (DEEP) with Northern Connecticut

Land Trust (NCLT) on the Wraight property off of Webster Road. If the grant is awarded, NCLT will approach the Board of Selectmen about being a funding partner.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:

1. FY 19-20 Budget Expenditure Update
 - a. CT Land Conservation Council – 2019-2020 Organizational Membership

MOVED (GAGE) SECONDED (ZIELFELDER) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE CT LAND CONSERVATION COUNCIL 2019-2020 ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERSHIP FOR \$250.00.

- b. CACIWC Membership Renewal (July 1, 2019 thru June 30, 2020)

MOVED (GAGE) SECONDED (ZIELFELDER) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE CACIWC MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL (JULY 1, 2019 THRU JUNE 30, 2020) for \$60.00.

2. Approval of the July 2, 2019 regular meeting minutes

MOVED (HARFORD) SECONDED (DWYER) AND PASSED (GAGE ABSTAINED) TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF JULY 2, 2019, AS WRITTEN.

IV. Correspondence:

- a. Oakridge Times, July 23, 2019

V. ADJOURNMENT:

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

Respectfully submitted,

Barbra Galovich, Recording Clerk