



STATE OF CONNECTICUT – COUNTY OF TOLLAND  
INCORPORATED 1786  
**TOWN OF ELLINGTON**

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**CONSERVATION COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING AGENDA  
TUESDAY, MARCH 12, 2024, 7:00 PM**

**ONLINE MEETING, INSTRUCTIONS TO JOIN PROVIDED BELOW**

**I. CALL TO ORDER:**

**II. PUBLIC COMMENTS (On Non-Agenda Items):**

**III. ACTIVE BUSINESS:**

1. Review Plan of Conservation & Development, Chapter 4-Conservation Strategies, Natural Resource Preservation.
2. Review Sustainable CT Certification Actions - Conservation Sections.
  - 5.5 Inventory and Assess Historic Resources.
  - 5.6 Streamline Solar Permitting for Small Solar Installations.
3. Report - Farmland Preservation Program.
4. Report - Open Space Preservation Program.

**IV. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:**

1. FY 23-24 Budget & Expenditure Update.
2. Approval of January 9, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes.
3. Election of Officers.
4. Correspondence/Discussion:
  - a. Hartford Courant Article on Oakridge Dairy.
  - b. February 5, 2024, letter from the CT Siting Council for Petition 1589 for a 3MW solar facility at 360 Somers Road, vote to issue declaratory ruling failed.
  - c. Ad Hoc Ellington Trails Committee - Monthly Agendas/Minutes.
  - d. North Central Conservation District 2024 Spring Plant & Seedling Sale.

**V. ADJOURNMENT:**

*Next Meeting is April 9, 2024*

The February 13, 2024, meeting will be conducted solely by electronic equipment using the online video conferencing service provider Zoom, unless written request for in-person accommodation is received by the Ellington Planning Department not less than 24 hours prior to the meeting date. As provided by statute, members of the public attending electronic meetings will be provided with the same opportunity to participate as in-person meetings. Online meeting attendance details are listed below. The agenda is posted on the Ellington webpage ([www.ellington-ct.gov](http://www.ellington-ct.gov)) under Agenda & Minutes, Conservation Commission.

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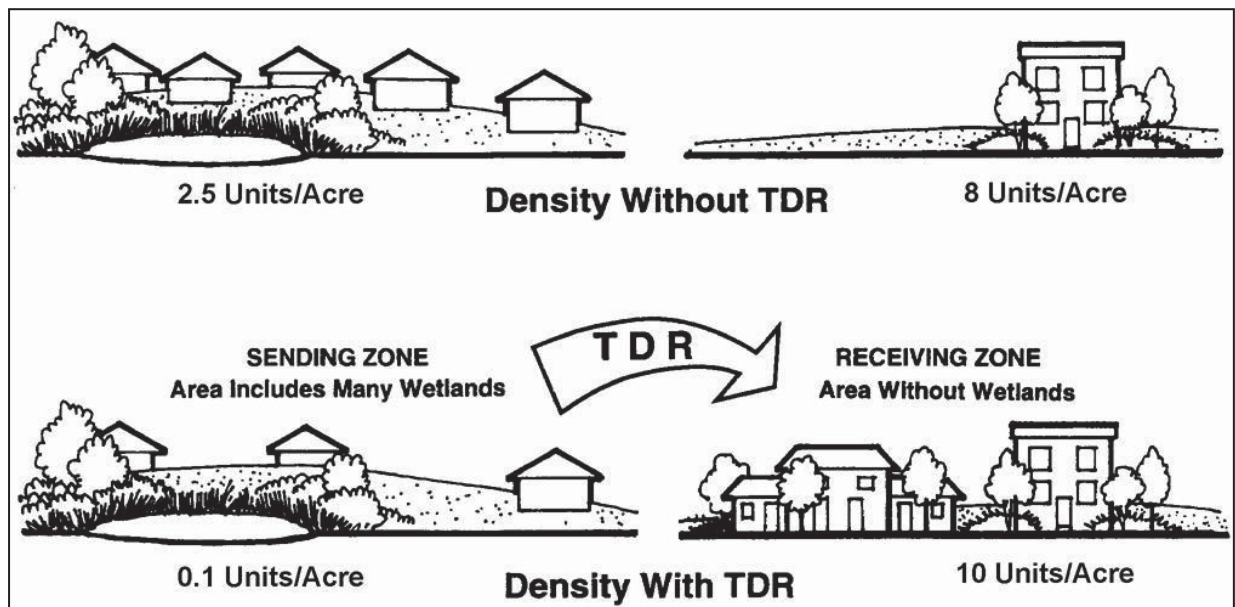
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COMMISSIONERS: TO ASSIST IN ESTABLISHING QUORUMS REQUIRED TO CONDUCT MEETINGS, PLEASE CONTACT THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND A SCHEDULED MEETING.

## **Transfer of Development Rights**

A zoning technique known as Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) offers additional opportunity to preserve open space without any capital outlay by the Town. To establish a program of TDR the official zoning map would need to be amended to include both “transfer in” and “transfer out” areas. Transfer- in areas represent those parcels where higher density development may be appropriate. Transfer-out areas represent undeveloped parcels of land which have been identified as having the highest priority for preservation. Some of the properties may include those identified by the Commission as a refinement to the Conservation Commission’s Plan of Conservation as discussed earlier in this chapter. The Commission retains maximum control as it is responsible to determine in advance which properties receive the

highest priority for preservation and which properties are appropriate for higher density development. In addition, a special permit is required. A great advantage of a TDR program is that it results in land preservation at no cost to the taxpayer. Designated “transfer out” properties can include both undeveloped land as well as property being used for agricultural purposes. If the transfer out parcel includes farmland, this land may remain in the ownership of the farmer following the sale of development rights, subject to a conservation easement, and may be sold in the future and used for similar purposes. Exhibit 4-1 shows a schematic of the mechanics of TDR.



**Exhibit 4-1: The Mechanics of TDR**

Source: Michigan Department of Environmental Quality

A TDR program by its nature does add complexity to a potential development application. Perhaps the most significant is that it requires a developer to obtain an interest in two or more (noncontiguous) parcels of land. A developer must secure an interest in land he/she wishes to develop, as well as an interest in land to be preserved (where development rights may be transferred out). The economics must be favorable enough for a developer to pursue such a transaction, given the added costs in time and uncertainty when compared to a more conventional development application. Accordingly, TDR regulations must be carefully crafted when establishing a formula for the transfer of rights between transfer out (sending) and transfer in (receiving) parcels. It may be prudent to offer a small increase in density to be assigned to the transfer-out parcel.

TDR traditionally involves the transfer of the potential residential development in the transfer-out parcel to added residential development assigned to the transfer-in parcel. It is possible, however, to also develop a formula which permits the transfer of potential residential development in exchange for additional commercial density in commercial zoning districts. As an example, a town in Massachusetts allows an additional 2,000 square foot increment in building size plus a potential increase in lot coverage for every acre of farmland preserved. It may be appropriate to utilize a concept like this in the permitting of compact commercial development in Ellington Village Center. These ideas are also discussed in Chapter 6: Housing Strategies and Chapter 7: Economic Development.

### **Considerations/Strategies**

#### ***Adopt a Transfer of Development Rights program (TDR)***

The Commission may consider adopting a TDR program through its Zoning Regulations to achieve the preservation of additional open space in targeted areas and increased residential densities in locations deemed appropriate by the Commission. Such an approach results in land preservation without capital expenditure by the Town. However, such an approach does add a level of complexity for a potential developer. As a result, careful thought must be given in developing the metrics of the transfer formula with enough incentive, such that a potential developer is encouraged to pursue this option over a conventional subdivision.

## Open Space or Cluster Subdivision

In 2011 Ellington adopted a density-based zoning regulation which establishes a maximum lot yield of either 0.5 or 0.6 homes per acre and minimum lot size of 40,000 square feet (except for 25,000 square feet in the lake residential zone with access to public water and sewer.) Under this regulation lots must average between 1.6 and 2 acres in size. (See sections 3.2.1 and 3.2.2 of the Ellington Zoning Regulations for more detail.

If soils are suitable or public sewers are available, the PZC may permit a reduction in lot size of 32,000 square feet. In this event overall density must still comply with the 0.5 or 0.6 requirement. To date (since 2011) there have not been any requests to seek a lot reduction to 32,000 square feet. The PZC may wish to consider an amendment to this density-based regulation aimed at the preservation of significant tracts of open space.

The following might be considered:

- Offering greater density and reduced dimensional standards when more than ten(10) acres of open space is preserved (in addition to the 10% open space requirement in subdivision regulations.) The PZC is to retain discretion on the location, shape and quality of the open space.
- Reduction in road width where the PZC determines that public roads are not required for overall road circulation and private roads are proposed.
- Identify individual parcels or areas where an open space subdivision would be preferred over a traditional large lot subdivision. In these locations permit an open space subdivision as of right and require a special permit for a traditional project. Factors to consider in identifying locations for an open space subdivision can include:
  - The presence of unique natural resources especially worthy of preservation (steep slopes, floodplain, wetlands, endangered species habitat)
  - Land which has been identified as having the highest priority for open space preservation
  - Proximity to other protected open space assets to add to areas of unfragmented open space

### Considerations/Strategies

- Consider zoning amendments to Article 3 of the zoning regulations that would award a density bonus and reduction in required dimensional standards where significant amounts of open space are preserved well beyond minimum requirements established in the subdivision regulations.
- Consider identifying certain parcels or areas where an open space subdivision would be allowed as of right and where a traditional large lot subdivision would be allowed by special permit. Preparing a list of properties with the highest priority for preservation discussed in this chapter could also be used as the basis for this alternative approach.

## Historic Preservation



The preservation of significant historic structures contributes to the quality of life of Ellington residents in many ways. The Connecticut Trust for Historic Preservation states:

“Connecticut cities and towns are defined by the history of human impact on both the natural environment and the built environment. Rural or urban, coastal or hill town, industrial center or suburb—each of the state’s 169 cities and towns has a distinct character derived in part from the buildings, sites, and structures that represent the heritage of that community. Preserving community character enriches the lives of Connecticut residents and adds vitality to neighborhoods and downtowns.”

The 2008 POCD discussed several steps which may be undertaken to identify and help preserve important historic structures. These recommendations have not been accomplished to date. These recommendations are still relevant and are incorporated into this plan.

As a first step, the Town should consider hiring a consultant to conduct a historic resource inventory. Grants are available through the State Historic Preservation Office. A consultant must be selected that meets certain qualifications established by the U.S. Secretary of the Interior. Following this, the Town may decide what additional steps to take to add various levels of protection to these structures. These measures range from honorary to regulatory. They include listing on the National Register of Historic Places, State Register of Historic Places, and/or the creation of a local historic district.

### Considerations/Strategies

- Implement the various historic preservation strategies outlined in the 2008 POCD. Begin by conducting an inventory of historic structures.
- Consider adopting a demolition/delay ordinance which would impose a 30-day delay on owners seeking a permit to demolish a structure identified on the Town’s inventory. Give preservation groups an opportunity to negotiate privately with the owner for acquisition and possible adaptive reuse.



**Goal: Preserve Historic Resources**

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Ellington, like many New England communities, has a long and rich history. Yet there is little official documentation of historic buildings and sites within the town. Some historic resources which are readily identifiable include:

- The McKinstry House (1730), thought to be the oldest house in town;
- The Pinney House, currently being nominated for the National Register;
- The Ellington Center Historic District, listed as a National Register District;
- Kneseth Israel Synagogue, listed on the National Register; and
- The Nellie McKnight Museum, operated by the Ellington Historical Society.

*Preserving historic resources can protect community character and preserve Ellington’s historic legacy.*

**Nellie McKnight Museum**



A professional inventory of Ellington’s historic resources is badly needed. The Commission on Culture and Tourism, Historical Preservation and Museum Division, currently provides grants for the full cost of an inventory of historic buildings and sites. Once the full extent of historical resources is known, the Town can decide on the scope and scale of preservation efforts.

