



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 8, 2025, 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. Plan of Conservation & Development, Chapter 4-Conservation Strategies, Natural Resource Preservation: Historic Preservation.
2. Report - Farmland Preservation Program.
3. Report - Open Space Preservation Program.
 - a. 16 Penfield Avenue.
 - b. Somers Road, Assessor Parcel 191-001-0000.
 - c. Executive Session to Discuss Possible Open Space Purchases.

IV. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:

1. FY 24-25 Budget & Expenditure Update.
2. Approval of May 20, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes.
3. Correspondence/Discussion:
 - a. Ad Hoc Ellington Trails Committee – Monthly Minutes.
 - b. Community Outreach – Ellington Farmer's Market, Saturday, August 30th.
 - c. Connecticut Farmland Trust, Summer 25 Newsletter.

V. ADJOURNMENT:

Next Meeting is scheduled for August 12, 2025

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/89865149401>
Meeting ID: 898 6514 9401
Passcode: 355512

Join Zoom Meeting by Phone:
1-646-558-8656 US (New York)
Meeting ID: 898 6514 9401
Passcode: 355512

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



Pictures Google Map

RAW LAND

54.45 Sqft - 16 Penfield Ave, Ellington, Connecticut 06029

SNAPSHOT:

54.45 Acres of Undeveloped Land.

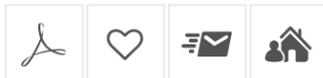
2 Parcels 16 Penfield Ave in Ellington is 27 acres with a 1500SF Cinderblock building and Windsorville Road in Vernon.

The property is currently accessed by a drive way off Penfield Road. Build your own nature preserve and home on the acreage or develop it into an outdoor recreation park.

LAND FOR SALE

Acreage : 54.45 Sqft Visits : 12 in 11 days

\$475,000



AVAILABILITY

LISTING TYPE : For Sale PROPERTY TYPE : Land PRICE : \$475,000

SNAPSHOT : 54.45 Acres of Undeveloped Land.

2 Parcels 16 Penfield Ave in Ellington is 27 acres with a 1500SF Cinderblock building and Windsorville Road in Vernon.

The property is currently accessed by a drive way off Penfield Road. Build your own nature preserve and home

AGENT INFO



THE GEENTY GROUP, REALTORS

765 East Main Street

Geenty Group

View website 203-488-1005 geentygroup@gmail.com

CONTACT AGENT

Full Name Phone Email

on the acreage or
develop it into an
outdoor recreation
park.

PRESENT USE: :
land

POTENTIAL USE: :
land, house site

Message

SITE

LOT(S): 2 **AREA SF:** 2,371,842 Sqft **ACREAGE:** 54.45 Sqft

ZONING: Ind-Resi **FRONTAGE:** 0 ft

Verification expired. Check the checkbox
again.

I'm not a robot

reCAPTCHA
Privacy - Terms

Send

UTILITIES

SEWAGE SYSTEM **AVAILABILITY :GAS**
Unknown

PROVIDER :
Unknown

POWER **AVAILABILITY :** Connected **PROVIDER :** Public Utility

ASSESSMENT

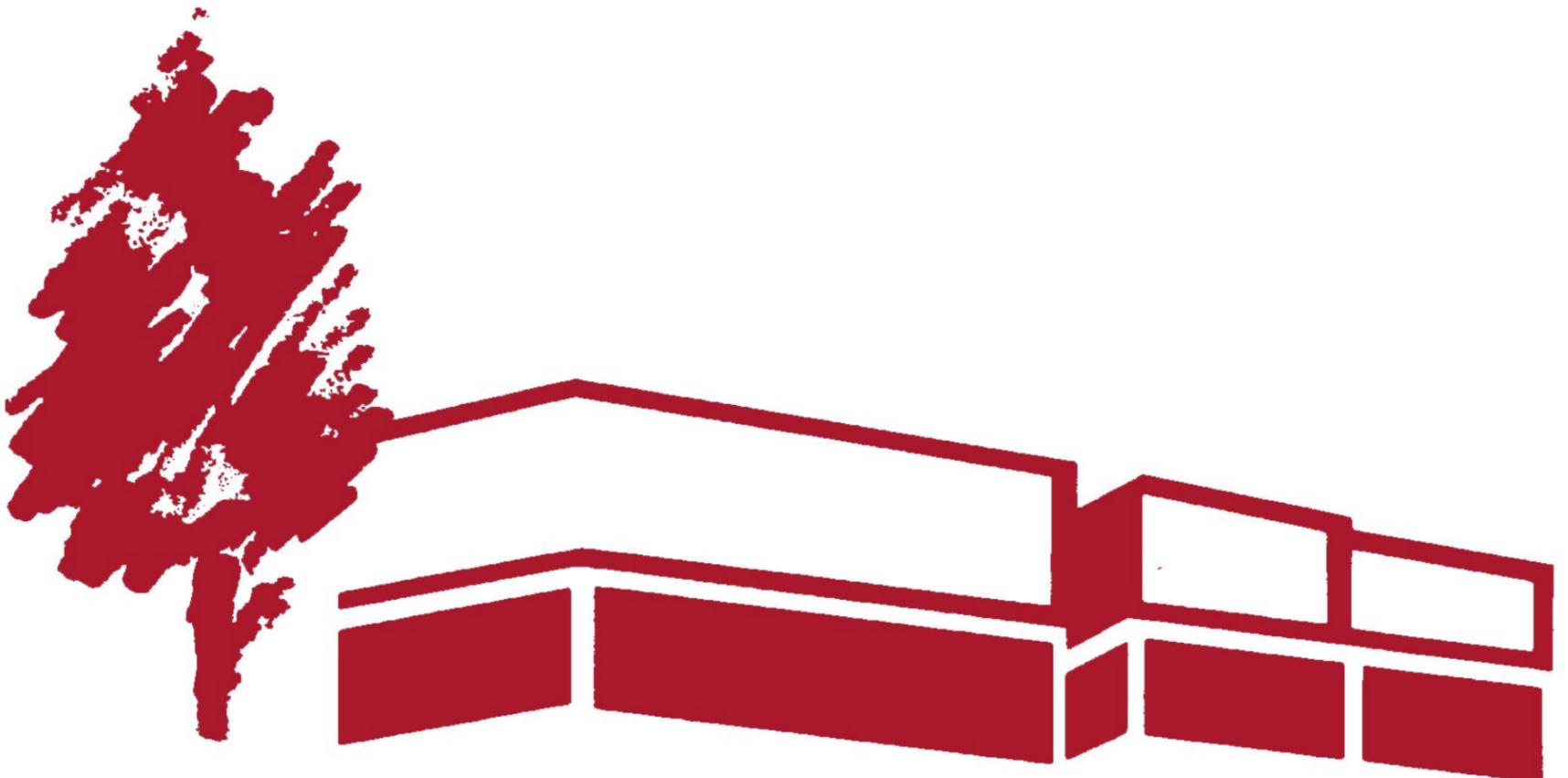
LAND : \$0 **TOTAL :** \$0 **TAXES :** \$0



