



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 AGENDA TUESDAY, JULY 9, 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. Report - Farmland Preservation Program.
3. Report - Open Space Preservation Program.
 - a. Open Space Brochure.
 - b. Open Space/Farmland/Recreational Assets Inventory, Revised June 2024.
 - c. Executive Session to Discuss Possible Open Space Purchases.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:

1. FY 23-24 Budget & Expenditure Update.
2. Approval of June 11, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes.
3. Correspondence/Discussion:
 - a. Ad Hoc Ellington Trails Committee - Monthly Agendas/Minutes.
 - b. Beach Leaf Disease.

V. ADJOURNMENT:

Next Meeting is August 13, 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, Conservation Commission.

Join Zoom Meeting via Link:
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84593830249>
Meeting ID: 845 9383 0249
Passcode: 948385

Join Zoom Meeting by Phone:
1-646-558-8656 US (New York)
Meeting ID: 845 9383 0249
Passcode: 948385

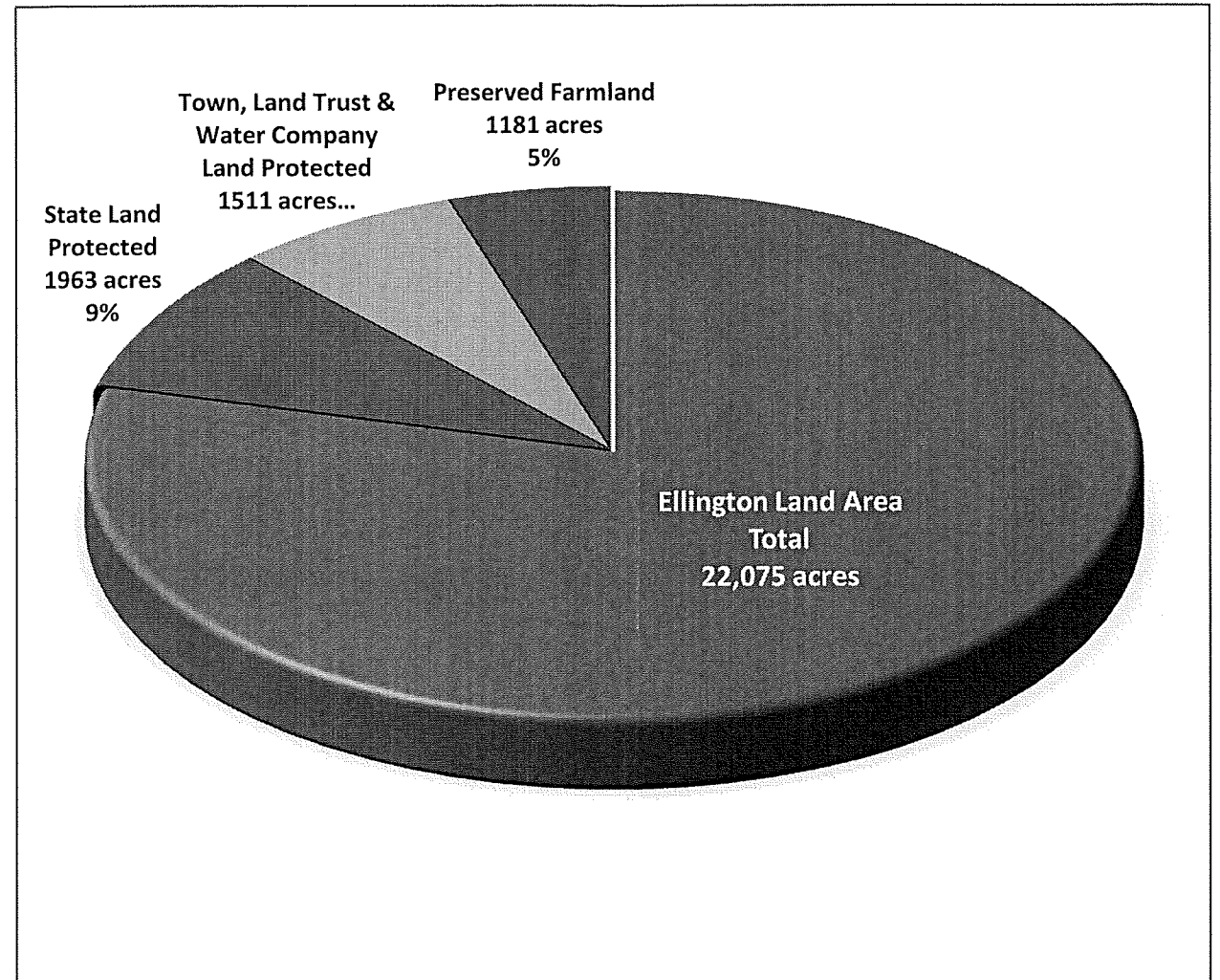
COMMISSIONERS: TO ASSIST IN ESTABLISHING QUORUMS REQUIRED TO CONDUCT MEETINGS, PLEASE CONTACT THE PLANNING DEPARTMENT IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO ATTEND A SCHEDULED MEETING.