*Strategy: Secure State funds and conduct a town- wide historic resource inventory.*

## Potential Preservation Programs

There are numerous approaches to historic preservation including, to name but a few:

- The establishment of historic districts;
- Incentives in zoning regulations to preserve buildings; and
- Demolition delay ordinances.

## Historic Resources



No one program is right for all communities. The various programs that can be employed are discussed below.

### Historic Districts

In order to exercise regulatory control over the architectural integrity of historic resources, property owners within historic areas would need to vote to establish a local historic district. A Historic District Commission, appointed by the Board of Selectmen, would then adopt and administer regulations requiring a Certificate of Appropriateness for certain exterior architectural improvements within a district that are visible from a public street. While the scope of regulations may vary from one district to another, the intent should be to ensure that improvements do not harm the architectural character of individual properties or the surrounding district. Property owners within local historic districts often appreciate the protection of their investment in maintaining and rehabilitating their properties offered by the assurance of continued historic and architectural integrity of neighboring properties.

*Strategy: Explore the appropriateness of establishing Local Historic Districts.*

#### Historic District Myths

Local Historic District Commissions can prohibit the installation of handicapped access ramps or fire escapes.

- ⊘ Commissions cannot prohibit the permitted installation of features required to protect health and safety.

Historic District Designation will lower the value of homes.

- ⊘ Studies have shown that both national and local historic district designations can stabilize or increase property values relative to similar properties outside of historic districts.

Local Historic District Commissions can regulate changes to the interior of buildings.

- ⊘ Commissions can only regulate the exterior appearance of elements that are visible from the street. Interior changes or exterior alterations and additions that are not visible from the street are not regulated.



Local Historic District Commissions can control the color of your house.

- ⊘ Painting your house is routine maintenance and is not a regulated activity. A Commission, if requested, might offer advice to a property owner on historic paint schemes.

Local Historic District Commissions can prevent the demolition of a historic structure.

- ⊘ Historic District Designation cannot ultimately prevent the demolition of an historic structure. A separately enacted Demolition Delay Ordinance can delay the demolition of an historic structure for up to 90 days in order to explore alternatives to demolition such as purchasing the property or relocating the structure.

### **Village Districts**

Another tool for protecting the aesthetic character of historic properties is the “village district.” Adopted by Planning & Zoning Commissions (PZC), a village district is a zoning district that allows for a high degree of architectural and site design control. A village district typically applies to commercial and multi-family developments, ensuring that as properties are redeveloped, or infill development occurs, the development will be in character with the surrounding area. Unlike a local historic district, village districts may be adopted unilaterally by the PZC after an application and public hearing in accordance with their established zoning procedures.



**Historic Green Area**

*Strategy: Explore the use of Village Districts to regulate historic commercial areas.*

### **Adaptive Re-Use**

To encourage, rather than mandate, historic preservation, regulatory incentives such as adaptive re-use provisions can be adopted by the PZC. This would give owners of historic properties flexibility in re-tenanting their properties in return for making repairs that ensure the continued architectural and historic integrity of the property.

*Strategy: Amend the zoning regulations to provide adaptive reuse provisions for historic properties.*

### **Tax Abatements**

The Board of Selectmen can provide economic incentives such as tax abatements for the restoration or improvement of historic resources, provided such improvements do not compromise the architectural or historic integrity of the property. CGS Section 12-127a authorizes communities to abate taxes for buildings of historic or architectural merit. The statute reads in part as follows: “Such tax abatement shall be available to the owners of real property which is so classified if it can be shown to the satisfaction of the municipality that the current

**Strategy:** Allow tax abatements for restoration or improvements to historic properties, provided they do not compromise architectural or historic integrity.

**Strategy:** Adopt a demolition delay ordinance that requires up to a 90-day waiting period before the demolition of a historic structure.

**Strategy:** Encourage sensitive stewardship to preserve historic resources.

level of taxation is a material factor which threatens the continued existence of the structure, necessitating either its demolition or remodeling in a manner which destroys the historical or architectural value.” CGS Section 12-65e authorizes communities to fix assessments during rehabilitation and/or phase in increased assessments resulting from the rehabilitation of properties within a designated rehabilitation area.

Such abatements are a “win-win” situation for both the Town and property owner. By deferring or phasing in the tax increase on the improved value of a historic property, property owners are not immediately saddled with higher property taxes while paying for renovations, which would otherwise be a disincentive to improving their property. The Town ultimately benefits from both the aesthetic improvement to properties as well as the eventual increase in property taxes when the properties are later assessed at their new full value.

**Demolition Delay Ordinance**

While not ultimately offering protection, the Board of Selectmen can adopt a demolition delay ordinance that requires as much as a 90-day waiting period before a historic building can be demolished. This waiting period allows the opportunity to seek alternatives to demolition such as purchasing the property, relocating the structure(s), or at a minimum, salvaging architectural components before a building is destroyed.

**“Sensitive Stewardship”**

Owners who are committed emotionally and financially to maintaining historic resources can be the most effective means of preserving them. “Sensitive stewardship” is the notion that owners of historic properties are temporary stewards of a historic community resource and have a responsibility to maintain their architectural and historic integrity and pass that responsibility on to future owners. Without pride and sensitivity in ownership, no regulatory or incentive program can prevent the loss of historic resources due to neglect and ultimate demolition. One way to encourage sensitive stewardship is through such recognition programs as the National and State Registers of Historic Places. Ellington already has several designations on both historic registers but there are clearly additional properties worthy of designation.



**Historic Residence**

National or State Historic Register designation is an honorary program with no regulatory impacts on owners. However, it does offer limited protection from federally funded programs such as Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) funded highway projects, requiring such projects to mitigate impacts on National Register designated properties. Designation can also benefit owners of historic commercial properties by making renovations thereof eligible for federal tax credits if the renovations comply with appropriate standards.

**Strategy:** *Encourage applications for National and State Historic Register designation.*

Ellington can also establish an honorary local register of historic places to acknowledge properties of local historic significance without the formality of an application for federal or state designation. Such a program might be administered by the Ellington Historical Society and could include a voluntarily historic placard program to indicate the original owner and/or date of construction of local historic buildings. While adding no protection to a property, it can instill pride in ownership and encourage preservation efforts.



Historic Placard

**Strategy:** *Consider establishing a local register of historic places and providing historic placards to instill pride in ownership.*

### **Education Programs**

Education programs are another critical component of any historic preservation program. Many owners of historic properties are unfamiliar with historic preservation techniques and have been known to rebel against historic register designation, local historic district designation, and village district designation for fear that they will lose control of their property or be financially harmed. Historic register programs are honorary and offer positive benefits without any regulation whatsoever. The purview of local historic districts is limited to the architectural appearance of historic properties from the street and does not reach beyond to the rear or interior of structures. Once property owners understand that the benefits of historic preservation outweigh any limitations that it may create, they will be more likely to support historic preservation initiatives in the future.

**Strategy:** *Seek ways to provide educational programs and technical assistance to owners of historic resources.*

### **Historic Preservation Strategies**

1. Secure State funds and conduct a Town-wide historic resource inventory.
2. Explore the appropriateness of establishing Local Historic Districts.
3. Explore the use of Village Districts to regulate historic commercial areas.
4. Amend the zoning regulations to provide adaptive reuse provisions for historic properties.
5. Allow tax abatements for restoration or improvements to historic properties that do not compromise their architectural or historic integrity.
6. Adopt a demolition delay ordinance that requires up to a 90-day waiting period before the demolition of a historic structure.
7. Encourage “sensitive stewardship” or pride in ownership as the most effective means of preserving historic resources.
8. Encourage applications for National and State Historic Register designation.
9. Consider establishing a local register of historic places and providing historic placards to instill pride in ownership.
10. Seek ways to provide educational programs and technical assistance to owners of historic resources.



## Section 5.5 – Inventory and Assess Historic Resources

1. Identify multiple priority historic assets within your community and actions required to sustain their long-term viability. Actions should be specific to each asset listed. Please include a short description of each location and note if the location is privately or municipally owned. **(10 points)**

Assets may include:

- Historic buildings,
- Parks,
- Natural resources,
- View-sheds,
- Public spaces,
- Stone walls,
- Other

**Submit:** The list of priority historic resources and the list of actions required to sustain their long-term viability. The [State Historic Preservation Office](#) can help pay for such services. If your list was created more than three years ago, also include a brief description of how it is still relevant and used by your municipality.

2. For at least one historic asset in your municipality, perform a conditions assessment, feasibility study, or long-term maintenance plan that uses the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Places. Include in the assessment the sustainability of each building present, possibility of energy retrofits, vulnerability to natural hazards and climate change, etc. You may assess the viability for up to three different assets. **(10 points per asset, up to 3 assets or 30 points)**

**Submit:** A completed [worksheet](#) and the conditions assessment, feasibility study, or long-term maintenance plan that uses the Secretary of the Interior's [Standards for the Treatment of Historic Places](#) for each historic resource listed in your inventory. The [State Historic Preservation Office](#) can help pay for such services. If your assessment was completed more than three years ago, include a brief description of how it is still relevant and used by your municipality.

3. Sponsor or host an educational workshop or program to educate owners of historic homes on how to manage their historic building(s) sustainably (for example, through energy audits or energy efficiency upgrades). Educational workshops must have taken place in the last three years; current, long-term educational programs that provide ongoing information are also eligible for points. **(5 points)**

**Submit:** A brief overview of outreach (suggested 5 sentences maximum), including target populations (if any); date of event (if applicable); and at least one example of educational materials disseminated in the last three years, which could include flyers, articles, letters, newsletters, presentations, or digital communications. For websites, submit both a hyperlink and a screenshot of the relevant webpage(s).

4. Achieve "Certified Local Government" status. See the [Certified Local Government Program](#) on the CT Department of Economic and Community Development website for additional information on how to work towards your certification. **(5 points)**

**Submit:** Proof of recognition from the National Park Service regarding attainment of *Certified Local Government* status.

# Introducing SolSmart

SolSmart is a national program that helps cities, towns, counties, and regional organizations become solar energy leaders.

**JUMP TO** >>

[Why Join?](#) [The Technical Assistance Process](#) [Program History](#) [How to Apply](#)

With the help of the SolSmart technical assistance team, local governments are becoming “open for solar business.”

*SolSmart is led by the Interstate Renewable Energy Council (IREC) and the International City/County Management Association (ICMA), and funded by the U.S. Department of Energy Solar Energy Technologies Office.*

The SolSmart program has two key parts. First, the program provides **no-cost technical assistance** to help local governments follow national best practices to expand solar energy use in their jurisdictions. Second, it recognizes and celebrates these communities with **SolSmart designations** of Platinum, Gold, Silver, and Bronze.

To date, 511 local governments in 43 states, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico have achieved SolSmart designation, representing over 117 million people.

A cornerstone of SolSmart’s efforts will be to further the goals of the federal Justice40 initiative to provide equitable opportunities for underserved communities which face barriers including fossil dependence, energy burden, environmental and climate hazards, and socio-economic vulnerabilities.

Want more info? Read below, or [download an overview here](#).

## Why Join SolSmart?

Whether your community is new to solar energy or an established leader, the SolSmart program can be beneficial in a number of ways. Here are some of the advantages of becoming a SolSmart community:



### Receive Expert Technical Assistance

At no cost other than staff time, you’ll get access to national experts and increase local knowledge of solar energy.



### Reduce Solar Energy Barriers

SolSmart helps cut bureaucratic red tape, saving taxpayer resources and reducing the time and cost it takes for households and businesses to go solar.