The Geenty Group, Realtors

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765 EAST MAIN STREET, BRANFORD, CONNECTICUT 06405 - INFO@GEENTYGROUP.COM - 203.488.1005



Town of Ellington

General Ledger - On Demand Report

Fiscal Year: 2024-2025

From Date: 7/1/2024

To Date: 6/30/2025

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

Account Type: All

Print Detail

Include PreEncumbrance

Print accounts with zero balance

Include Inactive Accounts

Filter Encumbrance Detail by Date Range

Budget Balance

Account Number / Description	Budget	Range To Date	YTD	Balance	Encumbrance	% Remaining Bud
1000.02.00270.10.50103 Part Time---Conservation Commission--	\$1,600.00	\$1,040.00	\$1,040.00	\$560.00	\$0.00	\$560.00 35.00%
1000.02.00270.20.60221 Advertising Printing---Conservation Commission--	\$400.00	\$371.00	\$371.00	\$29.00	\$0.00	\$29.00 7.25%
1000.02.00270.20.60222 Dues & Subscriptions---Conservation Commission--	\$1,350.00	\$1,740.00	\$1,740.00	(\$390.00)	\$0.00	(\$390.00) -28.89%
1000.02.00270.20.60223 Travel---Conservation Commission--	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00 0.00%
1000.02.00270.20.60234 Professional Development---Conservation Commission	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00 0.00%
1000.02.00270.20.60250 Contracted Services---Conservation Commission--	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00 0.00%
1000.02.00270.20.60254 St of CT Surcharges---Conservation Commission--	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00 0.00%
1000.02.00270.20.60341 Office Supplies---Conservation Commission--	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00 0.00%
1000.02.00270.30.60341 Office Supplies---Conservation Commission--	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00 0.00%
Fund: 1000	\$3,350.00	\$3,151.00	\$3,151.00	\$199.00	\$0.00	\$199.00

Town of Ellington

General Ledger - On Demand Report

Fiscal Year: 2024-2025

From Date:7/1/2024

To Date:6/30/2025

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

Account Type: All

Print Detail

Include PreEncumbrance

Print accounts with zero balance

Include Inactive Accounts

Filter Encumbrance Detail by Date Range

Budget Balance

Account Number / Description

Budget

Range To Date

YTD

Balance

Encumbrance

% Remaining Bud

Grand Total:

\$3,350.00

\$3,151.00

\$3,151.00

\$199.00

\$0.00

\$199.00

End of Report



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CONSERVATION COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES TUESDAY, MAY 20, 2025, 7:00 PM

IN-PERSON ATTENDANCE: TOWN HALL ANNEX, 57 MAIN STREET, ELLINGTON, CT
REMOTE ATTENDANCE: VIA ZOOM MEETING

PRESENT: Vice Chairman Robert Zielfelder. Jr., Regular Members James Gage, Laurie Burstein, Kathy Caton, and Alternate Ann Harford

ABSENT: Chairman Rebecca Quarno, and Regular Member Sean Dwyer

STAFF: John Colonese, Assistant Town Planner and Ashley DuBois, Recording Clerk

I. CALL TO ORDER: Vice Chairman Robert Zielfelder Jr. called the Conservation Commission meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

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

III. ACTIVE BUSINESS:

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

John Colonese, Assistant Town Planner, notified the commission the Request for Proposal is under review in the Finance office. Once approved, it will be sent to the State Historic Preservation Office.

2. Report - Farmland Preservation Program.

Nothing new to report.

3. Report - Open Space Preservation Program.

Commissioner Gage announced that property located at 16 Penfield Avenue is now on the market. The property currently has a non-operational radio station located on it, along with currently used trails. Roughly half of the property is in the Town of Ellington and the other half is in the Town of Vernon. Previous efforts have been made to acquire some of the property for its potential to improve trails along the Hockanum River. The Town of Ellington granted a 15-foot access easement across its property in the early 1980s to allow access to the radio station. Commissioners generally agreed that acquiring the land would be a major asset. However, at this time, the land trust was not interested in pursuing the land due to the high price of the land, so the information was brought to the commission and town's attention. The commission agreed to keep an eye on the status of the property, attempt to reach out to a caretaker of the property for more information, and if the

opportunity were to arise, pose the idea of donating the land to the town. Commissioners continued to discuss the characteristics of the property.

a. Executive Session to Discuss Possible Open Space Purchases.

John Colonese asked the commission if they would like to enter an executive session to discuss the possible open space purchases of 19 Lord Road and the 20-acre property off Somers Road abutting the State Forest as he has obtained additional information from the owners of the properties.

MOVED (BURSTEIN) SECONDED (GAGE) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ENTER INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 7:20 PM FOR THE PURPOSE OF DISCUSSING POTENTIAL OPEN SPACE ACQUISITIONS INVITING COMMISSION MEMBERS, THE ASSISTANT TOWN PLANNER, AND RECORDING CLERK.

MOVED (HARFORD) SECONDED (BURSTEIN) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO EXIT EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 7:31 PM.

II. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:

1. FY 24-25 Budget & Expenditure Update:
2. Approval of April 15, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes.

MOVED (GAGE) SECONDED (CATON) TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF APRIL 15, 2025, AS WRITTEN.