Ellington Planning Department
Town Hall Annex
Ellington, CT 06029
Phone: 860-870-3120
Email: planner@ellington-ct.gov
For additional details, visit:
www.ellington-ct.gov

OPEN SPACE

Ellington
Conservation
Commission

OPEN SPACE SNAPSHOT



TOTAL LAND AREA IN ELLINGTON: 22,075 ACRES

TOWN, LAND TRUST, WATER COMPANY & STATE LAND PROTECTED
AS OF JUNE 2024: 3,474 ACRES

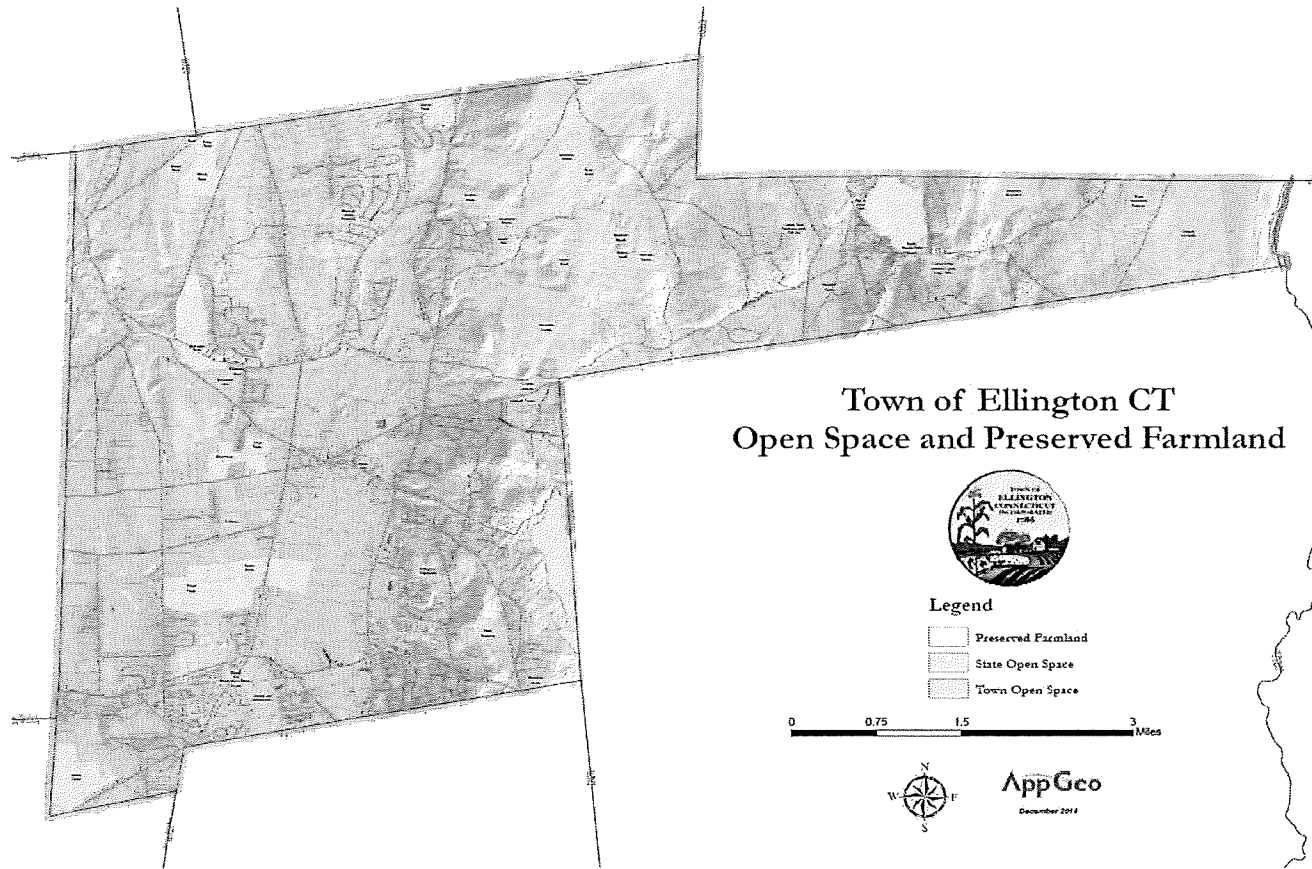
PRESERVED FARMLAND AS OF JUNE 2024: 1,181 ACRES

Why Conserve?

