



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

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

CONSERVATION COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING AGENDA TUESDAY, MAY 21, 2024, 7:00 P.M.

IN-PERSON ATTENDANCE: TOWN HALL ANNEX, 57 MAIN STREET, ELLINGTON, CT
REMOTE ATTENDANCE: VIA ZOOM MEETING, INSTRUCTIONS 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. Sustainable CT Certification, Conservation Sections - Update.
3. Report - Farmland Preservation Program.
 - a. Notice of Acquisition of Development Rights, Oakridge Dairy, Farm 2, for 101.98 acres, Recorded May 6, 2024.
 - b. Farmland Preservation Brochure, Revised May 2024.
 - c. Open Space/Farmland/Recreational Assets Inventory, Revised May 2024.
4. Report - Open Space Preservation Program.
 - a. Executive Session to Discuss Possible Open Space Purchases.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:

1. FY 23-24 Budget & Expenditure Update.
2. Approval of March 12, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes.
3. Correspondence/Discussion:
 - a. Ad Hoc Ellington Trails Committee - Monthly Agendas/Minutes.
 - b. Northern Connecticut Land Trust Landmark Newsletter, March 2024.
 - c. Oakridge Dairy receives CT Dept. of Agriculture Climate Resiliency Grant, Patch article dated April 17, 2024.

V. ADJOURNMENT:

Next Meeting is June 11, 2024

Instructions to attend remotely via Zoom Meeting listed below. The agenda is posted on the Town of Ellington webpage (www.ellington-ct.gov) under Agenda & Minutes, Inland Wetlands Agency.

Join Zoom Meeting via Link:
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85890690597>
Meeting ID: 858 9069 0597
Passcode: 689826

Join Zoom Meeting by Phone:
1-646-558-8656 US (New York)
Meeting ID: 858 9069 0597
Passcode: 689826

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

Return to
 Halloran Sage
 One Goodwin Square
 Hartford, CT 06103
 Attn RPR



Doc ID: 001634630003 Type: NOTICE

BK 549 PG 41-43

OAKRIDGE DAIRY FARM 2
 Ellington, Connecticut
 to
 STATE OF CONNECTICUT

NOTICE OF ACQUISITION OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS

Pursuant to Farmland Preservation Program Section 22-26cc(b) of the Connecticut General Statutes, notice is hereby given that pursuant to Chapter 422(a) of the Connecticut General Statutes, the State of Connecticut, acting by and through the Commissioner of Agriculture, has acquired development rights, as such term is defined in Section 22-26bb(d) of the Connecticut General Statutes, of farmland from **Oakridge Dairy LLC**, being the fee owners of agricultural land, as such term is defined in Section 22-26bb(a) of the Connecticut General Statutes. The land upon which such development rights have been acquired is located in the **Town of Ellington**, Connecticut, and is defined in "Schedule A" attached hereto and made a part hereof.

It is the purpose and intent of such conveyance to protect such land as agricultural land in accordance with the Statement of Intent set forth in Section 22-26aa of the Connecticut General Statutes so as to benefit the well being of the people of the State of Connecticut now and in the future.


For a more detailed description of the restrictions on such land, reference is made to that certain Conveyance of Development Rights Deed from **Oakridge Dairy LLC** to the State of Connecticut dated **April 15, 2024**, which has been recorded in the Land Records of the **Town of Ellington**, Connecticut on May, 6, 2024, at ~~am~~ p.m.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal this 29th day of April, 2024.


Signed, sealed and delivered in the presence of:



 Witness:



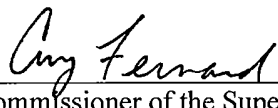

 Bryan P. Hurlburt
 Commissioner



 Witness:

STATE OF CONNECTICUT)
) ss: Hartford
 COUNTY OF HARTFORD)

The foregoing instrument was acknowledged before me this 24 day of April, 2024, by Bryan P. Hurlburt, Commissioner of Agriculture.

 Juris # 419549
 Commissioner of the Superior Court
 OR Notary Public
 My commission expires: 

OAKRIDGE DAIRY FARM 2
Ellington, Connecticut

SCHEDULE A

A certain piece or parcel of land (the "Premises") located on the southerly side of Meadow Brook Road in the Town of Ellington, County of Tolland, and State of Connecticut. Said Premises being shown on a map or plan entitled, "MONUMENTED PROPERTY SURVEY PREPARED FOR STATE OF CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FARMLAND PRESERVATION PROGRAM PROPERTY OF OAKRIDGE DAIRY, LLC TOTAL AREA OWNED = 101.98+/- ACRES TOTAL AREA RESTRICTED = 101.98+/- ACRES ASSESSOR'S NO. 091-003 MEADOW BROOK ROAD ELLINGTON, CONNECTICUT", Sheets 1-2 of 2, Scale 1" = 100', DATED: APRIL 11, 2023, BY ROB HELLSTROM LAND SURVEYING LLC. Said Premises being more particularly described as follows:

BEGINNING at an iron pin at the south street line of Meadow Brook Road, said iron pin being the northeast corner of the herein described parcel;

thence S 79°31'19" W a distance of 58.68' to an iron pin;
 thence S 79°31'19" W a distance of 139.32' to an iron pin;
 thence S 53°47'01" E a distance of 336.65' to an iron pin;
 thence S 53°47'01" E a distance of 339.39' to an iron pin;
 thence S 78°14'41" E a distance of 375.00' to an iron pin;
 thence S 78°14'41" E a distance of 359.30' to an iron pin;
 The preceding six courses are along land now or formerly of Glenn & Erika Bahler;

thence S 15°40'35" W a distance of 191.01' to an angle iron;
 thence S 15°51'56" W a distance of 117.97' to a 12" tree stump with wire;
 thence S 15°51'56" W a distance of 220.37' to an iron pin;
 thence S 16°34'48" W a distance of 325.12' to a fence post with wire;
 thence S 14°02'33" W a distance of 105.02' to an iron pin;
 thence S 14°02'33" W a distance of 158.67' to an iron pin;
 thence S 16°19'22" W a distance of 160.87' to a fence post with wire;
 thence S 17°11'30" W a distance of 157.46' to a fence post with wire;
 thence S 26°19'29" W a distance of 83.82' to a fence post with wire;
 thence S 26°19'29" W a distance of 175.44' to an iron pin;
 The preceding ten courses are along land now or formerly of Aborn Land, LLC;

thence S 23°43'36" W a distance of 122.50' to a point;
 thence S 11°33'36" W a distance of 137.89' to an iron pin;
 thence N 79°49'46" W a distance of 132.28' to a point;
 thence N 78°17'41" W a distance of 152.65' to a concrete monument;
 thence N 76°34'38" W a distance of 346.75' to an iron pin;
 thence N 76°34'38" W a distance of 281.66' to a point;

thence N 72°24'46" W a distance of 156.00' to a point;
thence N 74°49'46" W a distance of 81.50' to an iron pin;
The preceding eight courses are along land now or formerly of the Town of Ellington;

thence N 77°25'28" W a distance of 104.56' to a point;
thence N 77°25'28" W a distance of 80.53' to a point;
thence N 79°44'30" W a distance of 219.78' to a point;
thence N 78°52'30" W a distance of 174.26' to an iron pin;
thence N 78°52'30" W a distance of 360.34' to a 36" tree with wire;
thence N 07°02'29" E a distance of 29.27' to an iron pin;
thence N 07°02'29" E a distance of 570.73' to an iron pin;
thence N 07°02'29" E a distance of 239.74' to a point;
thence N 72°20'48" E a distance of 63.44' to an iron pin;
thence N 72°20'48" E a distance of 177.76' to a point;
thence N 09°55'06" E a distance of 329.15' to a 16" tree with wire;
thence N 09°55'06" E a distance of 220.22' to an iron pin;
The preceding twelve courses are along land now or formerly of Oakridge Dairy, LLC;

thence N 79°39'40" E a distance of 89' more or less to the centerline of Broad Brook;
thence northerly along the centerline of Broad Brook for a distance of 977' more or less, with a closing
line N 30°23'27" E a distance of 806.59' to an angle point on Meadow Brook Road;
The preceding two courses are along land of now or formerly Oakridge Dairy, LLC;

thence with a curve turning to the left with an arc length of 124' more or less, with a radius of 650.00' and
chord bearing S 68°22'32" E to an iron pin;
thence S 77°02'51" E a distance of 530.36' to an iron pin and the place of beginning;
The preceding two courses are along the south street line of Meadow Brook Road;

The Premises having an area of 101.98 acres.