3. Correspondence/Discussion:
 - a. Ad Hoc Ellington Trails Committee – Monthly Minutes.

Commissioner Harford updated the commission on several new developments. First, the Town of Vernon provided materials for a bridge and the Trails Committee built the bridge on the Maple Grove trail. Second, emergency signs on all trails are installed. Next, projects for the Highlands trail area, off Stein Rd, are completed. However, there is one bridge that is not big enough for an emergency quad to access, so there is consideration for rebuilding the bridge. Additionally, the committee ordered and received materials for a walkway north of the pond near 7 Nutmeg Drive that's in need of repair. Vice Chairman Zielfelder added the Scouts recently did a service project at Crystal Ridge trail where they did some general upkeep maintenance, leveled some spots, and improved some drainage in a wet area. Lastly, John Colonese added that a cover for the small amphitheater at the Batz property was approved yesterday by the Planning & Zoning Commission.

- b. Community Outreach – Ellington Farmer's Market.

The Farmers Market coordinator provided the following dates the commission could host a table: August 30th - Meet Your Community Day and October 11th - Go Green Day. The commissioners preferred the August 30th date, particularly due to the attendance of other town entities, so they plan to host an information table that day. Commissioners began discussions for booth ideas.

c. Ellington Trash, Recycling, and Disposal Information.

John Colonese noted that Sam Saunders, Recycling & Refuse Manager, provided the disposal brochure and added there is a lot more information on the Public Works website. Public Works was also at the Earth Day event providing the community with information on recycling. Sam Saunders is willing to attend a meeting to present disposal and recycling information if the commission is interested.

d. Mailing of Commission Meeting Packets

The Planning Department recently heard from the Town Administrator regarding the mailing of commission packets. The mailing of board and commission packets costs the town between \$10,000 and \$15,000 each year. The town would like to curtail this service and have boards and commissions institute alternative methods for receiving meeting packets.

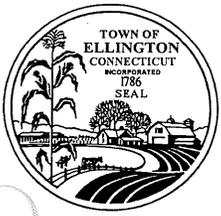
The commission is currently getting a copy of the meeting packet by email. Commissioners could also come to the Annex foyer to pick up the packet prior to the meeting or it could be made available at the meeting. Commissioners generally seemed interested in having the packet available at the meeting, although some were okay with an email only.

IV. ADJOURNMENT:

MOVED (HARFORD) SECONDED (CATON) TO ADJOURN THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING AT 7:53 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Ashley DuBois, Recording Clerk



STATE OF CONNECTICUT – COUNTY OF TOLLAND
INCORPORATED

TOWN OF ELLINGTON

Ad Hoc Ellington Trails Committee

CHAIRMAN
LINDA ANDERSON

VICE CHAIRMAN
CYNTHIA VAN ZELM

SECRETARY
DEANNA WAMBOLT-
GULICK

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

VALERIE AMSEL
DONNA ALLEN
LINDSAY NEUBECKER
BILL SCHULTZ
TOM PALSHAW
DAN CHAMBERLIN
ROBERT BARONE
ANN HARFORD
MICHAEL EMONS
STEVEN AUSTIN
STUART LANZ

Ad Hoc Ellington Trails Committee
Regular Meeting Minutes
May 7, 2025
Town Hall Annex

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

MEMBERS ABSENT: Deanna Wambolt-Gulick, Michael Emons, Steven Austin, Dan Chamberlin, Bill Schultz

I. Call to Order

Ms. Anderson called the meeting to order at 6:31 pm. She announced that member Judi Manfre has resigned. There was no one present for Citizens' Forum.

III. Approval of Minutes

A. April 2, 2025

MOVED (ALLEN), SECONDED (PALSHAW) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE APRIL 2, 2025 MEETING.

IV. Old Business

A. Hockanum River Crew

Mr. Barone said that brush trimming and knot weed removal had been done at Windermere. The team provided a fix for the bridge located near the pond. They also hammered in some posts that were sticking up.

Ms. Amsel said she can see if there are extra Trex to fix the deck board near location H-4. Mr. Barone said 2 by 12s would be preferred. A box of screws is also needed. Ms. Amsel will follow up with Public Works.

Mr. Barone said the Friends of Franklin Trail demolished a bridge and built a new one. The Town of Vernon paid this cost.

Ms. Anderson will double-check with Public Works on proper disposal of old wood.

Ms. Anderson asked if they were able to move the tree near location H-4. Mr. Barone suggested that this be a Public Works job. Ms. Anderson will follow up with Public Works.

Ms. Anderson said Mr. Barone, Ms. Amsel, and Mr. Palshaw inspected the bridges at Windermere. Ms. Anderson said the stakes located near location H-2 need to be pounded in or covered.

Ms. Anderson complimented the Hockanum River crew for their work including removing the knot weed.

B. Conservation Report

Ms. Harford said there was no report.

C. Kiosks – Map – Ellington Highlands

Ms. Anderson said the Ellington Highlands' maps are ready to be put in the kiosk at the trailhead.

D. Emergency Signs

Mr. Palshaw said all emergency sign locations have been submitted for review to John Turner. Ms. Amsel put up the emergency signs at the Boothroyd and Bellante trails.

E. Ellington Highlands – Map

See above under C. about Ellington Highlands' map.

F. Easements for West Road

Ms. Anderson said there is no further update on the easements.

G. Eagle Scout Project – Bee Hotel

Ms. Anderson said the Bee Hotel has been completed by Boy Scout Sean Ellis and he did a great job!

H. Community Service Hours for High School Students Committee

Ms. Anderson said there was no update.

I. Facebook

Mr. Austin reported in an email to Ms. Anderson that he is working with Lauren Desrocher to transfer over “ownership” of the Trails Committee Facebook page to him.

J. Cleanup Day at Kimball – Cancelled (Rain)

The cleanup day at Kimball was cancelled due to rain.

K. T-Mobile Hometown Grant Program

Ms. Anderson said that she, Ms. Allen, and Ms. Amsel went to the Ellington Board of Selectmen to get their endorsement for the T-Mobile Hometown Grant Program application for an awning over the amphitheater at Batz. The Board of Selectmen approved submitting the grant; the next step is approval by the Ellington Planning & Zoning Commission which is May 19.