Open space provides many benefits for Connecticut's citizens. Pleasant views help to preserve community character. Forested areas reduce pollution by filtering the air and water. Protected areas provide opportunities for passive recreation and provide habitat for wildlife. Open space acts as a balance against the negative aspects of development.

Impact

According to the Cost of Community Services study from March 2018, for every \$1 in tax revenue for residentially developed land it costs \$1.13 in services but for open space land only \$0.27.



For an interactive version of this map, please visit <https://ellingtonct.mapgeo.io/>

Preservation Goals

1. Preserve working farms
2. Protect Ellington's Natural Resources and Provide Natural Linkages
3. Preserve and Enhance Recreational Assets

Public Access

The following open space properties include public access:

- Arbor Park
- Batz Property
- Boothroyd & Bellante Preserve
- Crystal Ridge Trail
- Highlands Trail
- Hockanum River West Road Trail
- Kimball Forest
- Metcalf Trail
- Pinney Street Fields
- Sandy Beach
- Shenipsit State Forest
- Sunset Hill Trail
- Tedford Memorial Park
- Windermere Trails

How to Help

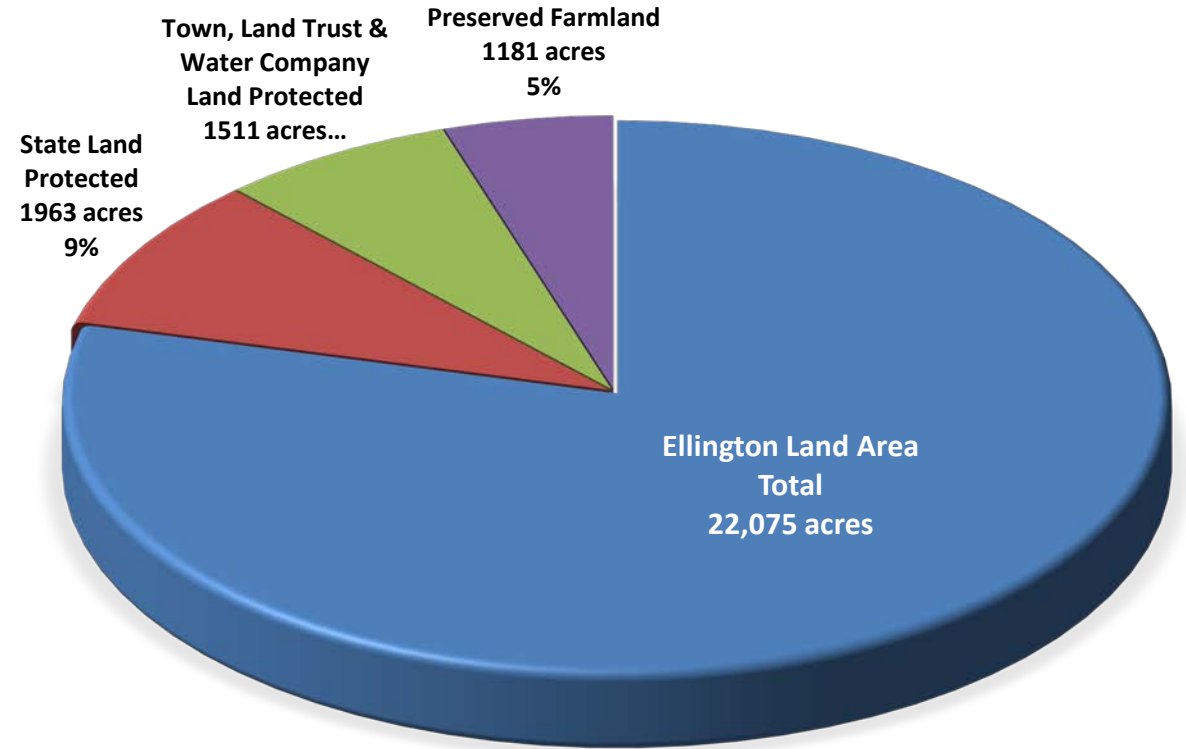
To find out how you can get involved with protecting Ellington's natural resources, please contact the Ellington Planning Department at (860)870-3120 or stop by the Town Hall Annex at 57 Main Street.

