

**TOWN OF HADDAM
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
COMMUNITY CENTER
7 CANDLEWOOD HILL ROAD, HIGGANUM
WEDNESDAY, 24 SEPTEMBER 2014
UNAPPROVED MINUTES
*Subject to Approval by the Commission***

ATTENDANCE

X	Walter Bragoni, Vice Chairman
A	Ian Gibson
X	Mardi Hanson-d'Alessandro
X	Gail Reynolds, Chairman
X	Deb Umba
A	Tom Worthley
X	Liz West Glidden, Town Planner
X	Bunny Hall Batzner, Recording Clerk

1. Call to Order

Mrs. Reynolds called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Attendance

Attendance was taken.

3. Approval of Agenda

Add: Under New Business – b. Right to Farm.

MOTION: Mardi Hanson made a motion to approve the 24 September 2014 agenda as amended. Walter Bragoni seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Approval of Minutes

Corrections to the 27 August 2014 minutes: page 1, Old Business, a. Open Space, Geo-Referencing of Conservation Easements, second line – delete “Service” and third line between “use” and “ArcView” – add “more efficient geo-referencing in”; and page 2, New Business, a. Communications/Publications/Correspondence, first sentence – change “Society magazine” to “State of the Birds Report”.

MOTION: Deb Umba made a motion to approve the 27 August 2014 minutes as amended. Mardi Hanson seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

5. Public Comment

Ed Munster thanked the Commission for all their hard work.

6. Old Business

a. Open Space

Preserving/Managing Open Space Presentation – Mrs. Reynolds reported that she had received an email from Liz Glidden, Town Planner, in regard to a presentation by Fred Carstensen, Professor of Finance and Economics Director, Connecticut Center for Economic Analysis, UConn, to be held on

Wednesday, 29 October 2014, Chester Town Hall, Upstairs Meeting Room, 203 Middlesex Ave., Chester, 7:00-8:00 p.m., sponsored by the Chester Conservation Commission. Mrs. Reynolds distributed fliers pertaining to this presentation.

Lower Connecticut River Land Trust Exchange Group - Mrs. Reynolds reported that the group has decided not to share the information outside of conservation commissions and land trusts as they still want to get feedback to see if the document is useable. Mrs. Reynolds also reported that the document is not available online.

Mrs. Reynolds reviewed the group's executive summary and some of the maps. Mrs. Reynolds gave a brief summary of the project for Mr. Munster's and Mrs. Glidden's benefit. Mrs. Reynolds will make arrangements to discuss the matter further with Mrs. Glidden.

Connecticut Yankee (CY) Conservation Project – Mrs. Reynolds reported that Jim McHutchison and Stanford Brainerd provided an update on this project at the Exchange Group meeting and that CY isn't ready to sell to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Mrs. Glidden reported that she had received a letter from DEEP releasing CY from their monitoring obligations as they have fulfilled their decommissioning requirements. A public hearing was held in August in Haddam Neck pertaining to this matter. Mr. Munster asked if he could obtain a copy of the letter. Mrs. Glidden stated yes, that the information is public knowledge.

Mr. Bragoni asked about the spent fuel rods still being on site and the need for continuing monitoring of them. Mrs. Glidden stated that the monitoring is done by the federal government. Discussion followed in regard the current storage of the rods, tax assessment, and whether there's a potential for this area to become a storage area for outside spent contamination.

Geo-Referencing of Conservation Easements – Mrs. Reynolds reported that she attended a Land Trust Alliance National Conference and spoke to people who work in mapping municipal conservation easements. Mrs. Reynolds stated that it unclear at this time whether she can obtain help from them or not.

Mrs. Reynolds also reported that the mapping of the conservation easements is going slowly for her and she will look into filing for a grant to hire someone to do the work. Mrs. Glidden offered her assistance in filing for a grant.

b. Budget

Mrs. Reynolds reported that the Commission has \$1,000. Discussion followed in regard to the fees for CACIWC and other publications and memberships. Mrs. Reynolds stated that she had received a letter indicating that the CACIWC fees have not been paid. Mrs. Glidden stated she thought the fees had been paid and will look into the matter. Mrs. Glidden suggested leveraging the current funding into potentially obtaining additional funding. Discussion followed in regard to using the \$1,000 as a match for grant funding.

Mrs. Reynolds stated that she would like to take photos of all the bicycle racks that have been purchased by the Commission and write an article for submission to Haddam Now.