## SolSmart Technical Assistance

SolSmart's technical assistance team includes [partner organizations](#) with expertise on solar energy and local government. Every municipality, county, and regional organization is eligible to receive this technical assistance at no cost.

The technical assistance team works with communities to meet the [SolSmart Criteria](#), which are based on national best practices to encourage solar energy use at the local level. Each local government works with the technical assistance provider to meet these criteria and achieve SolSmart designation.

This one-on-one assistance is supplemented by SolSmart's extensive [resource library](#) which includes toolkits, training presentations, webinars, and other reports to help meet a community's needs.



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## CONSERVATION COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, JANUARY 9, 2024, 7:00 PM

### REMOTE ATTENDANCE VIA ZOOM MEETING

**PRESENT:** Chairman Rebecca Quarno, Regular Members George Nickerson, Sean Dwyer, Robert Zielfelder, and Laurie Burstein

**ABSENT:** Vice Chairman David Bidwell, Regular Members James Gage, and Alternates Ann Harford and Jessica Fay

**STAFF:** John Colonese, Assistant Town Planner and Nathaniel Trask, Recording Clerk

#### OTHERS

**PRESENT:** None

**I. CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Rebecca Quarno called the Conservation Commission meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

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

#### III. ACTIVE BUSINESS:

1. Review Plan of Conservation & Development, Chapter 4 - Conservation Strategies, Natural Resource Preservation.

Mr. Colonese said he will be filling in for Lisa Houlihan, Town Planner, for the foreseeable future.

Ms. Houlihan sent an email saying that many of the conservation strategies had been accomplished, but there are a few remaining, such as transfer of development rights on pages 53 to 55 of the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD), the open space or cluster subdivision on page 59, and historic preservation on page 60. According to Mr. Colonese, Ms. Houlihan asked for discussion to continue in these areas and for the commission to identify its next initiative.

The transfer of development rights is the process by which a developer may transfer development rights from one property to another. This can be done so that a developer might have an area of high density and an area of low density in another location where an open space or farm easement could be acquired. This would be completed through the zoning regulations and with the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Under the open space or cluster subdivision section, the town currently has a cluster zoning regulation, but no developer has ever utilized it. The POCD recommends some

changes to that regulation, which would have to be done in conjunction with the Planning and Zoning Commission.

The final section is on historic preservation, which is an initiative the commission discussed at the November 2023 meeting. This is a shorter section in the 2019 Plan of Conservation and Development, but the current plan refers to the 2008 plan, which has a longer section on historic preservation. Mr. Colonese said the current POCD recommends hiring a consultant to do a historic resource inventory, and he added that there has been some inventorying of the downtown area. There is a National Register for Historic Places for Ellington that was completed in 1990. The State Historic Preservation Office has taken the information from the National Historic Preservation Office and incorporated it into their mapping system where historical places can be seen. Commissioner Dwyer asked how to go about finding out what other areas of Ellington might qualify for historic preservation and what information might be collected about the properties or the land. Mr. Colonese said he was unsure of the land and would have to do some research to see how that information is categorized. He said grants are available through the historic preservation office for completing an inventory through a consultant. Mr. Colonese asked if the commission wanted to take this on as an initiative. Commissioner Dwyer said he would like to move forward on it, but asked if there is something important about the section on the transfer of development rights or the section on open space or cluster subdivision that the commission should pursue. Mr. Colonese said he would ask Ms. Houlihan when the Planning and Zoning Commission might be working on those two sections so the Conservation Commission can join them in that work, but the Planning and Zoning Commission has not talked about those yet.

Chairman Quarno said the historic preservation initiative is interesting and goes along with preserving the town's identity, especially when driving along Main Street. Commissioner Burstein said historic preservation helps to preserve the town's New England character. Chairman Quarno asked what the commission could do with a historic preservation inventory if they were to secure the funding to complete one. Mr. Colonese said he wanted to forward the 2008 Plan of Conservation and Development to commissioners because the plan goes into detail about the different options. Commissioner Dwyer added that historic preservation could potentially allow homeowners access to some grant funding designated for preservation. Mr. Colonese said he would see what grants might be available to homeowners. Commissioner Zielfelder asked what the process would be to get homeowners to buy into the idea of and establish a historic district. Mr. Colonese said a 90-day demolition would be an ordinance put in place by the Board of Selectmen, for example, but he would research how homeowners would become involved in the historic district process. He added that another layer of restriction might be favorable to some and not others. Commissioner Zielfelder said ultimately any decisions on ordinances or regulations should rest with the property owners in a designated historic district. Chairman Quarno agreed residents of a potential historic district would need to be engaged in the conversation. She added that the commission could only supplement the funding based on the current budget to complete a historic resource inventory, so most of the money to hire a consultant would have to come from elsewhere. Otherwise, the initiative could not be completed.

Mr. Colonese said he would provide the commission with more information on the initiatives and do some research on grant opportunities for the inventory.

2. Review Sustainable CT Certification Action Overview Worksheet - Conservation Sections
  - a. 5.3 Develop Agriculture-Friendly Practice.

Mr. Colonese said Sustainable CT section 5.3.5 asks for the establishment of a farmland acquisition fund. Ellington does not have a farmland acquisition fund, but instead has a farmland preservation program that was established in 2007. Ellington preserved over 630 acres of farmland in that time. According to Mr. Colonese, Ms. Houlihan said Ellington's bond authorization program was accepted by Sustainable CT and the town will receive points for their efforts, meaning that the town will receive credit for section 5.3.5. due to the farmland preservation program currently in place. The commission has championed open space preservation, natural resource and wildlife preservation, and agricultural friendly practices, so the town is anticipating getting points in those areas towards Sustainable CT certification.

Mr. Colonese said he was tasked with streamlining solar energy permitting which involves reviewing the zoning regulations for small solar panel installations and presenting those findings to the Planning and Zoning Commission. He said he believes the town's zoning regulations are pretty good along with other contractors, but they still must go through the process to see if there are any barriers that need to be addressed. A barrier that could be addressed might be something like a setback requirement or a height restriction. He said he would be writing a memo to the Planning and Zoning Commission about those barriers in accordance with Sustainable CT requirements.

Sustainable CT wants the town to have a solar landing page that outlines the town's solar installations, such as the ones on three of the town's schools and the library. The page will also have information on how to get solar approved for a home. Mr. Colonese asked if commissioners would like to see the memo that will be sent to the Planning and Zoning Commission. Commissioners indicated they would like to receive it.

Chairman Quarno asked Mr. Colonese if there is anything else the commission can be doing to help with the Sustainable CT application. He said the town is focused on making sure that Ellington gets points in all 12 of the sections as required by Sustainable CT prior to the April submission deadline, but that the commission has done a lot to support the application. However, he added that historic preservation is included under section 5, but completing a historic resource inventory would likely take longer than the April deadline. Chairman Quarno asked if completing the inventory could get the town points in the future. Mr. Colonese said if the town were to apply for recertification, then accomplishments in the meantime would apply. He will confirm how long certification lasts for Sustainable CT.

### 3. Report - Farmland Preservation Program.

Mr. Colonese said the Planning Department was notified by the Connecticut Department of Agriculture that the land survey for Farm 2 of Oakridge Dairy has been completed and they are waiting for Oakridge Dairy to be determined "landowner eligible" by the Natural Resources Conservation Service, a division of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Once that has been done, then the Department of Agriculture can proceed with the closing, which they hope can be completed this quarter. The town will share 10% of the cost to preserve the land, which is about \$49,000 and is a special appropriation that will have to be brought to the Board of Selectmen for approval. Mr. Colonese spoke with Seth Bahler, owner of Oakridge Dairy, who said he submitted the required paperwork to the USDA and is waiting for a response.

As reported by Mr. Colonese, Ms. Houlihan had a meeting with the Department of Agriculture who said they closed on 20 different farmland easements in 2023.

The Connecticut Farmland Trust also contacted Ms. Houlihan to do an outreach program for Ellington farmers and farmers of adjoining towns to educate them on federal programs and grants that are available to them as well as a service called FarmLink, which connects farmers with farmland. The event will be on February 27, 2024, from 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM at the Ellington Town Hall Annex. Mr. Colonese will forward along a formal invitation to commissioners once when it is available.

4. Report - Open Space Preservation Program

Commissioner Zielfelder said there are two parcels for sale near the Northern Connecticut Land Trust property. The commission reviewed the locations quickly and noted they do not touch the Northern Connecticut Land Trust parcel. One of the parcels on Tolland Turnpike is under contract.

Chairman Quarno believed Ms. Houlihan was sending letters to landowners in the areas targeted for open space preservation along Green Road which had been discussed previously. Mr. Colonese said he would check to see when the last time letters were sent to parcels along Green Road and the status of this item.

**IV. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:**

1. FY 23-24 Budget & Expenditure Update.

a. Request to approve Annual Contribution to the Northern Connecticut Land Trust.

**MOVED (DWYER) SECONDED (BURSTEIN) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO CONTRIBUTE \$450.00 TO THE NORTHERN CONNECTICUT LAND TRUST.**

2. Approval of November 14, 2023, Regular Meeting Minutes.

**MOVED (DWYER) SECONDED (NICKERSON) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 14, 2023, AS WRITTEN.**

3. Election of Officers.

**BY CONSENSUS, THE COMMISSION TABLED THE ELECTION OF OFFICERS TO THE REGULAR MEETING ON FEBRUARY 13, 2024.**

4. Correspondence/Discussion:

a. Ad Hoc Ellington Trails Committee - Monthly Agendas/Minutes.

Commissioners were given a copy of the meeting minutes from the last two meetings, but no report was made.

b. Letter from Connecticut Land Conservation Council Re: Recent Contribution

The Connecticut Land Conservation Council sent a letter thanking the Conservation Commission for their continued support and the donation that was approved at the November 2023 meeting.

**V. ADJOURNMENT:**

**MOVED (ZIELFELDER) SECONDED (DWYER) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO  
ADJOURN THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING AT 7:56 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

---

Nathaniel Trask, Recording Clerk



## 'We want to be the farm of the future'

Oakridge Dairy lets public in to meet farmers and lots of happy cows



Cows feed in one of the pens at Oakridge Dairy in Ellington on Wednesday.  
Aaron Flaum/Hartford Courant photos

BY SEAN KROFSSIK SPECIAL TO THE COURANT

If you have had a glass of milk in Connecticut the last handful of generations, chances are you've tasted the product from Oakridge Dairy.

The dairy farm has been a staple of Ellington for almost 150 years and its 5,500 cows supply 20% of the state's milk. It all started from the humble beginnings

with eight cows and now the vast 3,000-acre grounds on Jobs Hill Road are filled with activity using modern technology.

And the farm wants the public to see what they do.

### Cows close up

There were about 18,500 milk cows in Connecticut in 2022, according to the National Agricultural Statistical Service. Also according to the service, Connecticut cows produce 430,000,000 pounds of milk a year, valued at \$115.7 million. The state also is home to about 4,500 beef cattle, the service also notes.

The Connecticut Department of Agriculture reports that there are about 85 dairy farms in the state, and Connecticut Dairy notes about 97% of those are family owned. In more down-to-earth terms, New England Dairy notes that each of Connecticut's dairy cows produces 128 glasses of milk a day.

Oakridge opened its doors to public bus tours starting last fall and the rides around the farm have been a big hit.

Chief Executive Officer Seth Bahler is the fifth-generation owner. His great-great grandfather started the farm in 1890.

“Opening up to the public aligns our vision of the farm,” Bahler said.

“We want to be the farm of the future and we want people to get a chance to meet their farmers. That's why we opened the tour. We are surrounded by people. Most dairy farms in the country — if you draw a mile around the farm, they will have 10 neighbors. We have thousands. We want to show them where their milk comes from.”