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OPEN SPACE

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Conservation
Commission

OPEN SPACE SNAPSHOT



TOTAL LAND AREA IN ELLINGTON: 22,075 ACRES

**TOWN, LAND TRUST, WATER COMPANY & STATE LAND PROTECTED
AS OF JUNE 2024: 3,474 ACRES**

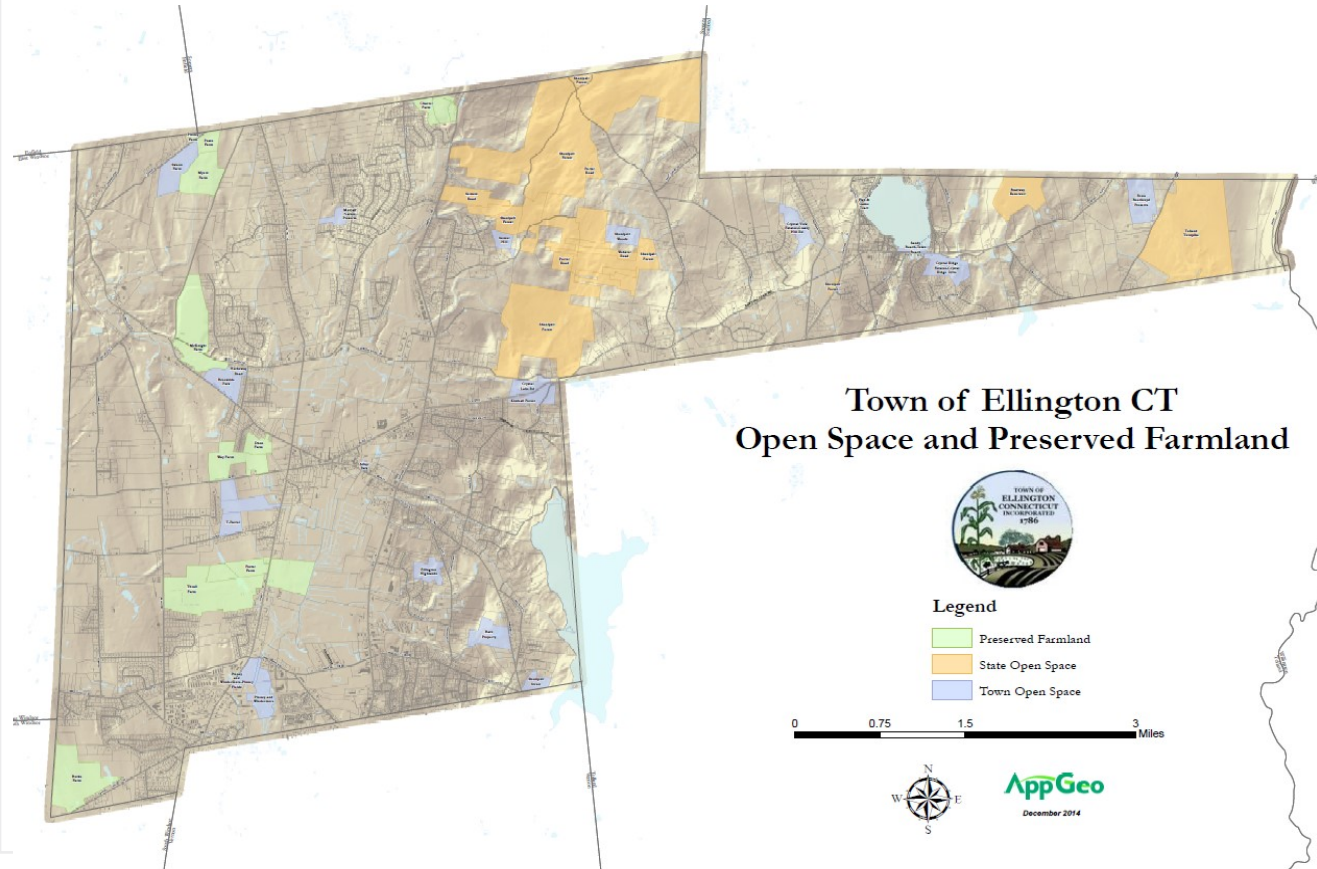
PRESERVED FARMLAND AS OF JUNE 2024: 1181 ACRES

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- Tedford Memorial Park
- Windermere Trails

How to Help

To find out how you can get involved with protecting Ellington's natural resources, please contact the Ellington Planning Department at (860)870-3120 or stop by the Town Hall Annex at 57 Main Street.