Received for Record at Town of Ellington, CT
On 05/06/2024 At 2:32:00 pm

Danna G. Hasey

~ Ellington ~
**A GREAT PLACE TO
 GROW!**

**FARMLAND
 PRESERVATION**

*Ellington
 Conservation
 Commission*

Ellington Planning Department

Land Use Annex
 57 Main Street

Ellington, CT 06029

Phone: 860-870-3120

Fax: 860-870-3122

Email: planner@ellington-ct.gov

For additional details, visit:

<http://ellington-ct.gov/>

PRESERVED FARMLAND



The following is a list of farmland with preserved development rights.

Farm Name	Location	Acres Preserved
Thrall Farm	Abbott Road	171.09
Burke Ridge Farm	Wapping Wood Road	119.4 (addl. in South Windsor)
Way Farm	Frog Hollow Road	68.6
Dzen Farm	Sadds Mill Road	22.25
Pease Farm	Reeves Road	20.79 (addl. in Somers)
Irish Bend Orchard	Reeves Road	5 (addl. in Enfield/Somers)
Preserved since 2007 bond authorization		
Oakridge Dairy Farm 1	Jobs Hill / Meadow Brook / Hoffman Road	101.83
Oakridge Dairy Farm 2	Meadow Brook Road	101.98
Oakridge Dairy Farm 3	Jobs Hill Road (west)	51.82
Bahler Farms	Abbott / Middle Road	125.78
McKnight Farm	Green / Muddy Brook Road	124.42
Silverhurst/Foster Farm	Pinney Street	97.32
Myers Farm	Green / Reeves Road	70.59
Charter Farm	Somers Road	43.39 (addl. in Somers)
Silverhurst/Foster/Thrall Farm	Pinney Street	20.57
Wraight Farm	Webster Road	36.62

What are Development Rights?

Development rights are rights of land to be used for residential, commercial, or industrial development. The value of development rights is the monetary difference between the "highest and best use" and the agricultural land value. The monetary value is paid to the landowner in exchange for an agricultural easement preserving the land as farmland. After the easement is in place, the land may be retained, sold, transferred or inherited, but the agricultural restriction continues.



There are a number of state and local programs that allow farm owners to preserve farmland, including the sale of development rights and agricultural conservation easements. Please contact the Ellington Planning Department (860-870-3120, planner@ellington-ct.gov) or the Connecticut Department of Agriculture (860-713-2500, www.ctgrown.gov) to learn more.

Benefits of Farmland Preservation

Landowner Benefits:

- Viable alternative to selling land;
- Access to capital to sustain & improve operations;
- Opportunity to purchase land at affordable prices;
- Share legacy rights with future generations;

Community Benefits:

- Protect food and fiber producing soils;
- Provide local food and products;
- Preserve rural character;
- Enhance quality of life for future generations;

Protects Rural Economy:

Connecticut's agricultural industry provides \$3.5 billion per year and generates more than 20,000 jobs statewide. Agricultural industry is a vital business sector that supports food manufacturers and processors, garden centers, veterinarians, farm equipment wholesalers, farm supply stores, machinery repairs and wholesale fuel suppliers.

Property Tax Implications:

More than 20 years of studies nationwide show that farmland generates more public revenue than it requires in municipal services (*Planning for Agriculture-A Guide for Connecticut Municipalities, 2012*). See the below table which compares the cost of community services for various types of land use.

Cost of Community Services

This table shows that farmland generates more in revenue than it costs in services.

CT Town (Year of Study)	Commercial/Industrial	Residential	Open Space/Farm/Vacant Land
Bolton (1998)	\$0.23	\$1.05	\$0.50
Brooklyn (2002)	\$0.17	\$1.09	\$0.30
Durham (1995)	\$0.27	\$1.07	\$0.23
Farmington (2007)	\$0.32	\$1.33	\$0.31
Hebron (1995)	\$0.47	\$1.06	\$0.43
Lebanon (2007)	\$0.16	\$1.12	\$0.17
Litchfield (1995)	\$0.34	\$1.11	\$0.34
Pomfret (1995)	\$0.27	\$1.06	\$0.86
Ellington (2018)	\$0.27	\$1.13	\$0.27
Median cost — per \$1.00 of revenue raised for public services by land use	\$0.27	\$1.11	\$0.37

INVENTORY OF OPEN SPACE, FARMLAND, AND RECREATIONAL ASSETS

(NOT INCLUDING GOLF COURSES AND CONSERVATION EASEMENTS)

DESCRIPTION	OWNER	AREA (ac.)
Pinney and Windermere (Including Pinney Street Fields)	Town	67.71
Hockanum River Linear Parcel	Town	8.87
Carriage Hill Open Space	Town	18.51
Crystal Ridge Estates Open Space	Town	52.41
Crystal View Estates Open Space	Town	35.3
Ellington Highlands Open Space	Town	33.24
Rising Acres II Open Space	Town	8.3
Tripp Road Open Space	Town	8
Mosley Plains Open Space	Town	4.62
High Ridge Open Space	Town	3.46
Hatheway Road	Town	3.18
Sunset Hill - Town Access	Town	1.6
Batz Property	Town	44.86
Kimball Forest	Town	55.61
Meadow Brook Estates Open Space	Town	15.26
Metcalf Nature Preserve	Town	15.63
Stagecoach Crossing Open Space	Town	6.64
"T" Property**	Town	73.75
Schlude Property**	Town	11.46
Arbor Park	Town	3.3
Veterans Memorial Park (Main Street)	Town	0.63
Tedford Memorial Park	Town	41.42
Sandy Beach	Town	7.23
Veterans Memorial Park (Crystal Lake)	Town	0.24
Porter Road Highlands	Town	3.16
Other Town Open Lands	Town	21.87
Properties Taken In Lieu of Taxes	Town	30.18
Subtotal		576.44
Bellante (Sandy Beach Road)	NC Land Trust	35.76
Wraight (Webster Road)	NC Land Trust	116.43
Pearl	NC Land Trust	11.78
Sunset Hill	NC Land Trust	14
Swann Farm	NC Land Trust	56.21
Joy Property	NC Land Trust	6.87
Shenipsit Woods	NC Land Trust	29.73
Ernie Boothroyd Preserve	NC Land Trust	58
Wapping Wood Bird Sanctuary	SW Land Trust	7.6
Subtotal		336.38
Way Farm	PDR	68.6
Culbro Farm	PDR	171.09
Burke Farm	PDR	119.4
Pinney Farm	PDR	5
Myers Farm*	PDR/Land Trust	70.59
Dzen Farm	PDR	22.25
Silverhurst/Foster Farm	PDR	97.32
Silverhurst/Foster/Thrall Farm	PDR	20.57
Charter Farm	PDR	43.39
Pease Farm	PDR	20.79
McKnight Farm	PDR	124.42
Bahler Farm	PDR	125.78
Oakridge Dairy Farm (Jobs Hill Rd, Meadow Brook Rd, Hoffman Rd - Farm 1)	PDR	101.83
Oakridge Dairy Farm (Meadow Brook Rd - Farm 2)	PDR	101.98
Oakridge Dairy Farm (Jobs Hill Rd - Farm 3)	PDR	51.82
Wraight Farm	PDR/CFT	36.62
Subtotal		1181.45
Shenipsit State Forest	State	1509.49
Nye Holman State Forest	State	361.21
Bradway Reservoir	State	87.93
Boat Launch, Crystal Lake	State	4.81
Subtotal		1963.44
Crystal Lake		175.51
Shenipsit Lake	Conn. Water	170.91
Other Water Company Open Lands	Conn. Water	154.18
Subtotal		500.6
TOTAL =		4558.31