Ms. Anderson said the Trails team also visited with several Ellington Departments to get their views. Staff was supportive; Public Works wants details about who is responsible for maintenance of the amphitheater roof. Ms. Amsel said Public Works thought the awning may need to be re-stained after five to ten years.

Ms. Allen said two local vendors are interested in the project. The awning will be angled and custom built.

Ms. Allen said she has started to work on the grant application. Several interested parties have provided letters of support. Ms. van Zelm will help with a letter from the Trails Committee by the end of June.

L. Painting of Storage Bin

Ms. Anderson said she, Mr. Palshaw, and Committee member Mr. Schultz scraped and power washed the storage bin. The Ellington High School students still need to paint the structure. Ms. Anderson is going to follow up with the art teacher on timing.

V. New Business

Mr. Palshaw asked about widening a bridge at Ellington Highlands to assist with firefighters' access; if there is a fire on the trails, they would not be able to get their ATVs across the bridge at its current width. Ms. Anderson said the distance was only 50 feet and it may be ok to carry someone out from that point. Mr. Palshaw will get input from local firefighters and the discussion will be added to a future agenda.

VI. Subcommittee Reports**A. Treasurer**

Ms. Anderson said there is \$2,030 left in the budget for the current fiscal year. She mentioned several items to be bought that will likely use most of the rest of the budget: mulch, lumber, pollinator sign at Batz, and candy for Trails of Treats.

B. Maintenance

Ms. Anderson said there is a tree down at Kimball. She will ask Public Works to remove it as well as a tree down at Ellington Highlands.

C. Community Outreach**1. Cleanup Day on April 5th at Kimball – Cancelled (Rain)**

There was no discussion.

2. Cub Scout Batz Cleanup, April 12th – Cancelled (Rain)

There was no discussion.

3. Earth Day, April 26th – Didn't Attend (Rain)

There was no discussion.

4. Bird Walk at Batz – May 3rd, 2025

Ms. Anderson said there were eight total attendees for the bird walk conducted by Denise Anamani. Three of the birdhouses that had been built are being used by birds – two by swallows and one by bluebirds.

5. Cleanup Day at Crystal Ridge – May 10th, 9am start with Boy Scouts, Green Earth Club and any other volunteers

Ms. Anderson confirmed that the cleanup at Crystal Ridge will be on May 10 at 9 am pending weather, particularly as one of the goals of the cleanup is to place drainage stones in an area that may be too wet.

6. CT Trails Day – Ellington Highlands, June 7th, 2025 at 10am with Ms. van Zelm and Steve Austin

Ms. van Zelm said Trails Day registration opens on May 14. She noted that Committee members need to sign up even though the Committee is hosting the hike.

7. 3 Foragers – July

Ms. Anderson is still waiting for a date from the 3 Foragers.

8. CT Astronomy Night – August 12, 2025 at Pinney Field, 9pm – midnight

Ms. Anderson reiterated the date for this event.

9. Geologist – Ray Schaeffer

Ms. Anderson passed out a report on the geology of the Ellington Trails system from Mr. Schaeffer. A walk is planned for September 27 at 9 am at Crystal Ridge. Mr. Schaeffer will also give a talk at the Hall Memorial Library in the winter.

10. Jane Seymour Pollinator Talk at Batz

Ms. Anderson said Jane Seymour will give a pollinator talk on August 5 at Batz at 10 am.

11. Trail of Treats – End of October, no date yet

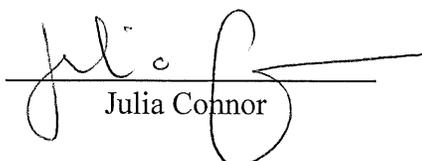
Ms. Anderson said she is still waiting on a date for Trail of Treats from the Lion's Club.

The Ellington Historical Society is interested in a ghost walk at Batz. The Library is interested in reading *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* at Batz but this may be for a later time after an assessment is made about how the ghost walk goes. Ms. Harford will follow up with Dianne Trueb at the Historical Society on details.

VII. Adjournment

MOVED (ANDERSON), SECONDED (HARFORD) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE TRAILS COMMITTEE MEETING AT 7:32 PM.

Submitted by


Julia Connor



STATE OF CONNECTICUT – COUNTY OF TOLLAND
INCORPORATED

TOWN OF ELLINGTON

Ad Hoc Ellington Trails Committee

CHAIRMAN
LINDA ANDERSON

VICE CHAIRMAN
CYNTHIA VAN ZELM

SECRETARY
DEANNA WAMBOLT-
GULICK

55 MAIN STREET – PO BOX 187
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VALERIE AMSEL
DONNA ALLEN
LINDSAY NEUBECKER
BILL SCHULTZ
TOM PALSHAW
DAN CHAMBERLIN
ROBERT BARONE
ANN HARFORD
MICHAEL EMONS
STEVEN AUSTIN
STUART LANZ

Ad Hoc Ellington Trails Committee
Regular Meeting Minutes
June 4, 2025
Town Hall Annex

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cynthia van Zelm, Valerie Amsel, Donna Allen, Tom Palshaw, Robert Barone

MEMBERS ABSENT: Linda Anderson, Deanna Wambolt-Gulick, Lindsay Neubecker, Bill Schultz, Dan Chamberlin, Ann Harford, Michael Emons, Steven Austin, Stuart Lanz

I. Call to Order

Ms. van Zelm called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. It was noted that there was no quorum.

II. Citizens' Forum

No citizens were present.

III. Approval of Minutes

A. May 7, 2025

There was no quorum to approve the minutes.

IV. Old Business

A. Hockanum River Crew

Mr. Palshaw reported the following:

- They worked on the deck to the bridge closest to H4. Ms. Amsel had some screws that worked well. They will need more screws.
- The tree that was hanging at a 45-degree angle has shifted and is now out of the way.
- They fixed the fence posts near the conduit.
- They put a cross-plate on the bridge post near H4.
- They mowed West Road Trail.
- They placed a tarp over the Japanese Knotweed near the pond to experiment whether it would kill or better control the weed.
- They pulled any litter they saw along the trail and the river.
- They reported that there are indications that the trail is being well used.

B. Conservation Report

There was no report.