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
Kibbe Road Property	Town	27
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		603.44
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 =		4585.31

*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: 6/30/2024

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

Account Type: All

Print Detail

Include PreEncumbrance

Print accounts with zero balance

Include Inactive Accounts

Filter Encumbrance Detail by Date Range

Include PreEncumbrance

Account Number / Description

Budget Balance

Budget Range To Date

YTD

Balance

Encumbrance

% Remaining Bud

Account Number / Description	Budget	Range To Date	YTD	Balance	Encumbrance	% Remaining Bud
1000.02.00270.10.50103	\$1,600.00	\$1,040.00	\$1,040.00	\$560.00	\$0.00	35.00%
Part Time---Conservation Commission--						
1000.02.00270.20.60221	\$400.00	(\$2.00)	(\$2.00)	\$402.00	\$0.00	\$402.00
Advertising Printing---Conservation Commission--						100.50%
1000.02.00270.20.60222	\$1,350.00	\$960.00	\$960.00	\$390.00	\$0.00	\$390.00
Dues & Subscriptions---Conservation Commission--						28.89%
1000.02.00270.20.60223	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Travel---Conservation Commission--						0.00%
1000.02.00270.20.60234	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Professional Development---Conservation Commission						0.00%
1000.02.00270.20.60250	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Contracted Services---Conservation Commission--						0.00%
1000.02.00270.20.60254	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
St of CT Surcharges---Conservation Commission--						0.00%
1000.02.00270.20.60341	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Office Supplies---Conservation Commission--						0.00%
1000.02.00270.30.60341	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Office Supplies---Conservation Commission--						0.00%
Fund: 1000	\$3,350.00	\$1,998.00	\$1,998.00	\$1,352.00	\$0.00	\$1,352.00

Town of Ellington

General Ledger - On Demand Report

Fiscal Year: 2023-2024 From Date: 7/1/2023 To Date: 6/30/2024

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

Account Type: All

Print accounts with zero balance

Include Inactive Accounts

Print Detail

Filter Encumbrance Detail by Date Range

Include PreEncumbrance

Account Number / Description

Budget	Range To Date	YTD	Balance	Encumbrance	% Remaining	Bud
\$3,350.00	\$1,998.00	\$1,998.00	\$1,352.00	\$0.00		\$1,352.00
Grand Total:						

End of Report



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**CONSERVATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, JUNE 11, 2024, 7:00 PM
IN-PERSON ATTENDANCE: TOWN HALL ANNEX, 57 MAIN STREET, ELLINGTON, CT
REMOTE ATTENDANCE: VIA ZOOM MEETING**

PRESENT: In Person: Chairman Rebecca Quarno, Vice Chairman David Bidwell, Regular Member James Gage, George Nickerson (arrived at 7:08), and Alternate Jon Kaczmarek
Remote: Regular Member Robert Zielfelder and Laurie Burstein

ABSENT: Regular Member Sean Dwyer and Alternate Ann Harford

STAFF: Remote: Lisa Houlihan, Town Planner and In-Person: Nathaniel Trask, Recording Clerk

I. CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Rebecca Quarno called the 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.

John Colonese, Assistant Town Planner, and the Conservation Commission have been working on an update to the historic inventory for Ellington. Ms. Houlihan reported that Mr. Colonese talked with the State Historic Preservation Office about grants to help with the project. They are \$20,000 non-matching grants that cover an inventory of about 100 buildings. After this is fulfilled, the town can apply for successive grants if necessary. A list of buildings based on date of construction was obtained from the assessor's office, which could help start the inventory process. This does not include the existing list and does not include independent sheds and barns. Mr. Colonese is awaiting a call back from Mary Dunne with the State Historic Preservation Office. Ms. Houlihan asked if commissioners wanted to wait to get a little more information before deciding to move forward with the historic preservation inventory and outlined some of the other strategies in this chapter of the Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD) the group could work on. One strategy is the cluster open space subdivision regulation, which the town already has and is currently referred to as a density-based subdivision. Based on the subdivisions that have come through so far under this regulation, the developer has been required to connect streets, which has not worked because the old infrastructure has conventional subdivision, and they could not cluster it to create smaller lots, shorter roads, and greater open space. The other strategy is the transfer of development rights, which Ms. Houlihan believes will need to be coordinated with the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC). There is a state statute that requires the PZC to update their housing plan every five years. The PZC will be focusing on this plan in the upcoming months and won't have time to work on transfer of development rights.

Chairman Quarno asked if commissioners had any thoughts about how to proceed. Commissioner Zielfelder asked what the benefit of establishing a historic district would be. Commissioner Kaczmarek asked how many homes were on the list from the Assessor. Ms. Houlihan said there were 100 homes and commercial buildings, not including those that were on the 1990 list. She added that by looking at this strategy from the POCD and deciding whether to proceed or not, the commission is fulfilling the goal. Once Mr. Colonese hears back from Mary Dunne, the commission will have a better idea as to what the benefit of conducting an inventory is.