Kaylee Hill is the public relations and tour director at Oakridge who runs the 90-minute tour around the facility. The tour holds a maximum of 15 patrons on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. However, school trips have become popular at the farm and will go around the property on their full school bus. School vacation weeks have more frequent bus tours.

The regular tour travels around the farm on a small school bus and drives through the barn that houses their milking herd, with chances for stopping and visitors getting out at the viewing room to watch the farm's cows in the rotary milking parlor. The farm also grows crops.

Seventy-two cows are milked almost around the clock. It just stops three separate times in a day in one-hour increments for cleaning. The cows are

constantly cycled in and out. Each cow is on the rotary for 9 minutes and 45 seconds, three times a day.

The milk goes through a filtration system and cools from 100 to 37 degrees before going into three massive tanks for storage before being shipped out. In all, an estimated 220,000 pounds of milk are produced at the farm each day.

Participants get back on the bus to view the methane digester (it help manure decompose), calf housing, feed storage, and more, while an Oakridge Dairy tour guide supplies information about modern dairy farming.

### Making milk a complex process

There are 62 employees who have various duties, such as cleaning the barns, milking, feeding and caring for the cows. There is also a vet on site. Each cow produces about 10 gallons of milk per day.

Oakridge, a fifth-generation dairy farm, is the largest dairy farm in Connecticut and supplies about 20 percent of the milk sold in the state. The bulk of it goes to Dairy Farmers of America, which sends it to various plants.

There is also a health team on the grounds and the cows are checked and watched regularly. The cows sleep 15 hours per day and are free range in their pens. There are 250 to 300 cows in each pen. Each pen has a sleeping area, fresh food and fresh water. The pens are cleaned and vacuumed while the cows are in the milking parlor.

Each cow eats roughly 80-100 pounds of food each day and a portion of their food, which is a mix of hay, grains, proteins, vitamins and minerals, is grown on site. Cows can have an appetite. They have a stomach split into four compartments, which many people identify as four stomachs.

The 318,000-square-foot barn can withstand extreme conditions of heat and cold. Special curtains can be adjusted to keep heat in during the winter and can be raised during the summer accompanied by 180 adjustable fans across the back of the barn to keep the area cool.

Two million gallons of manure ended up in the digester, which is stored at 101 degrees and the methane could power 800 cars or 800 homes per day. The manure is piped underground into the digester. The digester is a newer development and first came into use last June.

The pregnant cows have their own pen. All pregnancies are started through artificial insemination. The calves are typically born at 75 pounds and are walking within 30 minutes. They gain two pounds per day. The cows have a

pregnancy of 285 days and can produce one calf a year. Following birth, the first milk from the mother goes to the calf.

The average lifespan at Oakridge is 10 and a half years old. Hill said it's nearly double the life span of many other dairy farms.

In the "pregnant pen" the cows could give birth in two minutes or wait as long as 14 days. On average, six to 12 calves are born a day on the farm. There are about 700 calves on site.

The calves are sequestered to a different part of the ground to build up immunity. They are tagged and get their vaccines. They are susceptible to sickness. They are there for 6 months. They are sent to a farm in Pennsylvania until they are two years old and then they are brought back to Ellington.

Any sick cow is in a separate pen where they are watched and checked two times a day. All cows also have their hooves trimmed regularly.

"The cows love a boring life and a boring schedule," Hill said. "The farm has been here for 130-plus years, and we wanted to be more involved in the community, so we started the tours on Oct. 14, and we've had good success. We are already booking out until June with school groups, camps and Girl Scouts."

Hill said the milking process, milk tastings and seeing the calves were the most popular parts of the tours with those who take the trek through Oakridge.

The farm does deliver to area customers through the Modern Milkman Creamery. It's a throwback. The milk is delivered in glass bottles into outdoor coolers outside customers' houses. Deliveries have doubled in the last three months.

The Modern Milkman is a weekly subscription-based box service that delivers fresh Oakridge milk (milked less than 24 hours ago) along with local farm fresh eggs, butter, yogurt, cheese, and so many other products to your doorstep.

"It's a perfect opportunity to see where your milk is coming from," Hill said. "We are showcasing everything Oakridge has to offer and how well the cows are treated. It's farm to table and you get a chance to meet your farmer."

Reservations are needed in advance and can be made on Oakridge Dairy's website. The tour schedule is also available online at [oakridge.dairy.com/oakridgetours](http://oakridge.dairy.com/oakridgetours).

"We want to create a tour destination and the tours have helped with that," Bahler said. "We have a lot of people who live near the farm, and we want them to come see us."

“We want to show the care we give our animals and the level of passion we have for our land and our soil and our employees,” Bahler said. “We are farmers of the 21st century with all the technology we use. If a farmer came from 100 years ago, they wouldn’t know what we were doing.”



# STATE OF CONNECTICUT

## CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL

Ten Franklin Square, New Britain, CT 06051

Phone: (860) 827-2935 Fax: (860) 827-2950

E-Mail: [siting.council@ct.gov](mailto:siting.council@ct.gov)

Web Site: [portal.ct.gov/csc](http://portal.ct.gov/csc)

### VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL & CERTIFIED MAIL RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

February 5, 2024

Lee D. Hoffman, Esq.  
Pullman & Comley, LLC  
90 State House Square  
Hartford, CT 06103-3702  
[lhoffman@pullcom.com](mailto:lhoffman@pullcom.com)

RE: **PETITION NO. 1589** – USS Somers Solar, LLC petition for a declaratory ruling, pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §4-176 and §16-50k, for the proposed construction, maintenance and operation of a 3.0-megawatt AC solar photovoltaic electric generating facility located at 360 Somers Road, Ellington, Connecticut, and associated electrical interconnection.

Dear Attorney Hoffman:

At the energy/telecommunications meeting held on February 1, 2024, the Connecticut Siting Council (Council) did not issue a declaratory ruling, pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §4-176 and §16-50k, for the proposed solar photovoltaic electric generating facility in Ellington, Connecticut. Due to a tie, the final vote failed; therefore, a declaratory ruling was not issued.

Enclosed are the Council's Findings of Fact, Opinion, and Decision and Order that were considered during the February 1, 2024 meeting.

Sincerely,

Melanie A. Bachman  
Executive Director

MB/IN/dll

Enclosures (3)

c: Service List dated January 23, 2024  
State Documents Librarian (via email – [csl.cda@ct.gov](mailto:csl.cda@ct.gov))





STATE OF CONNECTICUT – COUNTY OF TOLLAND  
INCORPORATED 1786

# TOWN OF ELLINGTON

55 MAIN STREET – PO BOX 187  
ELLINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06029-0187  
[www.ellington-ct.gov](http://www.ellington-ct.gov)

**Ad Hoc Ellington Trails Committee**  
**Regular Meeting Agenda**  
**Wednesday, March 6, 2024 - 6:30 PM**  
**Town Hall Annex, 57 Main Street**

- I. Call to Order
- II. Citizens' Forum
- III. Approval of Minutes
  - A. February 7, 2024
- IV. Old Business
  - A. Hockanum River Crew Report
  - B. Boardwalk – Wetlands
  - C. Conservation Commission Report
  - D. Grant for Kiosks
  - E. New Emergency Signs
    1. Emergency Meeting Update
  - F. Crystal Ridge Map
  - G. Road Signs
  - H. Easements for West Road
  - I. Mowing Meeting Results – Batz/Ellington Highlands
    1. Mowing
    2. Seeding
    3. Bluebird Houses
- V. New Business
  - A. Eagle Scout Proposal
- VI. Subcommittee Reports
  - A. Treasurer
  - B. Maintenance
    1. Clean-Up Day - April 6<sup>th</sup> at Crystal Ridge with Boy Scouts and Green Earth Club
  - C. Community Outreach
    1. Ginny Apple Talks

- a. Reptiles and Amphibians
  - b. Minks, Muskrats, Beavers, and Otters – March 26<sup>th</sup>,  
Hall Memorial Library, 6:30 pm
2. Congregational Church Talk Update
3. Earth Day – April 20<sup>th</sup>, Town Green, 10am-2pm
  - a. Set Up 8:00-9:00 am
  - b. Photo Board
  - c. Members to Set Up/Work Table
4. Ellington Youth Services – Bring a Buddy/Neighbor Walk for  
National Public Health, Saturday, April 13<sup>th</sup> (rain date April 14)
5. CT Trails Day – June 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> – Confirm Details
6. Bird Walk at Batz – May 11<sup>th</sup> (rain date May 12) – 7:30 am

VII. Adjournment



# TOWN OF ELLINGTON

## Ad Hoc Ellington Trails Committee

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

**CHAIRMAN**  
LINDA ANDERSON

**VICE CHAIRMAN**  
CYNTHIA VAN ZELM

**SECRETARY**  
DEANNA WAMBOLT-GULICK

VALERIE AMSEL  
JUDI MANFRE  
LARRISSA BURKE  
DONNA ALLEN  
LINDSAY NEUBECKER  
BILL SCHULTZ  
TOM PALSHAW  
DAN CHAMBERLIN  
ROBERT BARONE  
ANN HARFORD

Ad Hoc Ellington Trails Committee  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
February 7, 2024  
Town Hall Annex

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Donna Allen, Judi Manfre, Linda Anderson, Tom Palshaw, Dan Chamberlin, Robert Barone, Lindsay Neubecker, Deanna Wambolt-Gulick

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Cynthia van Zelm, Valerie Amsel, Ann Harford, Larrissa Burke, Bill Schultz

### **I. Call to Order**

Ms. Anderson called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm.

### **II. Citizens' Forum:** No discussion was held.

### **III. Approval of Minutes**

#### **A. December 6, 2023**

MOVED (PALSHAW), SECONDED (ALLEN) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 6, 2023 MEETING.

### **IV. Old Business**

#### **A. Hockanum River Crew Report**

Mr. Barone shared that work is going on to replace a bridge, raising it up; concern was expressed that many trees are starting to fall victim to erosion. Mr. Barone commented that some downed trees need removal across different areas of the trail. Mr. Palshaw added that the bridge leads to a dead end, so it isn't critical that it be raised further.

#### **1. Boardwalk – Wetlands – 2/12/2024**

Ms. Anderson shared that the Inland Wetlands Agency will discuss the proposal for the boardwalk bridge at their next meeting.

#### **2. Tree Removed Near Swing Bridge**

The Town has removed the downed tree that had been blocking the swing bridge.

#### **B. Conservation Commission Report**

Ms. Anderson shared that there were a couple of properties up for sale, but there is no current activity that directly relates to the work of the Committee.

#### **C. Grants for Kiosks**

Ms. Anderson shared that the grant was approved by the Town, in an amount of \$9,950. Ms. Amsel has gotten three quotes for the project, and TimberHomes of Vermont has come in the lowest so far. Once

the grant funds come through, members of the Committee will get the kits and work on installation; Boy Scouts may be available to help with set-up during the summer.

#### **D. New Emergency Signs**

Mr. Palshaw shared that the signs are a bit more complicated than initially planned, with the addition of more information/characters. He suggested that the signs be oriented vertically to improve the longevity of the signs, and he suggested that the emergency sign located by blazed yellow at eye level, done consistently through all trails.

Ms. Anderson noted that all maps will need to be adjusted to indicate that yellow blaze means emergency signage. Ms. Allen asked if it is easier or better to post reflective tape or dayglow instead of a yellow blaze, as it would be more attention-grabbing at night. Ms. Anderson echoed the importance of ensuring visibility at night. It was suggested that a reflector be placed at the emergency sign locations to aid in visibility. Discussion was held on the potential increase in cost when adding signs, reflectors, and updating kiosks; this is something that the Committee will need to explore further.

Ms. Palshaw is giving a talk on February 21 at 7:00 pm at the Ambulance Building to emergency service personnel concerning the emergency signage; he said that anyone interested is welcome to come and learn. He is planning to explain the system, show the overall trail map, cover specific trails, and explain what conditions to expect if an emergency extraction was required. He plans to encourage the emergency departments to consider conducting training pertaining to the trails.