C. Kiosks – Map – Ellington Highlands

Ms. Anderson placed maps at the kiosk at Ellington Highlands. Ms. Amsel placed maps at the Metcalf Trail. Mr. Palshaw placed maps at the Windermere Trail.

D. Easements for West Road

There was no report.

E. Community Service Hours for High School Students Committee

There was no report.

F. Facebook

Mr. Austin has the ability to update the Ellington Trails Facebook site.

G. T-Mobile Hometown Grant Program

Ms. van Zelm reported that the Planning & Zoning Commission voted to support the Trails Committee in the T-Mobile grant process at their meeting on May 19, 2025.

Ms. Allen is gathering images and data to complete the grant application before the June 30 due date.

H. Painting of Storage Bin

Committee members agreed that the painting of the storage bin was a great improvement.

I. Widening Bridge at Ellington Highlands for Fire Access

Ms. van Zelm reported that Ms. Anderson agreed that the bridge at Ellington Highlands needs to be widened to accommodate emergency vehicles. Mr. Palshaw has spoken with the Fire Chief and will schedule a day and time to inspect the bridge to determine what specifications will be needed.

J. Follow-up Details: Dianne Trueb/Ellington Historical Society Ghost Walk, Possible Use of Batz for Sleepy Hollow Event

There was no report.

V. New Business

There was no new business.

VI. Subcommittee Reports**A. Treasurer**

The current balance is \$1481.36.

B. Maintenance

- Ms. Amsel will be buying wood and screws to complete bridge projects.
- Ms. Anderson had mentioned she will purchase mulch for the sensory garden at the Batz property.
- She also will purchase additional items to give away at the Trail of Treats.
- Ms. van Zelm is going to investigate purchasing a new canopy/tent to cover our table at events.
- Ms. Amsel replaced a piece of rotted wood at the Batz sensory garden and thinks we will need to replace most of the garden frames.
- Ms. Anderson placed all the signs at the sensory garden.
- Ms. Allen weeded the Batz sensory garden and around the sign at the front entrance.
- 1-2 more pavers are needed at the Quartz Trail bridge at Crystal Ridge and some additional blazing.

C. Community Outreach**1. Cleanup Day at Crystal Ridge – May 10, 2025, with Boy Scouts, Green Earth Club**

Ms. Amsel reported that we had a good turnout. We were able to put a railing on the bridge, widen the path leading up from the bridge, and raked the higher trails.

2. CT Trails Day – Ellington Highlands, June 7, 2025 at 10am with Ms. van Zelm and Steve Austin

There was no update.

3. 3 Foragers – Unavailable in July

The 3 Foragers provided two fall dates for a fall hike but they do not work for the Committee. A possible idea is to do a hike in the spring/early summer of 2026.

4. Jane Seymour Pollinator Talk at Batz – August 5 at 10am, co-sponsored with Hall Memorial Library

There was no update.

5. CT Astronomy Night – August 12, 2025 at Pinney Field, 9pm – midnight

There was no update.

6. Farmers Market – Saturday, August 23, 2025 – will have a table to hand out maps and information

There was no update.

7. Geologist Ray Schaeffer – Walk at Crystal Ridge on September 27, 9am, future talk at Hall Memorial Library in the winter

There was no update.

8. Trail of Treats – End of October, no date yet

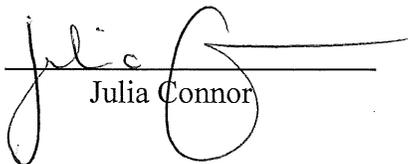
There was no update.