This agenda item will be tabled until next meeting.

2. Report - Farmland Preservation Program.

The last pending application has closed.

As far as other initiatives that are ongoing, Ms. Houlihan has been working with the Economic Development Commission (EDC) on implementing a potential new farming ordinance under statute 12-81M which will allow municipalities to abate up to 50% of property tax on certain farms like dairy farms, vegetable farms, orchards, and nurseries. The statute does not include chicken or beef farms. The proposed ordinance was presented to the Board of Selectmen on June 10. This is a statute that was brought to the EDC's attention by Oakridge Dairy, who built a large milking facility under a tax abatement application. That abatement expires this year, and because milk is heavily regulated, it is difficult to sustain operations. This new program would effectively replace the abatement they currently have, and the building would be abated at 50% of property taxes. There is an ongoing analysis of what the tax implications would be, with Ms. Houlihan currently estimating \$2,600 in loss. The EDC wanted the ordinance to benefit as many farms as possible, although there are currently three other exemption programs regarding farm equipment, farm buildings, and land. The only farm with significant buildings on their property is Oakridge Dairy. Currently, Oakridge Dairy will be the only one that will benefit from the ordinance but will hopefully be an incentive for other farms.

Chairman Quarno asked when it was that the commission did an outreach letter to farmers. Ms. Houlihan said she believed it was 2021. Chairman Quarno added that there is usually renewed interest whenever they do outreach, however if it's the same farms that are interested, then that would not make much sense. In the past, the town has done direct mailers to promote interest in the farmland preservation program. Ms. Houlihan suggested posting on the Town of Ellington social media accounts or run an advertisement in the local newspaper. Chairman Quarno said doing some outreach in this manner wouldn't hurt. Ms. Houlihan said she would work with Mr. Colonese on it.

3. Report - Open Space Preservation Program

- a. Notice of Special Town Meeting, June 10, 2024, 6pm, Ellington Town Hall to discuss and vote on the purchase of open space at 79 Kibbe Road.

The open space purchase of 79 Kibbe Road was unanimously approved at a special town meeting on June 10. Ms. Houlihan attended the meeting. Chairman Quarno and Vice Chairman Bidwell said it has been a long time since the last time an open space purchase was wholly approved by the town. Funding from the Kibbe Road parcel came from a special fund dedicated to purchasing open space land in the Shenipsit Forest. Vice Chairman Bidwell asked if there has been any conversation regarding the use of the land. Ms. Houlihan said the only focus has been to restore emergency service access to Sykes Road and to gain public access from Kibbe Road to Shenipsit Forest.

It will take a couple of weeks to do some administrative work. The Finance Office must cut a check and a certificate of title is needed from the Town Attorney before the town can close on the property.

Ms. Houlihan said Jeb Stevens from the Connecticut Forest & Park Association called about 178 Crystal Lake Road. The property was for sale about a month-and-a-half ago until it was purchased by a new owner. Mr. Colonese called the new owners about an open space purchase; however, they are not interested. Commissioner Zielfelder added that the new owners have already installed a gate.

The Ad Hoc Ellington Trails Committee informed Ms. Houlihan that they are talking about the Penfield property again since there are many trails that run through the parcel. This property is located where the radio station is behind the YMCA. The owners of the parcel wanted a lot of money for the property, and Ms. Houlihan verified that they are up to date on their taxes. She believes they are paying someone to manicure the property. Now that funds have been used from the open space fund to purchase 79 Kibbe Road, the balance in the fund will be about \$400,000. Ms. Houlihan asked if the commission wanted to continue pursuing Green Road or look into the Penfield property. Vice Chairman Bidwell said he believed the owners were looking to sell just a piece of the property; however, he observed that a portion of the parcel extends into Vernon. Commissioner Kaczmarek confirmed that portion is the same owner via Vernon's GIS map. Vice Chairman Bidwell expressed concern that purchasing the portion of land with the trails running through it would cut the owners off from the other piece of their land. Ms. Houlihan said the area becomes more valuable when there is parking, but Commissioner Nickerson and Vice Chairman Bidwell added there is parking at the sewage treatment plant and the YMCA that people typically go to.

