



STATE OF CONNECTICUT – COUNTY OF TOLLAND
INCORPORATED 1786

TOWN OF ELLINGTON

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CONSERVATION COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, MARCH 2, 2021, 7:00 PM ZOOM MEETING

PRESENT: Chairman Rebecca Quarno, Vice Chairman David Bidwell, Regular Members Robert Zielfelder, Sean Dwyer, George Nickerson and James Gage

ABSENT: Regular Member Laurie Burstein and Alternates Ann Harford and Jessica Fay

STAFF: Lisa Houlihan, Town Planner and Christine Post, Recording Clerk

I. CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Rebecca Quarno called the Conservation Commission meeting to order at 7:06 PM.

I. PUBLIC COMMENTS (On Non-Agenda Items): NONE

II. ACTIVE BUSINESS:

1. Sustainable Ellington Initiative

a. 2.5 Create a Natural Resource and Wildlife Inventory – Draft dated March 2, 2021

Ms. Houlihan reviewed the final draft of the Natural Resource and Wildlife Inventory with the commission and Chairman Quarno opened it to the commission for any comments or edits to discuss. The commissioners thanked the staff for all their hard work and expressed there were no further changes needed.

MOVED (GAGE) SECONDED (BIDWELL) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE NATURAL RESOURCE AND WILDLIFE INVENTORY DATED MARCH 2, 2021.

b. 2.7 Provide Education on Water Conservation

Ms. Houlihan reported that the newsletter in April will include the Conservation Commission's Water Conservation Tips guide.

c. Plan of Conservation and Development: Chapter 4 – Conservation Strategies, Natural Resource Preservation

Ms. Houlihan addressed the commission regarding the Sustainable Ellington Initiative on the commission's agenda and suggested focusing on the initiatives that have to do with conservation strategies and natural resource preservation by amending the Conservation Commission's Active Business to replace the Sustainable Ellington Initiative with the Plan of Conservation and Development, Chapter 4. Part of Chapter 4 addresses prioritizing parcels the commission would like to protect as open space

and farmland preservation. The commission agreed and in preparation of next month's meeting, the commissioners will review Chapter 4 and pick their top 2 items for discussion as to what the commission should start working on. Ms. Houlihan added that the Right to Farm Ordinance was passed December 2019, and the farm winery brewery distillery and cidery regulation has also been adopted.

BY CONSENSUS, AGREED TO AMEND ACTIVE BUSINESS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS AND REPLACE SUSTAINABLE ELLINGTON INITIATIVE WITH PLAN OF CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT CHAPTER 4 - CONSERVATION STRATEGIES, NATURAL RESOURCE PRESERVATION.

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

a. Ad Hoc Ellington Trails Committee – Monthly agenda/minutes

Valerie Amsel updated the commissioners regarding the Ellington Trails Committee's upcoming activity including setting up new trails out past Crystal Lake. She reviewed the progress made last summer at the Batz property and stated that this year's focus will be the amphitheater project. The Trails Committee has also been trying to get plowing of parking at Batz accomplished to make the trails accessible during the winter months.

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

Ms. Houlihan updated the commission that Oakridge Dairy received Town Meeting approval for their farmland preservation applications for land generally located on Jobs Hill and Hoffman Roads and now the State of Connecticut and Town of Ellington can work on administrative matters and legal documents. She also reported that Oakridge Dairy received approval from both the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Wetlands Commission for their anaerobic digester and can begin pulling permits to construct in the spring.

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

Commissioner Gage reported that the Connecticut Land Trust received a package from the Department of Energy and Environment Protection (DEEP) outlining requirements for the Wraight open space preservation property. The Land Trust has satisfied the requirements and sent same to the DEEP.

III. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:

1. FY 20-21 Budget Expenditure Update

Nothing new to report.

2. Approval of the December 1, 2020 regular meeting minutes

MOVED (GAGE) SECONDED (ZIELFELDER) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF DECEMBER 1, 2020 AS WRITTEN.

3. Election of Officers

Chairman Position:

MOVED (GAGE) SECONDED (DWYER) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO NOMINATE COMMISSIONER QUARNO FOR CHAIRMAN OF THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION FOR 2021.

**COMMISSIONER QUARNO ACCEPTED THE NOMINATION.
HEARING NO FURTHER NOMINATIONS, NOMINATIONS WERE CLOSED.**

MOVED (DWYER) SECONDED (ZIELFELDER) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ELECT COMMISSIONER QUARNO FOR CHAIRMAN OF THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION FOR 2021.

Vice Chairman Position:

MOVED (QUARNO) SECONDED (DWYER) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO NOMINATE COMMISSIONER BIDWELL FOR VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION FOR 2021.

**COMMISSIONER BIDWELL ACCEPTED THE NOMINATION.
HEARING NO FURTHER NOMINATIONS, NOMINATIONS WERE CLOSED.**

MOVED (ZIELFELDER) SECONDED (QUARNO) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ELECT COMMISSIONER BIDWELL FOR VICE CHAIRMAN OF THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION FOR 2021.

4. Correspondence:

a. Northern Connecticut Land Trust, Inc. Annual Report 2019-2020

b. Thank you note from CT Land Conservation Council for membership contribution.

IV. ADJOURNMENT:

MOVED (BIDWELL) SECONDED (GAGE) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING AT 7:44 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Post, Recording Clerk