Mr. Palshaw also discussed potential materials for the signage, balancing cost and durability of the signs.

#### **E. Meeting Schedule 2024**

The May meeting will be held in the Town Hall due to a scheduling conflict with the Annex.

#### **F. Crystal Ridge – New Map/Road Sign**

Ms. Anderson shared that the map should be ready for review by the next meeting; she received the first draft, and there are things that still need to be changed, as the drafting process is ongoing. The Committee will also need to work on writing a description for the trail. Mr. Palshaw requested a copy of the draft, which Ms. Anderson will send to him.

Ms. Harford had previously suggested adding a street sign for the trail, which has been approved at Public Works. Ms. Anderson thinks that it will say *Crystal Ridge Trail* with an arrow marking the entrance of the trail, printed on both sides. Ms. Allen expressed concern that a green sign with that printing by the Crystal Ridge Road sign could be confusing; the Committee will explore other color options to alleviate this confusion.

#### **G. Road Signs for Kimball**

Ms. Anderson shared that the Committee is looking to get similar street signage for the Kimball Trail as well.

#### **H. Easements for West Road**

Ms. Anderson shared that this is being explored, though there is a question of whether the Town Attorney needs to be involved in the process, which could become costly very quickly. There are not many properties involved, so it could be a quick process, but there are no guarantees.

Mr. Palshaw questioned if there might be some town development plans on a relevant property; Ms. Anderson suggested that the Committee continue to pursue easements but warned that the situation may develop differently depending on how receptive the property owners are.

#### **I. CT Trail Finder**

Ms. Anderson has reached out to see if the Ellington Trails can be listed on the site; currently the answer is no because of certain regulations required by CT Trail Finder, but the Committee was encouraged to circle back at a later date.

## **V. New Business**

### **A. Lindsay – Trails and Beautification**

The Scouts are looking to install bluebird houses and are looking to the Committee for guidance. A question was raised on expanding the Trails Committee to a “Trails and Beautification Committee” to work on beautification of trails and the community. Ms. Anderson shared that there is already an Ellington Beautification Committee, and suggested reaching out to Julia Connor in the Administration Office to see how to get involved. Ms. Anderson expressed that the Committee is currently pretty busy, so exploring beautification would be a better option for interested individuals.

### **B. Bluebird Houses from Somers Boy Scouts**

Ms. Anderson shared that Batz and Ellington Highlands would be ideal locations for these houses, though she is wary of accepting the boxes if the Town insists on mowing around the boxes. With bluebird boxes, there needs to be a space around the boxes that remains meadow-like to make it more pollinator- and bird-friendly. Mr. Anderson recommended putting this on hold for now until the mowing is further discussed/decided.

### **C. Ellington Youth Services**

#### **1. Vape Disposal Containers**

Ms. Anderson met with Youth Services staff, who are looking to get more involved with the Trails Committee. One thing that Youth Services is looking to do is to get recycling containers installed at the trails to help protect the trails from the potential dangers of vape batteries. They are currently working to find a company that specializes in this area.

Ms. Allen asked who would be responsible for maintaining these containers. Ms. Anderson stated that it would be up to the recycling center. All parties have been contacted and are willing to participate, though this is still very much in its beginning stages.

#### **2. Bring a Buddy/Neighbor Walk for National Public Health Week – Sunday, April 7<sup>th</sup>**

This will be held at either Batz or Windermere, due to parking needs. Ms. Anderson suggested that letterboxing may be a good thing to include. She also suggested that the Amphitheater be used for some of the Committee’s summer programming.

### **D. Wildflower Field and Mowing at Batz**

The Committee is looking to create a wildflower field.

### **E. Deanna – Ellington Congregational Church Outreach**

Ms. Wambolt-Gulick was contacted regarding sharing information on the Trails Committee at the Ellington Congregational Church on February 23 at 7:00 pm. They are looking for information about where to access maps, what trails are offered, and what projects and happenings are going on.

Ms. Wambolt-Gulick and Ms. Allen will attend to share information and Ms. Anderson will provide maps to hand out.

## **VI. Subcommittee Reports**

### **A. Treasurer**

#### **1. Budget Submitted**

Ms. Anderson reviewed the budget, noting that different items were dropped based on use over the previous year.

## **B. Maintenance**

### **1. Kimball's Bridges**

Ms. Amsel checked the bridges and noted that they are all in good shape.

### **2. Clean-Up Day (first or second Saturday of April – Trails Committee/Boy Scouts/Girl Scouts/High School Group)**

Ms. Anderson shared that she is working on determining a date where interested parties are available to work on trail cleanup.

### **3. Kiosk Installments – Help from Boy Scouts**

Ms. Anderson shared that Boy Scouts are interested in helping with the project. She suggested that a high school group may be willing to help as well.

## **C. Community Outreach**

### **1. Ginny Apple Talks**

#### **a. Squirrels**

The talk was popular, with 25 people in attendance. Ms. Anderson passed along some of the interesting facts that were shared at the talk.

#### **b. Reptiles and Amphibians – February 27<sup>th</sup>**

This event is upcoming.

#### **c. Minks, Muskrats, Beavers, and Otters – March 26<sup>th</sup>**

This event is upcoming.

### **2. Earth Day – Table, Mulch at Batz**

The Committee is looking for volunteers to work the table at the Earth Day event. Ms. Anderson is also looking to see if other groups (Girl Scouts, Green Earth Group, etc.) are willing to help, as well as checking to see if other groups are willing to help spread mulch at Batz.

Ms. Anderson suggested setting up a photo board for the table, showcasing the Committee's support and work.

### **3. Bird Walk at Batz – May 4<sup>th</sup> (rain date May 11<sup>th</sup>)**

This event is upcoming, and the date has been shifted to May 11, rain date May 12<sup>th</sup>, due to availability.

### **4. CT Trails Day – June 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>**

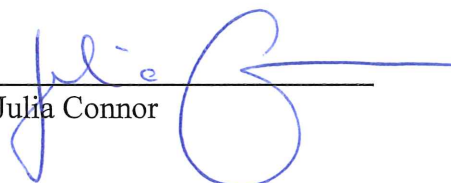
The date will be determined as the event gets closer. Ms. Anderson suggested hiking Windermere, as she doesn't recall that being utilized for past events. Ms. Anderson will also be looking for volunteers to assist with this event.

## **VII. Adjournment**

MOVED (MANFRE), SECONDED (ALLEN) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE TRAILS COMMITTEE MEETING AT 7:42 PM.

Prepared by Deanna Wambolt-Gulick; submitted by

Julia Connor



# SPRING 2024 PLANT & SEEDLING SALE

## NORTH CENTRAL CONSERVATION DISTRICT

NCCD is your local conservation organization dedicated to protecting and improving natural resources.

Our Plant Sale is the Conservation District's main fund raising event for the year. All proceeds are used to fund conservation programs, environmental education, and technical assistance to landowners and municipalities.



Orders must be received by Wednesday, April 3rd.

EXCEPTION: Bare Root Evergreen Orders due Tuesday, March 12th.

Supplies limited, please order early.

Updates/possible substitutions posted on website.

### ONLINE ORDERING AND PAYMENT AVAILABLE

Visit our website at [www.conservect.org/northcentral](http://www.conservect.org/northcentral) for instructions

Curbside Pick-up Dates/Times: Friday, April 19th (10am - 7pm) and Saturday, April 20th (9am - 1pm)

#### Curbside Pick-up Locations:

Tolland County Agricultural Center (TAC)  
24 Hyde Avenue (Route 30)  
Vernon, CT (exit 67 off I-84)

Hawk Hill Farm  
22 Duncaster Road  
Bloomfield, CT

All sales pre-order; no "day-of" sales. To encourage staggering of pick-ups, we will ask you to choose a timeframe.

### THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

### Conservation Functions of Plants

Plants clean air and water, and reduce energy use  
As **Windbreaks**, they reduce heating costs  
As **Wildlife Habitat**, they provide food & shelter to native pollinators, birds, and others.



As **Streamside Buffer Plantings**, they control erosion, provide habitat, and protect water quality by filtering fertilizers/pesticides and moderating water temperature.

## PLANT LISTINGS AND DESCRIPTIONS

### Key to Symbols and Notes

- Full Sun, or 5+ hrs direct sun ● Part Sun/Part Shade, or 2-5 hrs direct sun, or all-day dappled sun ● Full Shade; or < 2 hrs sun  
Range of Soil Moisture: Dry Average/Medium Moist (well-drained) Wet (not well-drained)

### EDIBLE LANDSCAPES, Part 1

CT native, except as noted.

**Blackberry 'Black Satin'** (*Rubus* hybrid): (2 gal) 5-7' thornless semi-trailing canes, vigorous, very disease resistant. Heavy yields, high quality, large, firm, tart-sweet dark fruits, early Aug., for 4 weeks. Moist soil. Fruits on 2nd year canes, doesn't sucker. Simple trellis required. Excellent for home gardens. **Birds, Butterflies, Bees.** ○



**Blueberry, Highbush** (*Vaccinium corymbosum*): (1 gal) Sets of 3 plants: early, mid, late-fruiting. 4-7'. White urn-shaped flowers in May, fruits in July-August. Excellent red-orange fall foliage, red stems glow in winter. Average to wet, acid soil. Ornamental 4 seasons. Use for patches, gardens, slopes. (pictured right) **Bees, Butterflies, Birds. Stream Buffers.** ○

**Blueberry, Lowbush** (*V. angustifolium*): (1 gal) 1-2', red stems form creeping colonies. Pink-white May flowers produce the famous Maine blueberry, July-August. Brilliant crimson leaves in fall. Dry to moist, well-drained acid soils, prefers low fertility. Multi-purpose easy groundcover. **Birds, Turtles, Butterflies.** ○●

**Elderberry 'Ranch'** (*Sambucus canadensis*): (3 gal) 5-6', bright pinnate leaves. White July flowers, extra-large panicles of purple berries, good for jam/wine early fall. Wet to average soil. Best choice for growing in extreme climates. Shrub borders, screens. **Butterflies, Bees, Birds. Stream Buffers.** ○●





## EDIBLE LANDSCAPE, Part 2

CT native, except as noted.



**Grape 'Reliance'** (*Vitis labrusca* hybrid): (2 gal) 15-20' climbing vine (can prune lower), bold three-lobed ornamental foliage. Large clusters of showy pinkish-red seedless grapes with sweet Labrusca flavor, early mid-season. Moist loam. Eating, juice, jam; screening/shading on trellis fences. (*part native, part European*)

**Birds.** ○●

**Ostrich Fern** (*Matteuccia struthiopteris*): (5 pt) 3-6' upright vase-shaped clumps. Furled fronds (edible fiddleheads) uncoil into bright-green finely dissected fronds. Average to wet soil. In rich moist soil, can spread into impressive colonies. Specimen/masses in woods, wildflower gardens, wet areas. **Stream Buffers.** ●●

**Persimmon** (*Diospyros virginiana*): (3 gal) 40', 30-40' spread. Rugged, blocky bark with thick dark-green leaves. Small fragrant white bell-shaped flowers bloom in early spring. Large delicious edible fruit only develops on female trees, need multiple trees for male/female reproduction. Moist, well-drained soil. **Birds, Bees.** ○●

**Strawberry 'Sweet Kiss'** (*Fragaria* hybrid): (1 gal) 6-8" x 24-26", compact, everbearing. High yields of shapely dark-red sweet fruit, June-frost. Rich, moist, well-drained soil. *European native.*

**Birds, Butterflies.** ○

**Virginia Strawberry** (*Fragaria virginiana*)-see *Groundcovers.*

## TREES

In pots (also see Bare-Root Tree Seedlings on last page)

CT native, except as noted.