Vice Chairman Bidwell said it wouldn't hurt to ask the owner if they are interested in open space preservation. Ms. Houlihan said she would relay that to Mr. Colonese. Regarding the properties along Green Road, she added that Mr. Colonese is waiting to hear back from John DeRham, but did hear back from Grant, who wanted to keep some of his land to attach to his property in Somers. Additional calls will be made.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:

1. FY 23-24 Budget & Expenditure Update.

There is \$390 left in the Dues and Subscriptions account. Ms. Houlihan suggested splitting that and contributing \$195.00 to the Connecticut Farm Bureau and \$195.00 to the Connecticut Farmland Trust. The Connecticut Farm Bureau has been helping Oakridge Dairy and put on the presentation to explain the history of the statute that would allow for the 50% abatement on property tax for certain farms. The Connecticut Farmland Trust worked with Ms. Houlihan to put on the farmer information event earlier this year.

MOVED (BIDWELL) SECONDED (GAGE) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE DISBURSEMENT OF \$195.00 TO THE CONNECTICUT FARM BUREAU AND \$195.00 TO THE CONNECTICUT FARMLAND TRUST FOR MEMBERSHIP AND DONATION FROM THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION'S DUES AND SUBSCRIPTIONS ACCOUNT.

Ms. Houlihan said there is a balance in the Printing Account. The Planning Department ordered some farmland brochures and Mr. Colonese is updating the open space brochures. More of those will be ordered before the end of the fiscal year.

2. Approval of May 21, 2024, Special Meeting Minutes.

MOVED (GAGE) SECONDED (QUARNO) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES OF MAY 21, 2024, AS WRITTEN.

3. Correspondence/Discussion:

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

Commissioner Harford was not in attendance to report on the activities of the trails committee, but commissioners got a copy of the most recent meeting minutes.

- b. Beech Leaf Disease.

Vice Chairman Bidwell said he was at the Highland property and noticed the beech trees were shriveling up and looked sick. He did some research and reached out to the agricultural experiments station about the issue. The trees have been infected with Beech Leaf Disease, which started in Ohio a few years ago and has been slowly spreading, hitting Connecticut last year or the year before. Not a lot is known about the disease or how to manage it. He said the agricultural station is testing some experimental treatments on it and the person he talked to asked if Ellington wanted to help with the testing by permitting the treatment on the Highland property. This disease is impacting Connecticut forests. Smaller beech trees are dying from the disease, while larger ones can survive it. Ms. Houlihan was unaware if there was any policy or precedent for research or experimental treatments, but said that one of the open space parcels, Metcalf, was closed for a couple of years due to poor vegetation management and many widowmakers. The town spent between \$40,000-\$50,000 of grant funds on tree service in the area. Processes like these take coordination with Public Works and require approval from the Board of Selectmen but could be something that the commission could put forward. Vice Chairman Bidwell said he would reach back out to see what the researchers are looking to do and whether there would be costs involved, like clearing trees and branches. Ms. Houlihan said some information would be needed on what treatment they would be doing and what materials they would use. Vice Chairman Bidwell said he wouldn't be surprised if the disease has also affected the Batz property.

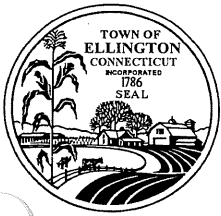
This item will stay on the agenda for the next meeting.

V. ADJOURNMENT:

MOVED (BIDWELL) SECONDED (NICKERSON) TO ADJOURN THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING AT 7:45 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
DONNA ALLEN
LINDSAY NEUBECKER
BILL SCHULTZ
TOM PALSHAW
DAN CHAMBERLIN
ROBERT BARONE
ANN HARFORD

Ad Hoc Ellington Trails Committee
Regular Meeting Minutes
June 5, 2024
Town Hall Annex

MEMBERS PRESENT: Linda Anderson, Bob Barone, Cynthia van Zelm, Ann Harford, Donna Allen, Tom Palshaw, Valerie Amsel, Bill Schultz

MEMBERS ABSENT: Deanna Wambolt-Gulick, Lindsay Neubecker, Judi Manfre, Dan Chamberlin

I. Call to Order

Ms. Anderson called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM and announced there will be no meeting in July.

II. Citizens' Forum

There was no citizens' forum.

III. Approval of Minutes

A. May 1, 2024

MOVED (HARFORD), SECONDED (BARONE) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MAY 1, 2024 MEETING.

IV. Old Business

A. Hockanum River Crew Report

Ms. Harford reported that Windermere Trail is clean. They have cut back the knotweed three times, yet it persists. They trimmed the shrubs along the edge close to the industrial park. They have also sprayed poison ivy near the radio station and will need to continue spraying to control poison ivy. They will need to address the first bench (closest to Windermere Rd.) because it is nearly under water and will need to add stones and mulch near the culvert.