*Included in open space totals

**May be used for municipal puposes

Town of Ellington

General Ledger - On Demand Report

Fiscal Year: 2023-2024

From Date: 7/1/2023

To Date: 4/30/2024

Account Mask: ?????00270???????

Account Type: All

Print Detail Include PreEncumbrance

Print accounts with zero balance

Filter Encumbrance Detail by Date Range

Budget Balance

Account Number / Description

Budget Range To Date

Balance

Encumbrance % Remaining Bud

1000.02.00270.10.50103

\$1,600.00 \$780.00

\$820.00

\$820.00

Part Time---Conservation Commission--

51.25%

1000.02.00270.20.60221

\$400.00 (\$200.00)

\$600.00

\$600.00

Advertising Printing---Conservation Commission--

150.00%

1000.02.00270.20.60222

\$1,350.00 \$960.00

\$390.00

\$390.00

Dues & Subscriptions---Conservation Commission--

28.89%

Fund: 1000

\$3,350.00 \$1,540.00

\$1,810.00

\$1,810.00

Town of Ellington

General Ledger - On Demand Report

Account Mask: ??????00270???????

Print accounts with zero balance

Account Number / Description

Fiscal Year: 2023-2024

Account Type: All

Include Inactive Accounts

Budget Range To Date

\$3,350.00

YTD

\$1,810.00

\$0.00

\$1,810.00

From Date: 7/1/2023

Print Detail

Filter Encumbrance Detail by Date Range

Balance

\$1,810.00

Encumbrance

\$0.00

% Remaining Bud

\$1,810.00

End of Report



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

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

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

REMOTE ATTENDANCE VIA ZOOM MEETING

PRESENT: Chairman Rebecca Quarno, Vice Chairman David Bidwell, Regular Members James Gage, Sean Dwyer, and Laurie Burstein

ABSENT: Regular Members George Nickerson, Robert Zielfelder, and Alternate Ann Harford

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

OTHERS

PRESENT: Valerie Amsel, Ad Hoc Ellington Trails Committee Liaison

I. CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Rebecca Quarno called the Conservation Commission meeting to order at 7:15 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 the commission was reviewing the Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD) as it relates to conservation strategies and natural resource preservation. The three areas that were pointed out that the commission might want to focus on include the transfer of development rights, the open space cluster subdivision, and historic preservation.

Mr. Colonese investigated funding for a town-wide inventory of historical resources which can be accessed via grants through the state historic preservation office. The office is managed by the Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development. They accept applications on a rolling basis and funding is awarded when it is available. Requirements for the grant include that the work must be completed by a consultant that meets the grant's standards and that the project must be approved by the Board of Selectmen as payment must first come from the town. The project would then be reimbursed by the state historic preservation office. Mr. Colonese said he would speak with the state historic preservation office to get an idea of cost, however the cost of the project would be fully covered by the grant.

Chairman Quarno said the commission wants to understand the historic preservation piece of the POCD until they get further along with the initiative. She said they can return to discussing transfer of development rights and open space cluster subdivision if the historic preservation is no longer viable to move forward with.

2. Review Sustainable CT Certification Action Overview Worksheet - Conservation Sections
 - 5.5 Inventory and Assess Historic Resources.

Mr. Colonese said Sustainable CT said approval lasts for three years and the spring certification deadline is April 10. The town committee in charge of Sustainable CT certification has almost all their items submitted, and they anticipate a bronze designation. The town is well beyond the point requirement for this goal. At this point, the town doesn't have to complete 5.5.

- 5.6 Streamline Solar Permitting for Small Solar Installations.

Mr. Colonese has applied for a silver designation with SolSmart, a federal program that helps towns limit their barriers to permitting solar installation. A SolSmart designation equates to 20 points available for 5.6 of Sustainable CT. This step required a landing webpage for solar, which was added to the Conservation Commission's webpage on the town's website. The page has information on how to apply for solar permits and which municipal buildings currently have solar installations. These buildings currently include the town library, Crystal Lake School, Center School, and Ellington Middle School. The town also has grant money for a solar carport at the state trooper's parking area which will be completed this construction season. Mr. Colonese said he hopes to hear about the SolSmart application soon and will keep it on the agenda so he can report back.

Chairman Quarno asked how long after the April 10 deadline does Sustainable CT give their awards. Mr. Colonese said he would find out that information. Chairman Quarno said it would be important to publicize the information when the town receives an award, either in a press release or putting it on the town's website.

3. Report - Farmland Preservation Program.

There is no update on Farm 2 of Oakridge Dairy. Mr. Colonese said he has not heard from Oakridge Dairy or the Department of Agriculture. Commissioner Gage said he had not heard anything either.

The Connecticut Farmland Trust held a public informational meeting on Tuesday, February 27 at the Town Hall Annex. There were approximately 40 people in attendance. Topics of discussion included soil health, farmland preservation programs, and grant opportunities. The Trust shared a link with PDFs from the slideshow from the meeting with the Planning Department. Chairman Quarno asked if that could be included on the Conservation Commission's website. Mr. Colonese said he would investigate adding all or some on the website and share the link with commissioners. Commissioner Gage said the entire presentation is available on YouTube as well.

4. Report - Open Space Preservation Program

The town sent a letter of intent to purchase to the owners of the Brady property at 79 Kibbe Road. They are currently negotiating a purchase price. The Planning and Zoning Commission made a positive referral to the Board of Selectmen for the purchase of the

land pursuant to CGS 8-24 as purchasing the property would increase the town's open space.

Mr. Colonese indicated there is a special fund within the town's open space acquisition fund designated for the purchase of open space around Shenipsit Forest, from an agreement with DEEP. The fund was earmarked as part of a 2006 land purchase agreement and currently has over \$200,000. The state told Lisa Houlihan, Town Planner, that these funds can be used for the purchase of 79 Kibbe Road.

The Planning Department sent letters to the owners of some parcels at the end of Green Road in late 2022, and Ms. Houlihan followed up with some owners at the beginning of last year. Owners Grant and McVarish said they were going to respond with amounts to possibly purchase their properties, but she has not heard from them. She also spoke with John Derham who seemed interested, however he's part of a trust so he had to speak with others who were involved. Brady, who also owns 79 Kibbe Road, also expressed interest but the Planning Department has not heard back. Chairman Quarno said it would be good to reach out to the owners again. Mr. Colonese said he would contact them.