Mrs. Glidden reported that she had received an email from Liz Bazazi in regard to the Higganum Walking Path that Tom Worthley and Eric Boardman had worked on. Mrs. Reynolds will provide paperwork to Mrs. Glidden. A brief discussion followed.

c. Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) Update

Mrs. Reynolds reported that she believes the Land Trust Exchange document would make a good contribution to the POCD. Mrs. Glidden reported that the POCD will be updated in 2018 and the funding

has been put into the capital budget. Mrs. Reynolds stated that she would like to see a layer showing agricultural soils be added to the mapping should the document be added to the POCD.

d. Higganum Center Master Plan

Mrs. Glidden reported that the question became whether there will be public infrastructure (water/sewer) in Higganum and that it's difficult to create a master plan without knowing this. Mrs. Glidden also reported that there was discussion in regard to doing a cost benefit analysis with and without sewer or a self-contained system. Mrs. Glidden stated that it's unclear at this time where this plan stands.

Incentive Housing Zone (IHZ) – Mrs. Glidden reported that the town has received a \$20,000 grant to help fund this project; that P&Z has selected a consultant to do a housing study (approval by Board of Selectmen still required), to create an IHZ district, and to select a couple of parcels based on soils/septic; and that there will be a number of public meetings over the next year or so to provide and obtain information. Mrs. Glidden stated that she hopes there will be some diversity in housing to allow empty nesters and singles to remain in or move into town. Discussion followed in regard to what affordable housing is – 20 percent of the housing in a particular development would need to be at 80 percent of the state median income (about \$45,000 per year); Ferry Crossing, the affordable housing complex in Old Saybrook; and the possibility of preference ratings to veterans, emergency service personnel, etc.

Mr. Munster asked if federal money was involved noting that when High Meadow Senior Housing was initially being considered, the thought was to give priority to Haddam residents; but at some point when federal funding came into play, the thought went to the wayside. Mrs. Glidden stated there are no federal funds at this time; however, it would depend on the type of financing the developer obtained.

7. New Business

a. Communications/Publications/Correspondence

Mrs. Reynolds noted that a letter concerning the CACIWC fees was discussed previously and reviewed a letter from the Connecticut Land Conservation Council (CLCC) thanking the Commission for joining their membership and providing a list of upcoming workshops.

b. Right to Farm

As Mrs. Umba had been absent from several meetings, Mrs. Reynolds gave a brief overview of previous discussion concerning this matter including Mr. Gibson's concerns and that the Commission had agreed to table the matter.

Mrs. Umba reported that she has done considerable research, that a number of towns have adopted Right to Farm ordinances, and that she had crafted an ordinance. Mrs. Umba stated that she believes the wording should be very broad and not limit what is or isn't a farm, but rather what's outlined under the state statutory definitions of agriculture and farming. Mrs. Umba stated that the goal of having a Right to Farm Ordinance is to declare Haddam's support of local farms and not to be restrictive. Mrs. Umba also stated that she felt there should be consideration given to going beyond Connecticut's borders.

Mrs. Reynolds asked Mrs. Umba if she had drafted an ordinance. Mrs. Umba stated yes, and distributed copies of Connecticut General Statute 19a-341, the draft ordinance, and Connecticut General Statute 1-1(q) Definition of Agriculture.

Mrs. Glidden asked which towns had adopted an ordinance. Mrs. Umba did not have the list, but would provide the names to Mrs. Glidden. Mrs. Glidden asked if Mrs. Umba had contacted the River CoG as they have a committee pertaining to this topic. Mrs. Umba stated that she had not contacted them. Discussion followed in regard to the wording merely being an affirmation; however, there was concern over the potential of creating a problem.

Mrs. Glidden stated that she will speak to Jim Ventres, Town Planner, East Haddam, and Mike O'Leary, Town Planner, Hebron, to see how they have been handling this matter and get back to the Commission.

8. Land Use Dept. Report

Mrs. Glidden reported on the following:

Higganum Center Bridge Replacement – It appears as if work will begin sometime in April/May of 2015. Clearing of trees is taking place in order to reset utility poles. A series of public hearings will be held to update the public on the process.

New Pharmacy, 12 Killingworth Road – Plans have been received for review by the Architectural Review Committee. The plans indicate that Duffy's Pub will be razed and a new structure constructed.

Higganum Cove Remediation – Work is moving forward and could be completed by December.

CTDOT Repair Garage, Higganum – The facility will be moving to Colchester to the new super garage. The town is interested in obtaining the property from the state. Underground tanks still need to be removed.

Signs – A number of complaints have been received and they are being reviewed. P&Z will be reviewing their sign regulations. A brief discussion followed in regard to the possible need for a town notification sign and notification of residents in the event of an emergency.

Mrs. Reynolds asked Mrs. Glidden when P&Z receives an application that is conservation oriented, that the Commission be notified to allow time to review prior to a decision being made by P&Z.

9. Adjournment

MOTION: Mardi Hanson made a motion to adjourn. Walter Bragoni seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bunny Hall Batzner

Bunny Hall Batzner
Recording Clerk

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, 29 October 2014.