



TOWN OF ELLINGTON

55 MAIN STREET – PO BOX 187
ELLINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06029-0187

www.ellington-ct.gov

TEL. (860) 870-3120 TOWN PLANNER'S OFFICE FAX (860) 870-3122

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, MAY 1, 2018, 7:00 P.M.
TOWN HALL ANNEX, 57 MAIN STREET, ELLINGTON, CT**

PRESENT: Chairman Rebecca Quarno, Vice Chairman David Bidwell, Regular Members James Gage, George Nickerson, and Robert Zielfelder, and Alternate Ann Harford

ABSENT: Regular Members Sean Dwyer and Chris Hattin

STAFF

PRESENT: Lisa Houlihan, Town Planner and Samantha Getchell, Recording Clerk

I. CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Rebecca Quarno called the Conservation Commission meeting to order at 7:02 PM, at Ellington Town Hall Annex, 57 Main Street, Ellington CT.

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS (On Non-Agenda Items): Rachel Dearborn, commissioner on the new Trails Commission, attended the Conservation Commission to speak about new projects being worked on by the Trails Commission. Ms. Dearborn reported they are presently working on creating a one mile loop between the intersection of Route 140 and Hopkins Road, on property owned by the town. The trail is just a walking trail with bridges wide enough to walk across, and no ATV access. The Trail Commission is also looking at property by Crystal Ridge, Grassy Hill, and Hoffman Road by Bridge Street, behind the brush dump area, for potential trails. Ms. Dearborn informed the Conservation Commission they are trying to encourage neighborhoods and the public to maintain the trails. Commissioner Harford asked how the trails will be advertised. Ms. Dearborn confirmed efforts by volunteers and noted use of Facebook and at town events. Ms. Dearborn informed the Commission there are monthly walks scheduled from now until the end of the year of which are announced on Facebook and at the library. Ms. Dearborn informed the Commission about a project in the works to create a running trail around Brookside Park with exercise stations. Lisa Houlihan, Town Planner, noted the opportunity for the Trails Committee and Hockanum River Trail Committee to collaborate on projects and pool volunteer efforts.

III. ACTIVE BUSINESS:

1. Sustainable Initiatives: Bidwell/Staff – Leads
 - a. Sustainable CT – Master Action List

Ms. Houlihan informed the Commission the Board of Selectmen passed a resolution on April 16th to become a Sustainable CT Town, authorizing First Selectman Lori Spielman to be the Sustainable contact person. Within 90 days the First Selectman has to create a Sustainability Team.

Ms. Houlihan referred back to prior meetings, and asked the Commission to go over the Master Action List and highlight some priorities that could be applicable for the Conservation Commission to complete. Chairman Quarno suggested that some of the actions can be collaborated on by many different groups like creating a natural resources and wildlife inventory could be accomplished in conjunction with the Trails Commissions. Ms. Houlihan noted that some of the actions on the Master Action List have already been completed by the Commission including: creating an open space plan, protecting agricultural land, preservation of open space, etc. Ms. Houlihan suggested making a priority list with actions that can be or have been completed by the Conservation Commission including actions: 2.4, 2.7, 2.5, 2.10, 4.3, and 6.8. Ms. Houlihan confirmed she is going to create a sub list from the Master Action List with items potentially completed and things that can be completed in the future.

2. Update – Ellington Hockanum River Trail Commission: Harford/Nickerson – Leads

Commissioner Harford reported to the Commission there is a video featuring the making of the suspended bridge in Vernon. Ms. Houlihan confirmed she will bring a projector for the Commission to watch the video at the next meeting. Ms. Harford confirmed that trail volunteers are starting this week to knock down the Knottweeds. Commissioner Harford reported there are two trees in the river blocking way for kayaks to get through which they are going to try to remove.

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

Ms. Houlihan presented a draft letter she created for the Conservation Commission to approve to be sent out to large property owners with soil that is approved for the preservation program. The Commission approved the draft letter.

Ms. Houlihan reported that she received a quote from Seth Bahler that she will add to the letter being sent out to land owners.

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

Ms. Houlihan reported that the realtor continues to let the town know that Mr. Arens is still interested in his property being considered for open space purchase. Nothing more to report on this topic.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:

1. FY17-18 Budget Expenditure Update

Commissioner Harford expressed needs for gloves and poison ivy spray, most likely costing \$100.00. The Commission agreed to make a motion on the FY17-18 Budget Expenditure.

MOVED (QUARNO) SECONDED (BIDWELL) (PASSED UNANIMOUSLY) TO AUTHORIZE EXPENDITURE OF APPROXIMATELY \$100 FROM CONTRACTED SERVICES FOR GLOVES, POISON IVY SPRAY, AND OTHER MISCELLANEOUS MAINTENANCE SUPPLIES FOR THE HOCKANUM RIVER TRAIL COMMISSION.

2. Approval of the April 3, 2018 regular meeting minutes

MOVED (GAGE) SECONDED (ZIELFELDER) (PASSED 6 YES, 0 NAY, 0 ABSTENTIONS) TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES AS WRITTEN.

3. Correspondence:

- a. The Habitat Winter/Spring 2018
- b. Oakridge Times, 2018

NO MOTIONS OR DECISIONS.

V. ADJOURNMENT:

MOVED (HARFORD) SECONDED (QUARNO) (PASSED UNANIMOUSLY) TO ADJOURN THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING AT 8:08PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Samantha Getchell, Recording Clerk