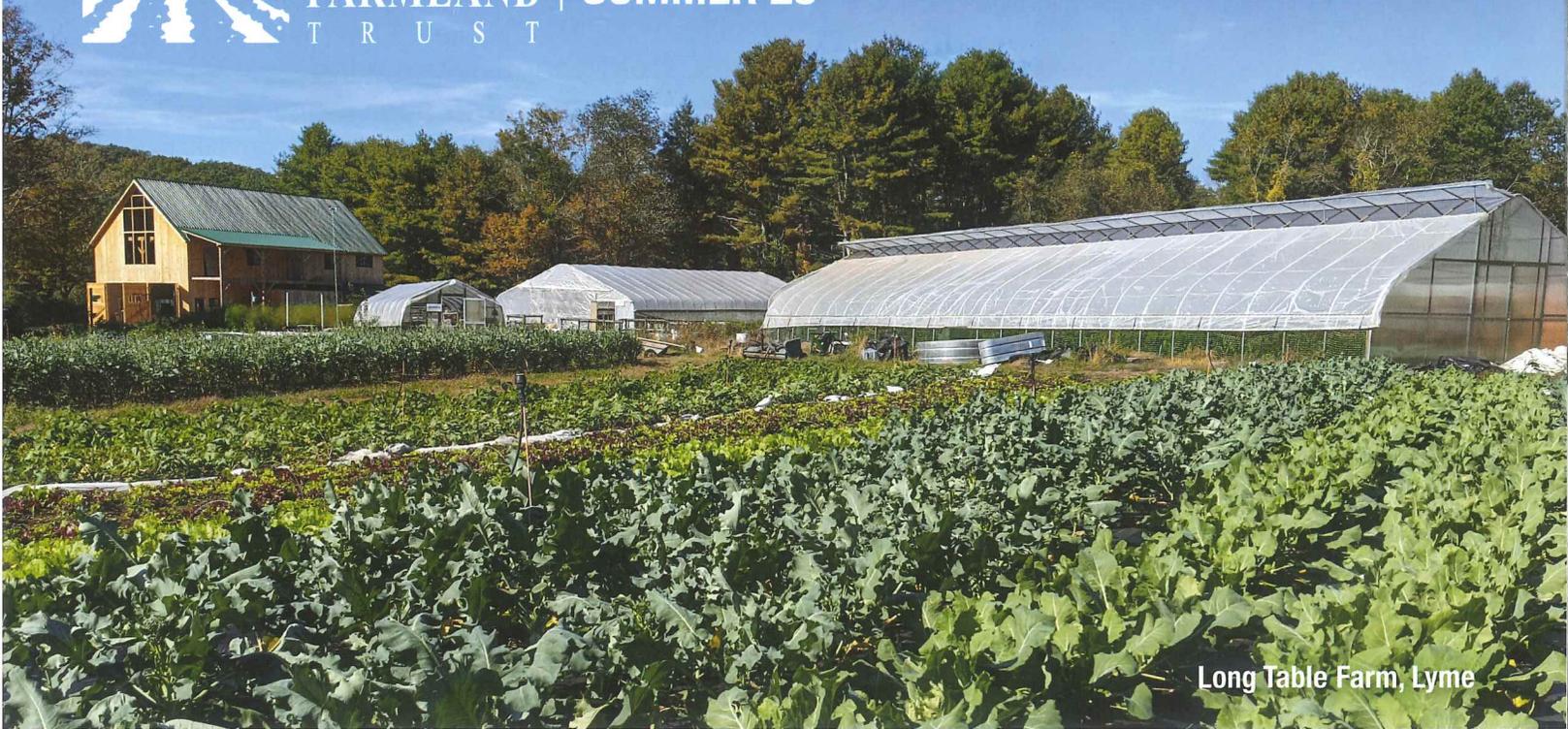
VII. Adjournment

MS. VAN ZELM ADJOURNED THE TRAILS COMMITTEE MEETING AT 7:15 PM.

Recorded by Donna L. Allen

Submitted by


Julia Connor



Long Table Farm, Lyme

Small Farm, Big Impact

Next generation farmers innovate, tap into conserved land

“A lot of people get into farming because they are passionate,” says Baylee Drown of Long Table Farm in Lyme, Connecticut, “you need to create a sustainable business in order to survive.”

Baylee and her husband, Ryan Quinn, “Quinn,” combine passion with strategy. After leasing a 4.6-acre parcel of farmland on Beaver Brook Road for a few years, they purchased it with a clear business plan in mind, one that relied on the land being conserved with an agricultural easement.

Buying the land at its agricultural value, rather than the development value, made ownership possible.

Conserved land has become a key tool for many young farmers. In Connecticut, where farmland is some of the most expensive in the country and infrequently comes up

“We could not have afforded the purchase of the farm without the easement.”

– **Baylee Drown**
Long Table Farm

for sale, purchasing conserved land offers a rare opportunity.

Agricultural conservation easements – voluntary, long-term agreements that protect land for farming – help keep farmland in production and within reach for new farmers.

Baylee and Quinn’s farming story begins with Deb and Rob Hornbake, who purchased the parcel in 2012 to create a wholesome food producing farm on a former hayfield.

Motivated by a desire to preserve farmland to support young farmers, and provide healthy food for their community, the Hornbakes worked with Connecticut Farmland Trust (CFT) to conserve the land in 2017. They began leasing it to Baylee and Quinn in 2015, creating the path for Long Table Farm to take root.

With support from CFT and the generosity of our donors, the Hornbakes protected the land, with feedback and guidance on the easement from farmers Baylee and Quinn, ensuring the easement would work for a viable farm operation. Baylee and Quinn

continued inside

A Bit of Joy on a Blustery Day

It's been a cold spring. Heavy rains. Strong winds. Cold snaps. More wind. I don't know about you, but in April, I was wondering—will spring ever really come?

That's why being out on a farm was exactly what I needed.

Tromping through the mud, listening to the wind rattle the greenhouse plastic and birds calling overhead, I was reminded of something: for me, farms are landscapes of hope.

Inside the greenhouse, spring had already arrived. Tiny shoots of tomatoes and peppers were starting to push up — leaves still too delicate to face the cold but readying themselves for the season ahead. Summer's harvest, just waiting for its chance to take root.

And that's what gave me pause.

Conserving farmland is a lot like growing those seedlings. It starts with a quiet idea, then needs just the right conditions to take root.

For some families, that moment comes when they're passing the land to the next generation. For others, there is no next generation yet and they want to make sure the land stays available, a promise to the future.

Either way, it's an act of hope.

Each spring, new seedlings. Each year, more farmers reach out, looking for help to conserve the land they love.

And that's only possible because of you.

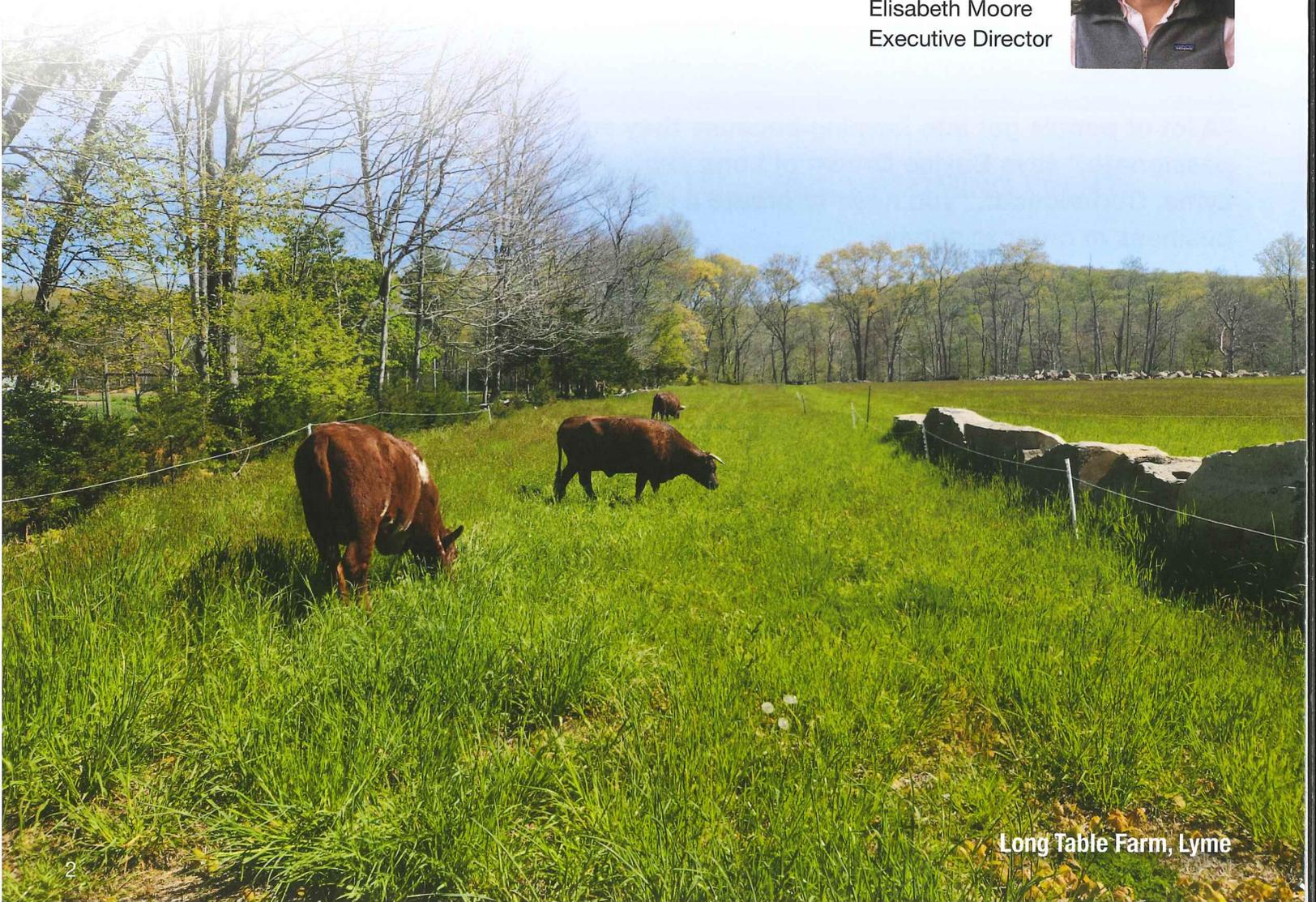
Conserving farmland isn't just about soil and crops. It's about honoring the past, sustaining the present, and planting something lasting for the future.