**American Basswood** (*Tilia americana*): (3 gal) 60-80', moderate growth rate, gray, ridged and furrowed bark. Serrated heart-shaped leaves, 4-8" long. Pale-yellow fall color. Creamy yellow flowers grow in clusters. Bloom early summer. Fruit is small round nutlets. Moist, well-drained soil. Adaptable to alkaline soil. Shade tree.

**Bees, Birds.** ○●



Nov. Moist acid organic soil, well-drained is essential, provide sheltered location until established. Long extinct in the wild, but initially found in GA. A small specimen, ornamental all year. (*pictured left*) **Bees.** ○●

**American Hornbeam** (*Carpinus caroliniana*): (2 gal) 15-20', wide-spreading, fine-texture. Unique blue-gray trunk with smooth muscle-like ridges. Catkin flowers, then late summer nuts. Good fall color, yellow/orange/red-purple. Moist-wet, takes drier; likes fertile rich soil. Specimen, screen, woods. **Butterflies, Birds. Stream Buffers.** ●●

**Franklinia** (*Franklinia alatamaha*): (2 gal) 10-20' multi-stemmed. Big pearly buds, 3" fragrant white flowers with gold centers Jul.-Sept., spectacular orange-scarlet fall foliage through

**Pagoda Dogwood** (*Swida alternifolia*): (3 gal) 15-25', horizontal branches in graceful tiers. White flowers May-June, showy summer fruits ripen from green to pink then blue. Fall color yellow to purple. Moist soil. Use by woods/water's edge, in borders, to soften vertical lines.

**Bees, Birds, Butterflies. Stream Buffers.** ○●

**Serviceberry** (*Amelanchier canadensis*): (2 gal or 3 gal clump form) 15-25', graceful, single or multi-stemmed, silvery-gray smooth-barked tree. White flowers in April, summer berries, excellent golden orange fall color. Wet to dry. Use as specimens, in borders, by foundations, at wood-or-water's edge, on hillsides.

**Birds, Butterflies, Bees. Stream Buffers.** ●

## BROADLEAF EVERGREEN SHRUBS

CT native, except as noted.

**American Yew** (*Taxus canadensis*): (2 gal) 3-6' x 6-8', loose upsweeping branches. Glossy dark 1" needles. Bright-red fruits. Moist well-drained cool soil. Avoid winter sun, wind, and deer. Groundcover for cool shady areas. Only yew native to NE. **Birds.** ●●



**Mountain Laurel** (*Kalmia latifolia*): (1 gal) 5-15', picturesque with age. Charming cupped white flowers with purple dot markings, June. Moist cool soil, not windy. Beloved for borders, massing, wood's edge, hillsides.

**CTStateFlower. Butterflies, Hummingbirds, Birds.** ●○

**Bog Rosemary 'Blue Ice'** (*Andromeda polifolia*) - see *Groundcovers*

**Inkberry** (*Ilex glabra*): (1 gal) 4-6' soft-looking billowing holly, attractive small shiny dark leaves, small black fruit. Wet to dry. Excellent for foundations, masses, hedges. **Birds, Butterflies.** ○●

**Leatherleaf 'Dew Drop'** (*Chamaedaphne calyculata*): (1 gal) 2-3' fine-textured, upswept horizontal branches. Lovely white bell flowers under upturned leathery leaves, April-June. Medium to wet, acidic, cool areas. Good cover in moist or wet soils.

**Butterflies, Bees. Stream Buffers.** ○●

• **'Species'**: As described above  
• **'Pink Charm'**: (1 gal): 10', glossy-leaved cultivar with dark deep pink buds, opening to rich pink flowers with narrow dark-pink band inside the flower near the base. Sets buds well, even at young age.

**Rhododendron Catawba 'Album'** (*Rhododendron catawbiense*): (2 gal) 5-6' vigorous upright mounded. Blush-colored buds, rounded trusses of 18 2.5-3" bell-shaped pure white flowers, May-June. 2-4" lustrous thick dark leaves. Medium to moist, acid, humusy soil. Very hardy. Massing, specimen, screens, hedges, shrub borders. *Native VA south. (picture above.)*

**Butterflies, Hummingbirds, Birds.** ●○

## DECIDUOUS SHRUBS

CT native, except as noted. 2 gallon plants, except as noted.

**Azalea Pinxterbloom 'Deep Pink'** (*Rhododendron periclymenoides*): 4-8'. 'Deep Pink' discovered in CT, very attractive dark-pink fragrant April-May blooms. Bright leaves. Moist acid soil, dry ok, can spread. Natural settings, woods-edges. (pictured right)

**Butterflies, Hummingbirds. Stream Buffers. ○●**



**Sageleaf Willow** (*Salix candida*): 12-40". Silver-gray foliage. Dioecious; showy 1-2" catkins on both male and female plants. Bloom from April-June. Pods split open to expose cottony seeds. Neutral to slightly alkaline damp to wet soil. Deer resistant.

**Birds, Bees. Erosion Control. ○●**

**Blue Haw 'Raisinette'** (*Viburnum cassinoides*): (3 gal) 5-7', 4-6' spread. Clusters of creamy white trumpet-shaped 1/4" flowers with yellow stamens. Fruit is blue-black when mature. Thick leathery foliage, red shades of fall color. Medium moisture to wet, well-drained soil. Deer resistant.

**Butterflies, Hummingbirds, Birds, Bees. ○**

**Swamp Azalea** (*Rhododendron viscosum*): 5-8', open spreading habit. Light-pink June flowers, 4-9 per cluster, with sweet clove-like scent. New leaf growth reddish, red-orange in fall. Moist to wet soils. Use for wood's edge, natural settings.

**Butterflies, Hummingbirds. Stream Buffers. ○●**

**Chokeberry, Red** (*Aronia arbutifolia*): (1 gal) 6-8', vase-shape in youth, arching later. Showy fragrant white April flowers. Abundant bright-red berries late summer, persist into winter. Glossy leaves turn brilliant scarlet in fall. Adaptable, wet to dry, clay or sand. Use in groups, shrub borders, woods areas, meadows. Can colonize, but easily constrained.

**Butterflies, Bees, Birds. Stream Buffers. ○●**

**Sweet Gale** (*Myrica gale*): 2-4' densely-branched aromatic shrub, like small Bayberry. Narrow sweet-scented 3" gray-lime-green leaves. Catkin flowers, yellow-green male, reddish female, April before leaves. Glowing-orange summer seedcones. Native to bogs/water margins, but adaptable to much drier soil. Attractive sturdy groundcover in masses, foundations.

**Butterflies, Birds. Erosion Control. Stream Buffers. ○●●**

**Fragrant Sumac 'Gro-Low'** (*Rhus aromatica*): 2' x 6-8' dense mounding shrub. Fragrant yellow March-April flowers. Glossy blue-green leaves, showy orange-red in fall. Abundant persistent red fall fruit. Dry to moist, even poor soil. Excellent fast-growing groundcover, slope cover, or foundations.

**Butterflies, Birds. Erosion Control. ○●**

**Virginia Rose** (*Rosa virginiana*): (1 gal) 4-6'. 2-3" showy, fragrant pink flowers. Blooms from June to August. Dark-green foliage with numerous hooked prickles along stem. Edible rosehips used to make jams and tea, and also provides food for birds. Does well in most soil types; salt tolerant. Hedges and wildlife gardens.

**Birds, Bees, Butterflies. ○●**

**New Jersey Redroot** (*Ceanothus americanus*): (1 gal) 2-4', dense with slender branches; yellow twigs striking in winter. 2" panicles of honey-scented frothy white June-July flowers. Glossy toothed dark leaves, yellow in fall. Dry to medium soil, takes shallow poor soils/drought. Very adaptable. Borders, tall ground cover, massing on banks, eroded areas, cut flowers.

**Bees, Butterflies, Birds. Erosion Control. ○●**

**Winterberry 'Red Sprite'** (*Ilex verticillata*): 3-4', compact, mounded. Silvery-smooth bark, dark lustrous leaves. Red berries through fall/winter. Easy to grow, average to wet soils, takes dry, more fruit in more sun. Winter specimen, massing, screen, hedges. *Non-fruiting male, below, offered to aid pollination and berry set.*

**Birds, Butterflies. Stream Buffers. ○●**

**Oakleaf Hydrangea 'Snow Queen'** (*Hydrangea quercifolia*): 4-7'. 6" deeply-lobed oak-like dark leaves, superb red-burgundy in fall. 8" cones of white June flowers, held upright, turn purplish-pink when mature, earthy brown in late fall, retain shape into winter. Cinnamon-color peeling stems. Moist soil. Shrub border, massing, specimen. *Native SE U.S.*

**Bees. ○●**

**Winterberry 'Jim Dandy'** (*Ilex verticillata*): 3-6'. This male plant does not produce berries, but aids in pollination and berry set for female. Ideal for pairing with early blooming 'Red Sprite'. One male can pollinate up to six female plants, located within 50'. Good for foundation planting and screening.

**Bees, Butterflies. Stream Buffers. ○●**



### Why Are Native Plants Important?

Native insects need native plants to thrive.  
Native birds and mammals need native insects, as well as native plants, to thrive.  
Thus, native plants are critical to higher forms of life.

Often, ornamental plants from Asia and Europe do not supply food for our native insects.

For example, our native oaks support over 500 native butterflies and moths.  
Invasive Phragmites supports 170 species in its homeland, while supporting only 5 species here.



**The UConn Extension Master Gardener Program** provides us with knowledgeable volunteers to assist with our sale every year. They can answer your questions both during the sale and beyond. Online: [mastergardener.uconn.edu](http://mastergardener.uconn.edu)  
Hartford County Master Gardener Office: 860.570.9010 / Tolland County Master Gardener Office: 860.870.6934

**UConn Home and Garden Education Center** can answer all your growing questions.  
Phone: 877.486.6271 Email: [ladybug@uconn.edu](mailto:ladybug@uconn.edu) Web: [www.ladybug.uconn.edu](http://www.ladybug.uconn.edu). Sign up for free monthly newsletter.

## PERENNIALS

CT native, except as noted.