The Planning Department was recently contacted by Jeb Stevens, Trails Protection Coordinator of the Connecticut Forest & Park Association. Mr. Stevens inquired as to whether the commission wanted to purchase a 12.7-acre parcel at 178 Crystal Lake Road for open space preservation as the land came up for sale recently and was listed at \$99,000 on Zillow. The state's Shenipsit Trail passes through the parcel. Then the property recently transferred for \$45,000. Commissioner Gage stated the Northern CT Land Trust Land Acquisition Committee reviewed the property and agreed not to get involved in acquiring it since the land is overpriced and access is dangerous as it's on the shoulder of Route 140 and behind some guardrails. Vice Chairman Bidwell agreed that it was a dangerous spot, although he felt it was an important trail connection for Shenipsit Trail. Ms. Amsel indicated the property has wetlands, so it may be tough to build on. The CT DOT has a project to realign that section of Crystal Lake Road, but not for another couple of years. Commissioner Dwyer said it wouldn't hurt to see if the owners were interested in selling the property. Mr. Colonese said he would reach out to the owners.

BY CONSENSUS, THE COMMISSION AUTHORIZED STAFF TO CONTACT THE PROPERTY OWNER OF 178 CRYSTAL LAKE ROAD TO PURSUE A POSSIBLE OPEN SPACE PURCHASE OR TRAIL EASEMENT AGREEMENT.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:

1. FY 23-24 Budget & Expenditure Update.

There is no update currently.

2. Approval of January 9, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes.

MOVED (DWYER) SECONDED (BURSTEIN) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF JANUARY 9, 2024, AS WRITTEN.

3. Election of Officers.

- a. Chairman Position

MOVED (BIDWELL) TO NOMINATE COMMISSIONER REBECCA QUARNO FOR CHAIRMAN OF THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION FOR THE YEAR OF 2024.

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

**MOVED (BIDWELL) SECONDED (DWYER) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO
ELECT COMMISSIONER REBECCA QUARNO FOR CHAIRMAN OF THE
CONSERVATION COMMISSION FOR THE YEAR OF 2024.**

b. Vice-Chairman Position

**MOVED (DWYER) TO NOMINATE COMMISSIONER DAVID BIDWELL FOR VICE-
CHAIRMAN OF THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION FOR THE YEAR OF 2024.**

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

**MOVED (DWYER) SECONDED (GAGE) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ELECT
COMMISSIONER DAVID BIDWELL FOR VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE
CONSERVATION COMMISSION FOR THE YEAR OF 2024.**

4. Correspondence/Discussion:

a. Hartford Courant Article on Oakridge Dairy

Mr. Colonese said the article details how the farm works. He noted that the farm is also running tours now, which can be set up through their website.

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.

The letter was to inform the commission that the project is no longer going forward due to the failed vote to issue a declaratory ruling. Mr. Colonese said the parachutists that utilize the property were not in favor of the project.

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

Ms. Amsel said the committee is getting ready to get on the trails this week. The emergency signs on the trails currently will be replaced, and the ambulance corps and fire department will be contacted to make sure they are on the same page. A purchase order for kiosks has been issued and she is hoping they will be delivered in the next two weeks. The committee is seeking the assistance of a local Boy Scout troop to help install the kiosks. A committee has sorted out the mowing schedule which was implemented to work around the planting of a wildflower field at the Batz Trails. Some bluebird houses will be installed at the Batz Trails as well. A local Eagle Scout candidate approached the committee about introducing some bees to the trails, however the committee voted it down because introducing a new species of bee can be harmful to indigenous ones in the area. On April 6, the Boy Scouts and the Green Earth Club will be holding a cleanup day at Crystal Ridge, and the Boy Scouts will be doing a hike there on June 1. The committee has a walk scheduled for Connecticut Trails Day which will be on June 1 and 2. On April 13, the Ellington Youth Services will be doing a Bring a Buddy Neighbor Walk. Ms. Amsel is hoping to have the Highlands bridge redone by the beginning of April.

d. North Central Conservation District 2024 Spring Plant & Seedling Sale.

Commissioners received a flyer for the Spring 2024 Plant & Seedling Sale.

Mr. Colonese said he and Lisa Houlihan, Town Planner, would not be able to attend next month's meeting and asked commissioners if they wanted to push agenda items to the May 2024 regular meeting. Commissioner Dwyer said the commission could hold a special meeting in April if necessary.

BY CONSENSUS, THE COMMISSION AGREED TO CANCEL THE APRIL 9, 2024, REGULAR MEETING.

BY CONSENSUS, THE COMMISSION AGREED TO RETURN TO A HYBRID (IN-PERSON AND REMOTE) FORMAT FOR FUTURE MEETINGS.

V. ADJOURNMENT:

MOVED (BIDWELL) SECONDED (BURSTEIN) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING AT 8:12 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Nathaniel Trask, Recording Clerk



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
March 6, 2024
Town Hall Annex

MEMBERS PRESENT: Linda Anderson, Tom Palshaw, Dan Chamberlin, Robert Barone, Cynthia van Zelm, Valerie Amsel, Lindsay Neubecker, Donna Allen, Deanna Wambolt-Gulick

MEMBERS ABSENT: Judi Manfre, Bill Shultz, Ann Harford, Larrissa Burke

I. Call to Order

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

II. Citizens' Forum: Mr. Palshaw shared a concern regarding parking at Stein Road. He is looking to have utility task vehicle (UTV) access put in to ensure that emergency service vehicles can more easily access deeper parts of the trail.

III. Approval of Minutes

A. February 7, 2024

MOVED (PALSHAW), SECONDED (BARONE) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 7, 2024 MEETING.

IV. Old Business

A. Hockanum River Crew Report

Mr. Barone shared that things are muddy, but the trail is getting use, and he noted that some brush will need to be trimmed as the spring season starts. He also shared that there is ATV activity on the trail, though there has been some attempt to curb the access that these vehicles have.

B. Boardwalk – Wetlands

Ms. Anderson shared that she, Mr. Palshaw and Ms. Amsel went before the Inland Wetlands Agency (IWA) and received initial approval, though the Committee has been asked by the IWA to use metal fence spikes instead of pressure-treated wood posts. Upon further research, it appears that guidance from the National Wetlands Inventory recommends pressure-treated wood; the Committee will bring this back to the IWA at the next meeting and anticipates final approval.

C. Conservation Commission Report

Ms. Amsel noted that there was no meeting this past month. However, Ms. Anderson shared that there is a parcel of land near Hopkins and Route 140 that is currently for sale; the parcel is largely wetlands, and it is near some trails, which may provide easier access. There is also a parcel of land for sale in Tolland, on Grahaber, that the Conservation Commission wanted the Committee to be aware of as well.

D. Grants for Kiosks

Ms. Anderson shared that the purchase order for the kiosks has gone through and has moved into production.

E. New Emergency Signs

Mr. Palshaw shared some examples of signage in other towns and expressed concern about how to best orient the signs. There is ongoing conversation about how to include the necessary town code, trail code, and reflectivity.

Mr. Barone expressed that the more concise the sign information can be kept, the better, requiring less to remember or ask in an emergency.

Mr. Palshaw reminded the Committee that emergency services have different maps than the public. Ms. Anderson read the guidelines for the kiosk and map, which reminds users of the trails of the emergency trail markers, including what information should be conveyed in the case of an emergency.