Thanks to you, we're protecting more than acres. Together, we're protecting a way of life — and offering a glimpse of the joy these farms can bring to all of us, season after season.

Warmly,



Elisabeth Moore
Executive Director



continued from cover

purchased the land at its agricultural value, rather than the development value, and are now growing food, building community, and stewarding the soil for the next generation.

Long Table Farm is a model of innovation and thoughtful land use.

With just a few acres, Baylee and Quinn run a diversified business that includes farm market sales and a thriving Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program.

They also lease land from the nearby Lyme Land Trust to expand production. “With intensive, regenerative practices, you can produce an immense amount of food on very little acreage, while building biodiversity and soil health,” Baylee said.

The CSA program is a major success, in part because they know their customers. “You have to give people what they want and are familiar with,” said Baylee, “and also keep it interesting — no more than one weird thing a week.”

They’ve made the most of Connecticut’s unique geography — a blend of urban, suburban, and

rural areas — which supports strong direct-to-consumer sales. “Other states don’t have this dynamic geography — farmers here can benefit from diverse soil types and a resilient landscape rich in flood-preventing swamps and bogs,” Baylee noted.

Their innovation also extends to sustainable practices. “Our farming practices are regenerative for soils, making them better than when we arrived,” Baylee said. “Our livestock are a source of pest control and fertility. Our composting operations draw in the entire Lyme community, and all our practices help us eliminate the need for any synthetic chemicals. When your soil is healthy, your plants are healthy.”

They’ve also tapped into solar energy, an imminent solar installation powering their farm and an electric truck.

High tunnels extend the growing season by trapping warmth from the sun earlier and later in the year. “You have to get good quickly at the things you are already good at, and keep innovating,” Quinn said. “After all, you only get maybe three dozen tries at getting it right in your lifetime.”



Conserved farmland gave Baylee and Quinn a viable path to ownership. They’ve turned that opportunity into a thriving, forward-thinking farm.

Baylee and Quinn’s work prioritizes soil health, biodiversity, and climate resilience — all rooted in a deeper mission: to serve their community and care for the land.

Conserved farmland gave them a viable path to ownership, and they’ve turned that opportunity into a thriving, forward-thinking farm.

Our challenge now is to increase the pace of conservation in Connecticut so that other farmers, throughout the state, can purchase and care for the land, for future generations.

Farmland at Risk, You Make the Difference

Farmland protection has perhaps never been more important than it is now.

Farmland protection has perhaps never been more important than it is now. From 1985 to 2015, according to the Connecticut Department of Agriculture, the state experienced a loss of approximately 45,000 acres of agricultural fields, representing about 16% of its farmland. This equates to an average annual loss of around 1,500 acres during that 30-year period.

As concerning as this is, the trend has continued. Between 2017 and 2022, Connecticut experienced an additional decline of farmland, losing approximately 460 farms and reducing the total number of farms to just over 5,050 — a decrease of about 8%.

Now Is the Time to Take Action

A report by the American Farmland Trust suggests that if development is left to business as usual, Connecticut could lose up to a total of 55,000 acres of farmland by 2040. This projection underscores the need for state and local action. With federal funding in flux, the state’s farmland protection funding — and the support of communities and donors — are what will make the difference.

Conserving one’s farm is a big decision. We can’t assist local farmers without you.



Waldingfield Farm Conservation Laid the Ground for Future Success

In the rolling hills of Washington, Connecticut, Damaris and John Horan made a decision four years ago that will ripple across generations.

They chose to preserve 78 acres of their family farmland — a bold commitment at a time when development pressures loom large for most or all family farms in Connecticut. That act of conservation wasn't just about protecting land. It was about planting the seeds for the future they believe in.

The story really began three decades earlier with their oldest son, Dan, who returned from college in 1990 full of energy and ideas. Inspired by a passion for organic food and sustainability, Dan began farming just a quarter-acre of vegetables and coined the farm's now-iconic motto: "Listen to your mother, eat your vegetables."

Patrick and Quincy, the Horans' twin sons, joined in during summer breaks, initially drawn by the fun and freedom. But over time,

something deeper took root. "You really feel like you're making a difference here," Quincy says.

Today, the seeds of grit, determination, and conservation have blossomed into *Waldingfield Farm*, one of the state's most respected organic farms.

The Horans' conservation decision will prove critical for future farmers, too.

As Connecticut's farmland disappears at one of the highest rates in the country, land prices have skyrocketed. "Access to affordable farmland is the single biggest challenge for young farmers," Patrick explains. "Without preserved land, it would've been nearly impossible for us to build what we have."