**Appalachian Sedge** (*Carex appalachica*)-see *Ground-covers, next page*

**Bloodroot** (*Sanguinaria canadensis*): (1 qt) 6-10" long-lived carefree wildflower. Forms clumps, patches, colonies. 2-3" crystal-white petals around golden center, March-April. Unique 9-12" wide, rounded, clefted wavy bright-green leaves into August, then die back. 1" long seed pods. Average to moist humusy soil. Bold foliage make superb groundcover under trees/shrubs. (pictured right) **Bees. ●●**



**Blue-Eyed Grass 'Lucerne'** (*Sisyrinchium angustifolium*): (5 pt) 1-1.5' grass-like wildflower. 1" long-lasting starry intense-blue flowers, yellow spike centers, May-June. Small iris-like leaves. Moist/average soil. Short-lived, but self-seeds freely into thick stands at right sites. Groundcover, edging, meadows, crevices. **Butterflies, Birds, Bees. ●●**

**Blue False Indigo** (*Baptisia australis*): (5 pt) 36-48", lovely upright species. Long spikes of indigo-blue pea-like June flowers; attractive seedpods. Abundant blue-green foliage lends soft shrubby look. Moist well-drained to dry, takes poor soils. Excellent in borders, meadows. *Native NY south.* **Butterflies, Birds. ●●**

**Broad-Leaved Mountain Mint** (*Pycnanthemum muticum*): (5 pt) 3' clumps, all parts aromatic. Dense disks of tiny pink florets, each with pair of showy soft silvery bracts; graceful frosted tiers of bloom. Dark oval leaves. Medium to moist. Naturalizes. Meadows, borders, herb gardens. **Butterflies, Pollinators. ●●**

**Culver's Root** (*Veronicastrum virginicum*): (5 pt) 3-5' x 2-3', showy lavender flowers on strong slender 15" candelabra-like spikes, June-August. Medium to moist soil, light shade ok, takes a few years to fully establish. Elegant vertical accents, back and middle of borders, meadows, rain gardens. **Butterflies, Bees. ●**

**Downy Rattlesnake Plantain** (*Goodyera pubescens*) (1 qt) 6-12", native orchid with green, white-veined evergreen basal leaves covered with fine downy hairs. Flower stalk can reach over 12" with a 1" spike comprised of numerous white flowers. One of the most prevalent orchids native to the Northeast. Slightly acidic/alkaline wet-dry soil. **Bees. ●●●**

**Field Pussytoes** (*Antennaria neglecta*): (1 qt) 4-6" basal rosette of leaves spreads to create a lovely groundcover. Small inconspicuous white flowers in spring. Evergreen grey-green hairy leaves. Dry to moderate soil moisture. Tolerates drought and foot traffic. Host to American Painted Lady butterfly caterpillars. **Bees, Butterflies. ●●**

**Goldenrod 'Little Lemon'** (*Solidago hybrid*): (5 pt) 14" x 18" compact form, well branched. Bright light-lemon-yellow flowers, upright thick panicles, June-fall. Fine-textured lance-leaves. Medium to dry, drought-tolerant; easy. Ragweed, not Goldenrods, cause hay fever. Outstanding in gardens: border fronts, edging, containers, excellent cut flowers. **Bees, Butterflies (100+), Birds. ●●**

**Goldenseal** (*Hydrastis canadensis*): (1 qt) 6-12" x 14", bold perennial. 1 showy 3/4" April-May flower, made of 50 spreading white stamens with pale chartreuse tips. 1 showy raspberry-like scarlet fruit, late summer. Moist cool rich humusy loamy soil. Excellent for woods, shade, wild gardens. Historically medicinal. **Bees, Birds. ●●**

**New England Aster** (*Symphotrichum novae-angliae*) (5 pt): 3-4' x 2-3'. Sprays of deep violet-blue flowers, yellow-orange-center disks, August-October. Narrow leaves on stout stems. Moist to average well-drained soil. Mildew-resistant. Very important nectar source for pollinators. **Birds, Butterflies, Bees. ●●**

**New York Ironweed** (*Vernonia nov*): (5 pt) 3-7' x 3-4' robust upright clumps. Loose fluffy deep reddish-purple flowers, Aug.-Sept. Narrow leaves, dense along stout stems. Average/wet, likes rich moist soil. Easily grown. Backs of large borders, cottage gardens, meadows. **Bees, Butterflies, Birds. Stream Buffers. ●●**

**Orange Fringed Orchid** (*Platanthera ciliaris*): (5 pt) 12-36", 12-15" spread. Produces 30-60 bright showy, yellow to orange flowers with deeply fringed lip petals clustered in a spike. Blooms for about a month during mid-late summer. Fruit consists of slender pods full of thousands of small seeds. Likes dry to wet, acidic soil/meadows/bogs. Considered rare in southern New England. **Butterflies. ●●**

**Red Columbine** (*Aquilegia canadensis*): (1 qt) 1-2' mound. 1-2" nodding bell-like flowers with red sepals, yellow petals and long stamens, and 5 red backward-projecting spurs, April-June. Fine-textured leaves, each with 3 round-lobed leaflets. Average soil, likes moist rich humusy. Easy to grow. Woods, borders, accents, naturalized/wildflower areas. **Bees, Butterflies, Birds, Hummingbirds. ●●**

**Scarlet Bee Balm** (*Monarda didyma*): (5 pt) 3-4' x 2-3' clumps of upright branching stems. Brilliant 2-4" bright scarlet-red flower heads of dense tousled globes atop strong stems, several weeks July-Aug. 3-6" heart-shaped aromatic leaves. Moist, likes fertile soil. A vigorous spreader, so give it room in naturalized areas, meadows. Top pollinator plant. *Possibly CT native, but native to NY.* **Bees, Butterflies, Hummingbirds. Stream Buffers. ●●**

**Sharp-lobed Hepatica** (*Hepatica acutiloba*): (1 qt) 3-6" x 8-12" tidy clumps, increase yearly. Charming 1" flowers with 6-8 oval petals, variably white/blue/violet/pink, centers yellow-green, sparkly-white stamens, Mar-Apr., before leaves. Leaves have three 3" oval pointed lobes; purple-brown in fall/winter. Moist, rich, slightly sweet soil. Long-lived, tough once settled. Harbinger of spring in woods, among rocks, in drifts. **Bees. ●**

**Spring Beauty** (*Claytonia virginiana*): (1 qt) 5-8" beloved early spring ephemeral. Clusters of 1/2" five-petaled April flowers, white or pink, but always with deep pink veining, deep pink anthers, and chartreuse spots at the base of petals. Pairs of grass-like 2-5" long dark leaves. Likes humusy rich moist well-drained soils. Early nectar source. Large patches/colonies are spectacular. **Bees, Early Pollinators. ●●**

**Sweet White Violet** (*Viola blanda*): (1 qt) A low maintenance, fragrant wildflower. Edible white flowers with violet/brown markings, under 1" in size, late spring/early summer. Basal leaves mostly heartshaped. Fruit is a hanging capsule containing many small seeds that ripen to dark brown. Moderate soil moisture. Spreads well, ground cover/wetland edges. **Bees, Butterflies. ●●**

**Tall Garden Phlox 'Jeana'** (*Phlox paniculata*)-see next page under *Perennial of the Year*

**Wild Ginger** (*Asarum canadense*)-see next page under *Ground-covers*

**Yellow Trout Lily** (*Erythronium americana*): (1 qt) 2-6" x 6-12" woodland spring ephemeral. Emerging in March, beautiful unusual 3-6" glossy oval leaves, with gray, green, and brown mottling (like colors of brook trout), form patches and carpets. Occasional blooms in April. These nodding 1.5" yellow flowers have backwards-bent petals, 3 inner, and 3 outer, with exterior of the latter brushed with red. Moist humusy fertile well-drained soil. Seasonal groundcover in woodland or shade gardens. **Bees. Stream Buffers. ●●**



## 2024 PERENNIAL PLANT OF THE YEAR

**Tall Garden Phlox 'Jeana'** (*Phlox paniculata*): (5 pt) 2-4'. Large tiered clusters of small lavender pink flowers. Blooms from mid-summer to early fall. Fragrant flowers are rich in nectar. Native range is Pennsylvania, south, but has naturalized in much of New England. Excellent resistance to powdery mildew. Borders and groupings. **Birds, Butterflies, Hummingbirds.** ○●



### GROUNDCOVERS

CT native, except as noted.

**Appalachian Sedge** (*Carex appalachica*): (5 pt) 6", clump-forming, slowly spreads to form colonies. Dark green weeping native sedge. Great for borders, rock gardens. Host to Skipper and Satyr butterfly caterpillars. Low-maintenance, drought tolerant and deer resistant. **Birds, Butterflies, Turtles.** ○●●



**Virginia Strawberry** (*Fragaria virginiana*): (1 qt) 3-12" ground-hugging densely-clumping perennial. Trailing stems root into vegetative gaps, helping to suppress weeds. White flowers, April-May. 1/2-1" bright red strawberries. Maroon-red fall foliage. Dry to moist, likes fertile soil. Adaptable, easy. Top groundcover, lawn substitute, edible. (Pictured above)

**Bees, Butterflies, Birds, Turtles. Erosion Control.** ○●

**Bog Rosemary 'Blue Ice'** (*Andromeda polifolia*): (1 gal) 12-14", 20-24" spread; clump. Intense slate-blue leaves, showy pink flower clusters bloom late spring. Groundcover/ornamental. Prefers rich, well-drained acidic soil. Raingardens/stream and pond margins. **Bees, Butterflies.** ●●

**Wild Ginger** (*Asarum canadense*) (1 qt): 3-8", outstanding shade ground-cover. Bold heart-shaped foliage (ginger scent when bruised). Purple-brown spring flowers, under leaves. Average to wet, likes humusy soil; spreads 6"/yr. once settled. Woods, edging. Often used with fine-textured Maidenhair Fern. **Butterflies.** ●●

**A Word on Spring Ephemerals:** Native to Eastern Woodlands, these spring wildflowers emerge, flower, set fruit, and die back in the sunny window between ground thawing and tree leaf-out (often March to May). They play a critical role in forest ecosystems by stabilizing soils, slowing water runoff, contributing important nutrients, and sustaining early native bee/insect populations. Habitat fragmentation, invasive plants and climate change are causing declines in populations. These plants establish slowly, and can take decades to even reappear.

**Spring ephemerals we offer this year are Bloodroot, Sharp-lobed Hepatica, Spring Beauty & Yellow Trout Lily.**



### NATIVE PERENNIAL PLUGS

Low-cost plant plugs sold in bulk, for establishing groundcovers, meadows, drifts, erosion control. Less than a year old, they are very easy to plant. All of the following are CT natives.



**Common Milkweed** (*Asclepias syriaca*): (10 plugs, 2" sq. x 5" deep) Space 1'. 2-4' stout unbranched stems, thick oblong leaves, milky sap when cut. Showy large domes of mauve June-Aug. flowers. 2-5" fall seedpods, brown seeds with long white silky tails. Moist to dry soils. Site where some spreading is ok. Meadows, naturalized areas. **Superb for Bees, Butterflies (vital for Monarchs).** ○



**Hair-awn Muhly Grass** (*Muhlenbergia capillaris*): (10 plugs, 1.9" sq. x 2.37" deep) 2-3' leaf-clumps, to 5' in flower. Glossy wiry leaves, copper in fall. Stiff stalks hold magnificent gossamer haze of 3' tassels with tiny flowers, green, then white, to superb rose-red, in fall through Oct.; smoky gray in winter. Average to moist, well-drained soil, tolerates drought and poor soils. Specimen, drifts, meadows, borders, foundations. **Wildlife Cover, Birds eat seeds.** ○

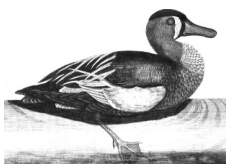
**Foxglove Beardtongue** (*Penstemon digitalis*): (10 plugs, 2" sq. x 5" deep) 3-4' robust clump. Lovely loose May-June panicles of 1.25" lavender-pink tubular bell flowers, held atop upright burgundy-red stems. Dark dramatic burgundy-red to wine-purple foliage. Average to moist soil. Borders, meadows, rock gardens, cut flowers. **Bees, Butterflies, Birds, Hummingbirds.** ○●

**Zig-Zag Goldenrod** (*Solidago flexicaulis*): (10 plugs, 2" sq. x 5" deep) 2-4'. Showy golden flowers July-Sept. Has toothed, broad ovate leaves along unbranched stems topped with elongated yellow flower clusters. Can tolerate shade, drought, and clay soil. Pollinator gardens, forest and stream edges. **Pollinators, Birds.** ○●

### GARDEN EXTRAS

All Connecticut-made

**Barley Straw for Ponds** (bales): An inexpensive and environmentally sound method for safely controlling algae. Algae deplete oxygen and can kill fish and other plants. In early spring, a loose bundle, contained in netting, is anchored with a brick or stone in pond. Netting included. One bale treats approximately 1/2 acre.



loved and beneficial birds. This threatened species has lost suitable nesting cavities due to changing land uses and urbanization.

**Bluebird House:** Rough-cut pine. Provides valuable nesting habitat for the Eastern Bluebird, one of the most

**Collins Compost** (40 lb bags): Leaf and cow manure, fully composted. Adds organic matter to soils, improves soil drainage, texture, and moisture-holding ability. NO manure odor. Our most popular item!