1. Emergency Meeting Update

There was no further discussion on this item.

F. Crystal Ridge Map

Ms. Anderson shared suggestions for the map, including highlighting the emergency signage information, located at the bottom of the map, in yellow to draw attention, as well as increasing the font size.

Concern was expressed about the size and colors of the trails. Ms. Amsel asked if the lines/fonts could be made larger. Ms. Anderson stated that as the trail is actually quite large, this would be challenging.

Ms. Anderson expressed concern over the Quartz Trail, which is challenging to see. There is part of the trail that crosses into private property, which is an issue. The Committee is looking to block off the part of the dirt road that enters private property. Ms. Anderson stated that she doesn't feel that people should be accessing from the bottom of the trail, anyway; the entrance from Old Sandy Beach Road is better.

Ms. Anderson recommended moving the "i" at the entrance over to the "l" in "Crystal Ridge" on the map, to space it away from the private property; she also stated that the part of the dirt road going up the hill should be marked Orange Blaze. The dirt road going down can be marked as dirt road; if it become a trail later, some blazing can be added and the maps updated accordingly.

The "i" at the entrance will move over, closer to the "B" in "Old Sandy Beach Road", so that the kiosk is closer to the start of the trail. The entrance of the trail should tie in to the Quartz Trail instead of being separate. At C2, the "Unmarked Trail" should be eliminated, as there is a boundary marker there and people shouldn't be moving past it.

Ms. Anderson does not anticipate doing a trail guide description yet, though she is planning to mark more accurate mileage information. Once that occurs, the Committee can begin working on the actual description. She asked the Committee members what other activities can be added to the "Suggested Trail Activities" area; Ms. Allen suggested snowshoeing, but Ms. Amsel pointed out how steep the trail is.

Ms. Anderson will update the trail map and share the new draft with the Committee, sharing her anticipation that a few more drafts will be needed before the map is finalized.

G. Road Signs

Ms. Anderson spoke with Public Works, who agreed that the green signs would be too confusing with the existing road signs; it was suggested that these be the same color as agricultural signs, which are brown and white. One set of signs will be done first, to see the cost, but eventually there should be signs for all of the trails.

This would mean one on either side at Kimball, one at Metcalf, one for Windermere, etc. To see what the expense will be, the Crystal Ridge Trail sign will be done first.

Mr. Barone suggested adding the hiking symbol to the road signs as well.

H. Easements for West Road

There were no new updates at this time.

I. Mowing Meeting Results – Batz/Ellington Highlands

1. Mowing

Ms. Anderson met with all interested parties to create a revised mowing plan. Mr. Palshaw asked if the information was sourced from anywhere, and Ms. Anderson stated that she got the information from current recommendations.

Field 1 at Batz, which has invasive plant concerns, will be mowed after the first frost, yearly. Field 2 at Batz will be tilled and planted with wildflower seeds. Mr. Modzelewski will then mow a path down the center for people to walk and admire the flowers and pollinators. Field 3 will be mowed to a low pasture, and a bluebird trail will begin there. The last field will be mowed often throughout the season. Public Works will mow as close as possible between the benches at the amphitheater, and Mr. Palshaw recommended a DR string trimmer to get in closer to the benches before events. The amphitheater field will be mowed more often to ensure that it is clear for event usage. The other parts of the amphitheater field will be mowed after October to help protect the ground nesting birds, and it will be mowed on a yearly basis to keep the Autumn Olive at bay.

The top field at Ellington Highlands will be mowed once a year in October, and some bluebird houses will be put there. The Scouts have given the Committee 11 bluebird houses, and the Committee has another to contribute as well. Ms. Anderson does not want the field mowed more than once a year to ensure that it is welcoming to bluebirds. The second field needs to be mowed down and maintained to keep it from getting covered in brush. At some point, the view near where the picnic tables are going will need to be opened up. The third field has recently been brush hogged, but it has overgrown very quickly. That field will be turned over to nature, and the boundary markers there will be reinforced.

2. Seeding

The details concerning wildflower seeding at Batz was discussed above.

3. Bluebird Houses

This item was also discussed above.

V. New Business

A. Eagle Scout Proposal

There is a Scout interested in putting “bee hotels” in at the Batz Property. However, this is not a practice that DEEP recommends due to the low percentage of uptake in the hotels, the maintenance needs, and the concern for what kind of bee species takes root in them.

Ms. Anderson is waiting to hear back, and she is planning to mention making a trail at Crystal Ridge, and some benches, instead, or making a nesting area for ground bees that the Committee would mark off to help protect, which could be done at Batz or Ellington Highlands. Another potential project would be a solar pump. Mr. Palshaw also suggested picnic benches at Blueberry Hill on Crystal Ridge.

VI. Subcommittee Reports

A. Treasurer: There was no update, though Ms. Anderson let Ms. Amsel know that the foam she requested to replace some rope that was breaking down is in.

B. Maintenance

Ms. Amsel referenced the maintenance list and asked the Committee to add anything else they can think of. She recognized that it is a lot, but hopefully other community groups can help.

Ms. Allen asked why the Batz bridges are being moved. Ms. Amsel explained that the short one is beginning to fall in, and that the larger one is over a much smaller area. She admitted that it wasn't an emergent problem, but one that can be easily solved by just moving them.

1. Clean-Up Day – April 6th at Crystal Ridge with Boy Scouts and Green Earth Club

The Boy Scouts and Green Earth Club are committed to helping, and Ms. Anderson is planning to get the word out even more. She noted that there are some volunteers that have already expressed interest in being involved.

Ms. Anderson shared that there should hopefully be enough people to split into several groups, which may include trail cleanup, mulching, raking, etc.

C. Community Outreach**1. Ginny Apple Talks**

- a. **Reptiles and Amphibians** - This was well attended.
- b. **Minks, Muskrats, Beavers, and Otters – March 26th, Hall Memorial Library, 6:30 pm** - This event is upcoming.

2. Congregational Church Talk Update

Ms. Wambolt-Gulick shared that the talk was well attended, notably by members of the Batz family that donated the parcel to the Committee. Ms. Allen noted that the group was unaware of much of the work done by the Committee. Ms. Wambolt-Gulick mentioned that they asked about accessibility in the trails, and Ms. Anderson discussed the more accessible trails, but did note the difficulty in making them more accessible. Ms. Anderson suggested adding braille to help with some accessibility, but overall the Committee is limited in what can be done/added.

3. Earth Day – April 20th, Town Green, 10am-2pm

- a. **Set Up 8:00-9:00 am**
- b. **Photo Board**
- c. **Members to Set Up/Work Table**

Ms. Allen, Ms. Anderson and Ms. Amsel are available to help.

4. Ellington Youth Services – Bring a Buddy/Neighbor Walk for National Public Health, Saturday, April 13th (rain date April 14)

Ms. Anderson noted that the Committee hasn't heard back yet about which trail has been chosen.

5. CT Trails Day – June 1st and 2nd – Confirm Details

Ms. van Zelm confirmed that the Committee is planning to do the Windermere Trail; at least two members will be needed to lead the walk. Ms. Allen is willing to help, as is Ms. van Zelm.

Ms. Anderson described where the recommended parking should be, and the route she would take to show some high-interest features. 10:00 am on June 1 would be a good time and date for the event.

The Boy Scouts are going to lead a walk at 1:00 pm at Crystal Ridge.