Mr. Barone reported that the owners of the West Road property have cleared some of the property that appears to be a parking lot, which abuts the trail. The crew has mowed the trail closest to Sullivan Tire twice.

Ms. Anderson plans to speak with John Colonese regarding seeking an easement at the West Road trail. Until now, we have had a handshake agreement.

B. Boardwalk

Ms. Anderson will reach out to Jaime Foster and the Manager at the Big Y to coordinate a Volunteer Day to help build the boardwalk at Windermere.

C. Conservation Commission Report

There is a special town meeting on June 10 to discuss and vote on buying land at 79 Kibbe Road for open space.

D. Kiosks

Ms. Anderson reported that the Scouts were unable to help build the kiosks on May 11 due to too many other commitments. Public Works has agreed to build and install them as they are able.

E. Emergency Signs

Mr. Palshaw reported that the decision regarding updating the emergency signs will have to wait until the budget is approved. The plan is to make them more vertical to allow them to be mounted on any bench or post and allow adding the town code (048).

F. Maps

The maps are on hold until we get into the new budget.

G. Road Signs**1. Batz**

There will be two signs on Mountain Road, one at the intersection with West Road and the other at the Ellington Road intersection.

2. Windermere

There will be one sign on Pinney, directing hikers to the kiosk on Windermere Ave.

H. Easements for West Road/Franklin Radio Station

Discussion was held under the Hockanum Crew Report about easements for the West Road property.

Ms. Anderson will speak with John Colonese and Lisa Houlihan regarding the possibility of acquiring the land near the radio station.

I. Eagle Scout Projects

Ms. Anderson reported on three scouts seeking help for Eagle awards.

One scout has targeted a project at the Ellington Highlands Trail. He is still raising funds for his project.

One scout has asked for suggestions. Ms. Anderson suggested the following:

1. Completing a trail at Crystal Ridge.
2. Creating a Braille Trail or Informational Trail at Batz.
3. Chess tables at Batz.

Ms. Harford commented it would be nice if one of the scouts labeled the trees along the Batz Trail.

One scout has chosen to create a place for ground nesting bees. Ms. Anderson has not heard from him regarding any progress.

J. Batz Wildflower Field

Ms. Anderson reported that there were seven people who helped plant wildflower seeds at the Batz Property: Linda Anderson, Val Amsel and Donna Allen from the Trails Committee, two town volunteers named Charlie and Keith, and Ella and Cecelia from Ellington High School's Green Earth Club. Ms. Anderson is hopeful that the seedlings are successful despite the aggressive weeds in the field.

V. New Business

Ms. Anderson spoke with Tom Modzelewski regarding buying gates to deter vehicles at Crystal Ridge, one near the retention pond and one near the entrance at the base of Crystal Ridge Road. Mr. Modzelewski agreed that the DPW will install gates if the Trails Committee purchases them.

VI. Subcommittee Reports**A. Treasurer**

Ms. Anderson reported that there is currently \$411.82 in the budget. Ms. Amsel will purchase screws for the boardwalk project and Ms. Anderson will purchase mulch for the orchard at Batz.

B. Maintenance**1. Kimball**

The trails at the Kimball Property have been cleared and are in good shape.

2. Batz

The sensory garden has been weeded and mulched. The weeds around the kiosk have been cut back. Public Works will mow the amphitheater field.

3. Other Trails

Ms. Amsel had walked Metcalf Trail and said it was in good order.

Ms. Anderson reported that Crystal Ridge Trail is in good order.

Ms. Anderson will reach out to David Bidwell to discuss Ellington Highlands. The Committee plans to start blazing the trails. She will speak with Public Works regarding the parking lot and the bridge needed to provide access for mowing.

C. Community Outreach**1. Bird Walk at Batz**

Ms. Anderson reported that there were two community members along with herself, Ms. van Zelm and Denise Anamani. They added 3 types of birds not recorded at previous bird walks. She asked Ms. Anamani to reserve the date one week earlier in 2025.

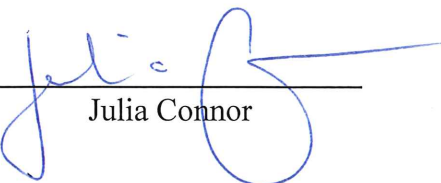
2. CT Trails Day

Ms. van Zelm reported that Ms. Allen led her and four others along the Windermere Trail. The group saw turtles, a garter snake, and heard bullfrogs and birds. Ms. Allen pointed out the work recently done by the Hockanum River Crew and continued the walk into Vernon to cross the suspension bridge.

VII. Adjournment

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

Prepared by Donna Allen; submitted by



Julia Connor