# EVERGREEN BARE-ROOT TREE SEEDLINGS

(Bundles of 25 unless noted) (Native to Northeast unless otherwise noted; All evergreens provide bird habitat.)

**Please Order Bare-Root Seedlings Early: Orders Due Tuesday, March 12th**

**American Arborvitae** (*Thuja occidentalis*): (2-yr 7-12") 40-60' x 10-15', conical, dark-green flat scale-leaves. Well-drained, takes pruning. Hedges/screens. Slow to medium. **Windbreak.** ○



**\*Fraser Fir** (*Abies fraseri*): (3-yr 7-12") 30-40' x 20-25', pyramidal, fragrant, shiny dark soft needles, very good retention. Moist, well-drained, slow growth, excellent fragrance. Specimen, Christmas tree. *Native to Appalachians.* ○○

**Eastern Red Cedar** (*Juniperus virginiana*): (1-yr 5-10") 40-50' x 8-20', densely pyramidal, needles & bluish waxy fruit aromatic when crushed. Well-drained, tolerates poor soils. Screen/foundation. **Windbreak.** ○○

**Colorado Blue Spruce** (*Picea pungens*): (2-yr 9-15") 30-60' x 10-20', silver-blue, good retention, good fragrance, dense horizontal branching. Slow to medium growth. Soil adaptable. Specimen, Christmas tree. *Native to Rockies.* ○

**Balsam Fir** (*Abies balsamea*): (2-yr 5-10") 50-60' x 20-30', fragrant shiny dark 1" needles. Well-drained, slow growth. Specimen, Christmas tree. ○○

**Norway Spruce** (*Picea abies*): (2-yr 10-18") 40-60' x 25-30', pendulous branches, dark needles, very good retention, good fragrance. Well-drained, fast growth. Specimen, screen. *European.* **Windbreak.** ○

**\*Canaan Fir** (*Abies balsamea var. phanerolepis*): (3-yr 8-16") 40-55' x 20-25', strong branches, dark 1" needles. Moist well-drained, tolerates wetter soils, resists spring frost injury. Specimen, Christmas tree. *Native to West Virginia.* ○

**White Spruce** (*Picea glauca*): (2-yr 10-18") 40-60' x 10-20', conical, short blue-green needles, medium rate. Well-drained. Christmas tree, specimen. **Windbreak.** ○

**Concolor Fir** (*Abies concolor*): (2-yr 10-15") 50-75' x 20-30'. Spirelike dense formal habit, tiered branches, needles silver-blue-green. Likes deep moist soil, but adaptable. Specimen, exceptional foliage. *Native to Western U.S.* ○

**White Pine:** (*Pinus Strobus*) (2-yr 7-10") 50-80' x 30-50', soft bluish-green 4" needles with excellent retention, very good fragrance. Well-drained, fast growing. Specimen, hedge, Christmas tree. **Windbreak.** ○

**Douglas Fir** (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*): (2-yr 10-18") 60-80' x 15-20', conical, horizontal pendulous branches, soft needles, excellent retention. Moist, well-drained soil, avoid high wind. Fast growth. Forest, timber, Christmas tree. *Native to Western U.S.* ○○

*\*Canaan and Fraser Firs are transplants, meaning they are older and further along in root and branch development. Sold in bundles of 5.*



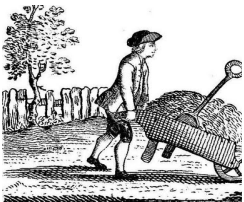
## NCCD FREE SPRING 2024 WORKSHOPS LANDSCAPING FOR BIRDS, BEES, & BUTTERFLIES USING NATIVE PLANTS



Jane Seymour, Wildlife Biologist, CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP)

**Saturday, February 24th, 10am-11:30am - Virtually via Zoom.**

Registration Info to be posted soon at: [www.conservect.org/northcentral](http://www.conservect.org/northcentral)



### PLANTING AND PRUNING BASICS

Indoor presentaion and outdoor demonstrations on tree health and care.

Ginny Patsun, Certified Arborist and Soil Conservation Specialist, NCCD



**Saturday, March 9th, 10am-12pm - In-person, Tolland County Agricultural Center, 24 Hyde Ave., Vernon, CT**

Registration Info to be posted soon at: [www.conservect.org/northcentral](http://www.conservect.org/northcentral)

## FREE GUIDED TRAIL WALK AT HAWK HILL FARM

Hosted by Traprock Ridge Land Conservancy



Walk approximately 2 miles along sloping farm roads on this beautiful, historic farm property to learn more about the efforts to control invasives and plants as well as identify and discuss connections between native plants and trees along the way. Guided by Ron Pitz, a DEEP-Certified Master Wildlife Conservationist and retired Executive Director of the Knox Park Foundation, and Peter Picone, DEEP Wildlife Biologist.

**Saturday, April 20, 1:30-3:30pm. Meet at Hawk Hill Farm, 22 Duncaster Rd, Bloomfield CT.**

RSVP at [www.trlandconservancy.org](http://www.trlandconservancy.org).

Hawk Hill Farm was purchased in 2015 by the Traprock Ridge Land Conservancy (formerly the Wintonbury Land Trust) with the support of its members to protect one of the oldest continuously operating farms in the area, dating to 1746, and its historic post-and-beam bank barn. The 47-acre property includes rolling hills, wetlands, champion trees, a public walking path, and space for the Conservancy's partner, the 4 Five Farm, to raise chickens and goats and grow vegetable crops that are available for purchase ([www.the4fivefarm.com](http://www.the4fivefarm.com)).

# 2024 ORDER FORM

Skip this form and ORDER ONLINE!

Visit [www.conservect.org/northcentral](http://www.conservect.org/northcentral) for Online Ordering, Sale Details, Plant Info & Photos

Potted Plants	Price	Qty.	Total \$
<b>Edible Landscape</b>			
Blackberry 'Black Satin' (2 gal)	\$30		
Blueberry (Highbush, set of 3; 1 gal each)	\$45		
Blueberry (Lowbush, 1 gal)	\$14		
Elderberry 'Ranch' (3 gal)	\$36		
Grape 'Reliance' (2 gal)	\$30		
Ostrich Fern (5 pint)	\$10		
Persimmon (3 gal)	\$62		
Strawberry 'Sweet Kiss' (1 gal)	\$12		
<b>Trees</b>			
American Basswood (3 gal)	\$60		
American Hornbeam (2 gal)	\$26		
Franklinia (2 gal)	\$30		
Pagoda Dogwood (3 gal)	\$60		
Serviceberry (2 gal)	\$30		
Serviceberry (clump form, 3 gal)	\$48		
<b>Evergreen Shrubs</b>			
American Yew (2 gal)	\$34		
Inkberry (1 gal)	\$18		
Leatherleaf 'Dew Drop' (1 gal)	\$16		
Mountain Laurel – Species (1 gal)	\$22		
Mountain Laurel 'Pink Charm' (1 gal)	\$22		
Rhododendron Catawba 'Album' (2 gal)	\$34		
<b>Deciduous Shrubs</b>			
Azalea Pinxterbloom 'Deep Pink' (2 gal)	\$30		
Blue Haw 'Raisinette' (3 gal)	\$40		
Chokeberry, Red (1 gal)	\$20		
Fragrant Sumac 'Gro-Low' (2 gal)	\$32		
New Jersey Redroot (1 gal)	\$22		
Oakleaf Hydrangea 'Snow Queen' (2 gal)	\$30		
Sageleaf Willow (2 gal)	\$28		
Swamp Azalea (2 gal)	\$30		
Sweet Gale (2 gal)	\$30		
Virginia Rose (1 gal)	\$20		
Winterberry 'Red Sprite' (2 gal)	\$30		
Winterberry 'Jim Dandy' (Male; 2 gal)	\$30		
<b>Sub-total Potted Plants</b>			<b>\$</b>

## Plant Orders due April 3! \*\*Order Bare-root Seedlings by March 12\*\*

Curbside Pre-Order Pick-Up Dates:  
Friday April 19 & Saturday April 20

Plants, Garden Extras	Price	Qty.	Total \$
<b>Perennials</b>			
Bloodroot (1 quart)	\$7		
Blue-Eyed Grass 'Lucerne' (5 pint)	\$10		
Blue False Indigo (5 pint)	\$10		
Broad-Leaved Mountain Mint (5 pint)	\$10		
Culver's Root (5 pint)	\$10		
Downy Rattlesnake Plantain (1 quart)	\$7		
Field Pussytoes (1 quart)	\$7		
Goldenrod 'Little Lemon' (5 pint)	\$10		
Goldenseal (1 quart)	\$7		
New England Aster (5 pint)	\$10		
New York Ironweed (5 pint)	\$10		
Orange Fringed Orchid (5 pint)	\$12		
Red Columbine (1 quart)	\$7		
Scarlet Bee Balm (5 pint)	\$10		
Sharp-Lobed Hepatica (1 quart)	\$7		
Spring Beauty (1 quart)	\$7		
Sweet White Violet (1 quart)	\$7		
Yellow Trout Lily (1 quart)	\$7		
<b>Perennial of the Year</b>			
Tall Garden Phlox 'Jeana' (5 pint)	\$10		
<b>Groundcovers</b>			
Appalachian Sedge (5 pint)	\$10		
Bog Rosemary 'Blue Ice' (1 gal)	\$22		
Virginia Strawberry (1 quart)	\$7		
Wild Ginger (1 quart)	\$7		
<b>Native Perennial Plugs</b>			
Common Milkweed (10 plugs)	\$32		
Foxglove Beardtongue (10 plugs)	\$30		
Hair-awn Muhly Grass (10 plugs)	\$28		
Zig-Zag Goldenrod (10 plugs)	\$30		
<b>Garden Extras</b>			
Barley Straw (1 large bale for ponds)	\$30		
Bluebird House (rough-cut pine)	\$15		
Collins Compost (40 lb bag)	\$12		
<b>Sub-total Plants, Extras</b>			<b>\$</b>

Evergreen Bare-root Tree Seedlings **Order by March 12**			
Bundles of 25 Seedlings	Qty. (# of bundles)		
American Arborvitae (2-yr 7-12")			
Eastern Red Cedar (1-yr 5-10")			
Balsam Fir (2-yr 5-10")			
Concolor Fir (2-yr 10-15")			
Douglas Fir (2-yr 10-18")			
Colorado Blue Spruce (2-yr 9-15")			
Norway Spruce (2-yr 10-18")			
White Spruce (2-yr 10-18")			
White Pine (2-yr 7-10")			
<b>Total # of bundles ordered</b>			
<b>1-3 bundles- \$25 per bundle*</b>		<i>*Price based on total # of bundles ordered</i>	
<b>4+ bundles- \$20 per bundle*</b>			
<b>Sub-total Bundles of 25</b>		<b>\$</b>	
<b>Bundles of 5 Transplants</b>			
	<b>Price</b>	<b>Qty.</b>	<b>Total \$</b>
Canaan Fir (P+1 3-yr, 8-16")	\$12		
Fraser Fir (P+1 3-yr, 7-12")	\$12		
<b>Sub-total Bundles of 5</b>		<b>\$</b>	

**Order Online:** [www.conservect.org/northcentral](http://www.conservect.org/northcentral) and click on Plant Sale link to access our online store

**Or Complete this Form & Mail w/Check:**

**SELECT A PICK-UP LOCATION:**

- Tolland County Agricultural Center, Vernon  
 Hawk Hill Farm, Bloomfield

**Circle Preferred Pick-up Day/Time (April 19/20)**

Fri 10a-12p 12-2p 2-4p 4-7p | Sat 9-11a 11a-1p

**Order Total:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Donation to NCCD:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Total Amount Enclosed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Make Checks Payable To:** NCCD

**Mail To:** North Central Conservation District  
24 Hyde Avenue, Vernon, CT 06066

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_