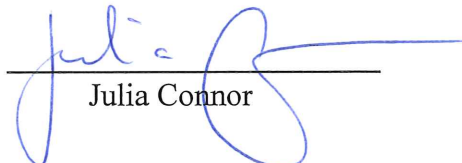
6. Bird Walk at Batz – May 11th (rain date May 12) – 7:30 am

Ms. Anderson reminded the Committee of this upcoming event. Ms. Allen is concerned that it may be too late, and there may be too many leaves.

VII. Adjournment

MOVED (VAN ZELM), SECONDED (ALLEN) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE TRAILS COMMITTEE MEETING AT 7:55 PM.

Prepared by Deanna Wambolt-Gulick; submitted by


Julia Connor



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
DONNA ALLEN
LINDSAY NEUBECKER
BILL SCHULTZ
TOM PALSHAW
DAN CHAMBERLIN
ROBERT BARONE
ANN HARFORD

Ad Hoc Ellington Trails Committee
Regular Meeting Minutes
April 3, 2024
Town Hall Annex

MEMBERS PRESENT: Linda Anderson, Tom Palshaw, Robert Barone, Cynthia van Zelm, Valerie Amsel, Lindsay Neubecker (by phone), Donna Allen, Ann Harford

MEMBERS ABSENT: Judi Manfre, Bill Shultz, Deanna Wambolt-Gulick.

I. Call to Order

Ms. Anderson called the meeting to order at 6:34 pm. Ms. Anderson noted that Larrissa Burke had resigned from the Committee.

II. Citizens' Forum: There were no public comments.

III. Approval of Minutes

A. March 6, 2024

MOVED (VAN ZELM), SECONDED (PALSHAW) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 6, 2024 MEETING.

IV. Old Business

A. Hockanum River Crew Report

Mr. Barone said he had walked both the Hockanum River trails, and did a litter pick up on the West Road trail. Some trees were down and water was collecting. With respect to the Windermere Trail, the new boardwalk will extend out of the mud. Ms. Anderson said she will look into an easement from the radio station to use the Franklin section of trail that the Town does not own.

B. Boardwalk – Hockanum

Ms. Anderson said that the Ellington Inland Wetlands Agency approved using pressure treated wood on the boardwalk. The hope is that the Key Bank volunteer team can work on the boardwalk. Ms. Anderson will also check to see if Big Y volunteers might be able to help as well.

C. Conservation Commission Report

Ms. Amsel said the Commission was looking at an inventory of historic properties vis a vis the Sustainable CT program application.

There is also some discussion of the acquisition of a property on Kibbe Road, and an area of Green Road for open space preservation.

D. Kiosks

Ms. Anderson said the kiosks are here and located at Public Works!

Mr. Palshaw said the location of the kiosks on particular trails will serve as the address location for emergency personnel.

Ms. Anderson said the kiosks will be installed by the Boy Scouts in late May. She said two kiosks will be installed at Crystal Ridge, one at the private entrance. All trails will have at least one kiosk. The Committee considered Mr. Palshaw's advice and will install one kiosk at Crystal Ridge and one at Pinney Road at the entrance to the Windermere Trail.

E. Emergency Signs

Ms. Anderson passed out a copy of what the new emergency signs will look like. Mr. Palshaw noted that he had given a PowerPoint presentation to all the emergency service groups on the new signs.

F. Crystal Ridge Map

Ms. Anderson reviewed the language on the Crystal Ridge map about the emergency signs. The verbiage of "stay put" to match what is on the sign will be replicated on the map.

G. Road Signs

Ms. Anderson said road signs have been ordered for Crystal Ridge (two on Old Sandy Beach Road) and Kimball (four at both ends of Hopkins Road).

H. Easements for West Road

Ms. Anderson said that The Barnyard will put a retention pond near the West Road trail. There will be a culvert to address overflow water that would go into the Hockanum River.

The emergency sign of W-8 will be removed. The trail will stop at emergency sign W-7 and a boundary sign will be put up to indicate to hikers that this is the area where they should turn around.

I. Eagle Scout Project

An Eagle Scout reached out to Ms. Anderson about doing a bee "hotel", but Ms. Anderson suggested some other projects and the Eagle Scout will get back her.

V. New Business

A. Ellington Highlands Bridge

Ms. Anderson walked Ellington Highlands with Tom Modzelewski, Director of Public Works, as a bridge is needed to get across an area that will need to be mowed. The bridge needs to be able to carry the heavy load of the mower. Approval for the bridge will need to go through the Town's Inland Wetlands Agency.

B. Batz Wildflower Field

Ms. Anderson said the field is wet near one of the neighbor's homes. The area will be blocked off with stakes so Public Works will know where it is ok to mow and where it is wet.

VI. Subcommittee Reports

A. Treasurer: Ms. Anderson said there is \$3,200 left in the budget for the current fiscal year. She will use some of the money to buy wildflower seeds. Other possible needs are emergency signs and mulch. She will use whatever funds are left for the road signs.

B. Maintenance: *(See other reports)*

- 1. Clean-Up Day at Crystal Ridge** - Ms. Anderson said some Boy Scouts and possibly Girl Scouts and Ellington High School Green Earth Club will do maintenance on April 6 at 9 am.
- 2. Metcalf** – Ms. Amsel put down Preem at the entrance of Metcalf.

C. Community Outreach

- 1. Ginny Apple Talk Rescheduled – April 29th at 6:30 pm at Hall Memorial Library**

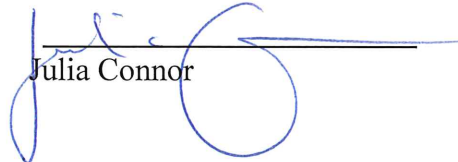
This was noted but no other discussion was held.

2. **Earth Day – April 20th** – Ms. Anderson, Ms. Amsel and Ms. Allen will work at the Committee's table at Earth Day. Maps will be handed out.
3. **Ellington Youth Services – Bring a Buddy/Neighbor Walk for National Public Health Month - April 14th, 10:00 am – Pinney Field, walking Windermere (rain date April 21)**
– Ms. Anderson passed out the flyer on this event.
4. **CT Trails Day – June 1st – 10:00 am, Windermere** – Ms. van Zelm said registration opens on May 8. After discussion, Ms. van Zelm will change the meeting location on the CT Forest and Park Association CT Trails Day page from the Y to Pinney Fields. The Committee suggested tying the Committee banner to the adjacent fence so people will see the start of the hike.
5. **Bird Walk at Batz – May 11th (rain date May 12) – 7:30 am**
6. **Other Events** – Ms. Anderson said the astronomy group reached out and they are looking at holding an event in June and August.
A geologist will do a walk in the spring of 2025.
The library is working on a Sunday music series at the Amphitheater at Batz as well as a possible model airplane event at Batz.
The 3 Foragers will be back in September.
Zen's Animals will be back in August.
Ms. Anderson also reached out to a ham radio group to do a demo at Batz.

VII. Adjournment

MOVED (VAN ZELM), SECONDED (ALLEN) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE TRAILS COMMITTEE MEETING AT 7:51 PM.

Prepared by Cynthia van Zelm; submitted by


Julia Connor



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

Ad Hoc Ellington Trails Committee
Regular Meeting Agenda
Wednesday, May 1, 2024 - 6:30 PM
Town Hall Annex, 57 Main Street

- I. Call to Order
- II. Citizens' Forum
- III. Approval of Minutes
 - A. April 3, 2024
- IV. Old Business
 - A. Hockanum River Crew Report
 - B. Boardwalk
 - C. Conservation Commission Report
 - D. Kiosks
 - E. Emergency Signs
 - F. Maps, Including Crystal Ridge
 - G. Road Signs
 1. Metcalf
 2. Windermere Placement
 3. Batz Placement
 - H. Easements for West Road/Franklin Radio Station
 - I. Eagle Scout Project
 - J. Ellington Highlands Bridge
 - K. Batz Wildflower Field
- V. New Business
- VI. Subcommittee Reports
 - A. Treasurer
 - B. Maintenance
 1. Ellington Highlands
 2. Clean-up Day at Crystal Ridge – Results
 3. Kimball
 - C. Community Outreach
 1. Ellington Youth Services Walk
 2. Earth Day – April 20th
 3. Ginny Apple Talk – Beavers/Minks/Otters/Muskrats
 4. Bird Walk at Batz – May 11th (rain date May 12th) at 7:30 am
 5. CT Trails Day – June 1st, 10:00 am at Windermere, led by Donna Allen and Cynthia van Zelm
 6. Astronomy Meteor Shower Watch at Pinney Field – August 12, after 9:00 pm to midnight
 7. Other Event Coming – June or July
- VII. Adjournment

LANDMARK

The newsletter of the Northern Connecticut Land Trust

*1900 acres of open space protected in E. Windsor, Ellington, Enfield,
Somers, Stafford, and Vernon Connecticut since 1987*



Number 44

March 2024

"Some beautiful paths cannot be discovered without getting lost." -- Erol Ozan

Trust Adds 54 Acres of Open Space in Stafford

NCLT has acquired a scenic 54-acre property in Stafford Ct. along Rt 190 less than a mile from the recently opened 79-acre Nipmuck Woods. It is primarily upland forest that abuts a section of the state Nipmuck Forest and includes sections of Roaring Brook, a cold water trout stream. Located on the north side of Rt 190 and bounded on the west by Crooked S Road, the Trust intends to name the property Roaring Brook Woodlands. It will be protected as open space and will be open to the public for passive recreation after parking and trails have been established. This acquisition brings the total land protected by the Trust to 1900 acres in the area.

The property was generously donated by the Dix Place, LLC, a family organization. The Dix Place, LLC has retained ownership of about 15 acres containing a vacation home and pond that will now be surrounded by protected open space. The transaction has many benefits. It provides the Dix family with the opportunity for a major charitable donation deduction on federal income taxes, it reduces property taxes, and it ensures their vacation home will forever be protected by open space. It also contributes to the State's goal and the NCLT goal of preserving the natural resources of Connecticut and will provide additional opportunities for passive recreation to the public. In the future, when parking facilities and trails have been developed, the Trust will provide maps of Roaring Brook Woodlands. Follow the progress of this success on the Trust website, www.northernctlandtrust.org.



Can Land Conservation Be Supported for Economic Reasons?

The answer is a solid "YES". Many studies have been published that show the reasons why people support land conservation, many of which are pure dollars and cents. The Connecticut Land Conservation Council website (www.ctconservation.org) contains many resources in their **Resource Library** (under "Tax Issues" or "Benefits of Open Space") documenting these studies. The CLCC is the statewide organization whose mission is to elevate and strengthen land conservation in Connecticut, and serves as the only statewide service provider and voice for all Ct. land trusts. Arguments for land conservation range from helping local economies thrive to direct impact on local property taxes and increasing property values. Contrary to some beliefs, open spaces generate more public revenue than they receive in public services. According to the CLCC one-pager "Economic Benefits of Land Conservation", a study of 9 Ct. towns showed that for every dollar generated by these open and working lands, only 37cents were spent supplying public services to these lands (see "Cost of Community Studies" in the Resource Library, conducted by American Farmland Trust).

For example, findings of a recent study by the East Lyme Town Finance Director were published in the 10/16/2023 edition of ***The Day***. He found that not purchasing a proposed 255 acre open space parcel might cost the taxpayers approximately \$300,000 per year. If the property was not kept open and 45 new homes were built, based on areas identified by an appraiser that were developable, they would generate \$470,232 in property taxes yet cost the town \$764,407 in town-supplied services every year. Included primarily were expenses related to education, public safety, and trash collection, with more costs that could be included but were beyond the scope of the study.

NCLT Membership/Support Process is Being Revised

In the past, NCLT has solicited membership donations early in the year (Feb/March) for memberships coinciding with that calendar year. Yet many folks prefer to make charitable donations towards the end of a year for tax bookkeeping. As mailing costs become more burdensome and to make our membership tracking more concise, the Trust is planning to modify their schedule. In 2023, we combined our membership requests into our late year Annual Report mailing (December), but despite prior notifications of this change, information flow was probably confusing and responses were not robust. Please stay tuned for correspondence with the revised plans to be determined soon.

Want to Help with Our Property Stewardship?

NCLT is an all-volunteer organization. From the board of directors to our stewardship volunteers and property stewards, we rely on our members to keep our organization functioning and continuing to acquire and preserve open space in north central Connecticut. To monitor our properties, we rely on property stewards who are assigned to each of our properties. We currently have openings for stewards on several of our properties in Somers, Ellington and Stafford. In Somers they include Schlaf Farm (mixed agriculture and woods without trails), Skyline Scenic Area (includes trails), and Stevenson Woodlands (future trails planned). In Ellington, Shenipsit Woods is land locked woodland adjacent to Shenipsit State Forest and close to NCLT's Bird Field Conservation Area. In Stafford, Haggerty Hollow is woodland adjoining NCLT's Culver Pond. Future trails are planned. Property Stewards perform light trail maintenance as well as inform the Stewardship Committee of any issues and larger maintenance activities required. They also are ambassadors for NCLT interacting with members of the public using the area. If you have an interest in becoming one of our property stewards or would like additional information, please contact Richard Bailey, Stewardship Chair, at dweezle_ct3@att.net.

2024 Activity Schedule

Check News and Events at www.northernctlandtrust.org for latest announcements

Sun. April 21 – Earth Day Hike at Culver Pond - 10:00 - We will take a 2 ½ mile loop hike to explore and look for signs of Spring at Culver Pond in Stafford. Culver Pond and Rock of Dundee Brook is one of the origins of the Scantic River. This will be at a leisurely pace. The parking area is on Gilbert Rd., which is a gravel road, left off Mountain Rd. from Somers. For questions call Albert Grant, 860-623-5487

Sat., May 11 – Canoe and Kayak Paddle of Upper Bolton Lake in Vernon -Take a leisurely tour of this pristine lake setting, perfect for bird-watching, photo opportunities, or just a quiet morning enjoying the outdoors. Meet at the boat launch area off Hatch Hill Road at 9:00 AM. Must bring your own boat, paddles, and life vests. Call Karl at 860-649-4949 for more information

Sun. May 12 – Mothers Day Hike on McCann Family Farm - 10:00 AM. Comfortable trail walk thru field and forest. Wild flowers and good bird-watching habitat. Meet at the rear of the Somers Town Hall, 600 Main St., Rt. 190 near the intersection of Rt. 83. For questions, contact Albert Grant, 860-623-5487

Sat. June 1- Trails Weekend - 10:00 AM - We will follow blazed trails through the Land Trust's premier 200+ acre, Whitaker Woods property, featuring woodland and a cow pasture. This approximately 2 ½ mile hike will be scenic, with bridge crossings and beautifully constructed and well-preserved stone walls. We will discuss the natural and land use history as well as local wildlife along the way. Meet behind the Somers Town Hall, 600 Main St., Rt. 190, near the intersection of Rt. 83 in the center of Somers. We will car pool to the trailhead. For questions, contact Albert Grant, 860-623-5487, albert_grant@sbcglobal.net.

Sun. June 16 - _Father's Day Hike at Boothroyd/Belante preserve, Ellington_ 11:00 AM – The 2 properties cover 94 acres acquired over the past 10 years. The hike will be about 2 miles featuring abundant mountain laurel in bloom. From Stafford, take Tolland Ave south for 1.5 miles, and will be on the right. From the south from Tolland Green, take Old Stafford Rd (becomes Tolland Tpke) 4.8 miles north to Boothroyd Preserve on the left. For further information, contact Albert Grant, 860-623-5487, albert_grant@sbcglobal.net

Sat. July 13 -_Nipmuck Woods -_Family hike in Stafford - 10:00 AM. Leisurely one mile walk on the Nipmuck Adventure Path. We will be stopping along the way for stories and exploring the natural world including two very impressive glacial erratic boulders. Good event for families with children as well as anyone who enjoys being around children. Meet at the large pull-off on the south side of Rt. 190 a short distance past Rockwell Road, east of the center of Stafford Springs. For questions or additional information, contact trip leader Richard Bailey, 860-559-3901

Sun Sept 8– Bald Mtn. Preserve, Somers - 10:00 AM – We will hike through two Land Trust properties as well as Town of Somers and State of CT properties. These comprise the Bald Mountain Preserve, which includes the entire summit of the tallest of the surrounding mountains. The trails are steep and rocky in some places but not difficult with good shoes. The distance will be about 2 ½ miles. Meet at the rear of the Somers Town Hall, 600 Main St. Rt. 190 near the intersection of Rt. 83. For questions contact Albert Grant 860, 623-5487

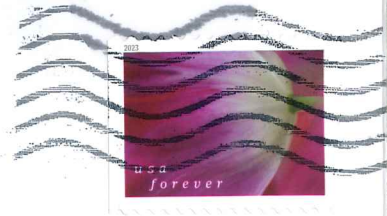
Sun., October 13 – Skyline Scenic Area – 10:00 AM - Foliage hike with great views of the valley to the west. The distance will be about 2 1/2 miles, up and downhill. Meet at the rear of the Somers Town Hall, 600 Main St. to car pool. For questions call Albert Grant, 860-623-5487.

Sun., October 13 – Fall foliage along Railroad Brook gorge in Vernon. Hike thru the Trust's Andrew Webster Knapp property to the Rails-to-trails, then up to the ridge overlooking Valley Falls Park and Railroad Brook for some beautiful scenery. Fairly challenging walk with up and down steep slopes, 1 to 1 ½ hours. Meet at the Valley Falls parking lot off Valley Falls Road at 9:00 AM. Call Karl at 860-649-4949 for further information.

"It is in the true silence of Nature where one will find true bliss"



HARTFORD CT 060
16 MAR 2024 PM 2 L



LANDMARK: *Newsletter of the*
Northern Connecticut Land Trust
PO Box 324
Somers, CT. 06071

*Ellington Conservation Commission
55 Main St
Ellington, CT 06029*

06029-334155



Board of Directors

President

Patrice Carson, Somers

1st V. President

Karl Hasel, Vernon

2nd V. President

James Gage, Ellington

Treasurer

Bryan Jambard, Enfield

Recording Secretary

Open

Directors

- Valerie Amsel, Somers
- Walter Moody, Ellington
- Albert Grant, Melrose
- Rick Dewey, Stafford
- Paul Lagel, Enfield
- Elise Bennett, Ellington
- Don Smith, Somers
- Gene Julian, Stafford
- Richard Bailey, Somers

If you have a friend interested in joining the Trust and supporting the work of protecting our natural resources, please pass this newsletter on to them. Contributions are tax deductible.

MEMBERSHIPS:	Individual	\$25	Family	\$35
	Sustaining	\$50	Patron	\$100
	Benefactor	\$1000		

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE: _____ E_MAIL: _____

Would you like to receive the newsletter by e-mail? _____

Mail to: Northern Connecticut Land Trust
PO Box 324
Somers, CT. 06071

If you would like to volunteer to work projects such as fund-raising, trail maintenance, newsletter, or others, please check YES ___ NO ___

[Business & Tech](#)

Ellington Dairy Farm Getting Long-Term Climate Resiliency Grant

The farm has been awarded \$100,000 by the Connecticut Department of Agriculture.



Tim Jensen, Patch Staff

Posted Wed, Apr 17, 2024 at 2:55 pm ET



ELLINGTON, CT — A prominent Ellington dairy farm is one of 20 recipients who will share \$1.475 million in state funding to farmers and non-profits involved in production agriculture, to invest in long-term climate resiliency projects which will decrease vulnerability to extreme weather events through regenerative agricultural practices.

ADVERTISEMENT

Oakridge Dairy LLC has been awarded \$100,000 by the Connecticut Department of Agriculture (CT DoAg), to be used for soil health and organic matter biodiversity, water management, capital improvements and purchases, according to Agriculture Commissioner Bryan P. Hurlburt.

The CT DoAg is funding the projects as part of the Farmland Restoration, Climate Resiliency and Preparedness Grant, which was authorized by and funded through Connecticut General Statutes 22-6c with a focus on restoring and improving land with prime and important farmland soils.

Interested in local real estate?Subscribe to Patch's new newsletter to be the first to know about open houses, new listings and more.

Your email address

Subscribe

ADVERTISEMENT

"Connecticut's agricultural producers have demonstrated a strong desire to implement sustainable farming practices to be part of the climate change solution while also mitigating the impacts of more extreme weather events," Hurlburt said in a written statement. "Through these strategic investments, farmers will be able to conduct projects to improve soils for increased productivity and enhanced resilience."

State Sen. Saud Anwar said, "It's encouraging to know Ellington's Oakridge Dairy is making investments to improve its resources and prepare for tomorrow, and I'm grateful to state leaders for including our community in its support."

ADVERTISEMENT

Funds can be used for capital investments, including equipment, to implement farming practices that will have a multi-year or cumulative effect on the climate resiliency of the land or farming operation. CT DoAg received 66 eligible grant applications requesting up to \$4.8 million in funding. Of the 20 awards, 13 were directed towards beginning/underserved producers and 5 to BIPOC producers.

Awardees will be provided technical assistance by a soil scientist or other advisor assigned by and paid for by CT DoAg in the development of their Farmland Restoration and Climate Resiliency Plan (FRCR Plan). Upon approval

ADVERTISEMENT

of the FRCR Plan by CT DoAg, grantees will receive funding to implement the FRCR Plan.

ADVERTISEMENT

Get more local news delivered straight to your inbox. [Sign up for free Patch newsletters and alerts.](#)

 Thank  Share

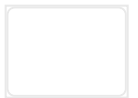


We've removed the ability to reply as we work to make improvements. [Learn more here](#)

More from Ellington-Somers

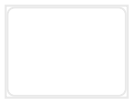
Community Corner | 5h

Ellington Community Unites For Earth Day Celebration



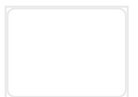
Real Estate | 1d

Who's Coming, Who's Going: The Most Recent Home Sales In Somers



Sports | 2d

Monday's High School Scoreboard: Hartford And Tolland Counties



ADVERTISEMENT