But make no mistake, success didn't come easily.

Learning and Innovating: Making the Impossible Happen

"We had no idea how to farm when we started," Patrick admits, as he looks back more than 30 years. The brothers had to learn everything from the ground up, weathering storms both literal and economic.

"Farming in Connecticut means competing with states that can grow cheaper, year-round," he says. "But we found our niche. Our Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) model and local market presence have made our farm viable and resilient."

They now grow food for hundreds of families, as well as for multiple farmers' markets, and are an integral part of the community.

For the Horans, conserving their farm isn't just about keeping

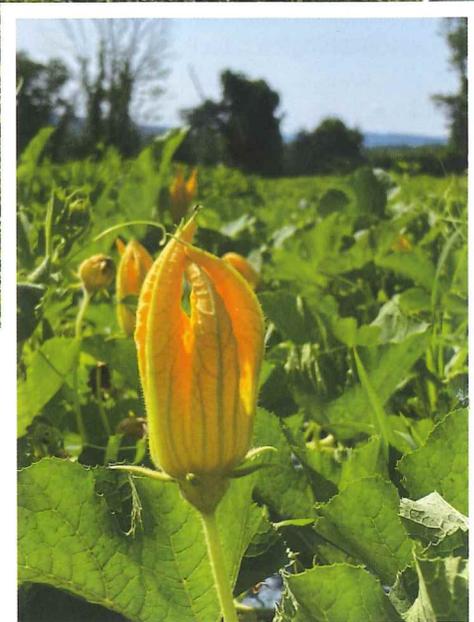


development at bay. It's about sustaining a way of life and securing local food for future generations. That's true for many of the farms that Connecticut Farmland Trust has conserved over the past 23 years.

It often takes years for a farm family to decide if conserving their land is right for them. There are important questions to be answered, conversations about future goals and how to enhance the soil and farm viability. It's a process

that can't be rushed. Our staff is only able to spend that time with these farm families thanks to the contributions of our community, people like you.

"Once farmland is gone, it doesn't come back," Patrick observes. "Preserving land means giving the next generation a fighting chance. It's how communities remain connected to the land and their food."



From squash to tomatoes, the decision to grow everything organically came from both personal values and the pragmatic demands of running a farm business.



Dick and Sally Jaynes
Broken Arrow Farm

Is Conservation Right for Someone You Know?

Waldingfield Farm stands today not only as a model of agricultural innovation and determination, but also proof of what's possible when land is protected and removes unrelenting development pressure for new farmers. For aspiring farmers, and for families wondering what legacy they want to leave, farmland conservation can make that possible.

If you — or someone you know — want to reduce your federal and state income taxes, protecting your land can help. You would continue to own and manage the land and can sell or bequeath the land knowing that your conservation agreement (conservation easement) will run with the land forever. We are available to discuss the details, please contact Elisabeth Moore at emoore@ctfarmland.org or 860-247-0202, ext. 224.

Connecticut is losing farmland at a rate of more than 2,300 acres/year.

But there's good news.

Thank you to farmers who have taken action with CFT to conserve their land. We look forward to working with more in the coming year.

Town	# of farms	# of acres protected
Ashford	1	212
Berlin	1	41
Bethany	1	133
Bethlehem/Washington	1	61
Bolton	2	89
Branford	1	37
Canaan	1	37
Canterbury	1	184
Canton	1	27
Colchester	1	75
Columbia	1	113
Cornwall	2	64
Coventry	2	108
Durham	1	43
East Haddam	1	55
Easton	1	37
Ellington	2	292
Enfield	1	147
Glastonbury	1	16
Griswold	1	86
Hamden	1	54
Lebanon	14	818
Lisbon/Canterbury	1	104
Lyme	1	5
Meriden	1	76
Middletown	1	41
Morris	1	137
New Hartford	2	280
New Milford	1	44
Newtown	1	31
North Canaan	2	202
North Stonington	1	69
Norwich/Franklin	1	181
Salem	2	282
Sharon	1	268
Southbury	3	277
Stafford	1	24
Stonington	3	181
Thompson	1	123
Vernon	1	49
Vernon/Tolland	1	21
Voluntown	1	498
Washington	2	129
Washington/Woodbury	1	64
Watertown	2	340
Watertown/Bethlehem	1	40
Woodstock	1	13

6,208 total acres preserved



Kuss Farm, Woodbury

A Lifetime of Loving Farms, Conserving it for the Next Generation

Dick and Peggy Ann Kuss didn't grow up on farms — but that didn't stop them from becoming farmers.

In their late 30s, the couple shifted careers from running a school bus business to pursuing Dick's lifelong dream of working the land.

"From a young age, I knew that I wanted to farm," Dick said. The Kusses balanced their business with farming — growing hay during the summer and gradually acquiring farmland in Woodbury and Bethlehem.

Peggy passed away in 2021 and Dick continues to honor her love of the farm by continuing their high-end hay operation and is committed to preserving the land they built together.

Over the past several years, Dick has already protected four parcels of farmland, with more in the pipeline. For the most recent two parcels, we worked alongside the State of Connecticut to secure matching funds from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and now share stewardship of those permanently protected lands.

"Dick is a committed and conservation-minded farmer who works tirelessly to maintain his farm," said our Executive Director, Elisabeth Moore. "Thanks to his foresight, these lands will stay in agriculture and could one day support the next generation of farmers."

We believe Connecticut has a unique opportunity to preserve farmland that not only honors a community's agricultural legacy but also creates space for new and innovative farmers to grow. While land access remains one of the biggest challenges for beginning farmers, landowners like Dick — and supporters like you — are helping change that.

"There are a lot of young people with an interest in farming," Dick said. "But they can't farm because there's no land available for them. Maybe young people can use this farm in the future."

With federal funding currently in flux, we are assessing local funding and state funding options, including community donations and donated conservation easements.

Over the next several years we will be assisting local farmers throughout the state to conserve additional lands, identify opportunities for innovation and farm viability, and promote our state's agricultural economy. It's community support that makes this possible and will keep Connecticut's agricultural future growing strong.

You Can Help Conserve Farmland

Sometimes it can seem overwhelming. What can one person do in the face of accelerating development pressure? How can a non-farmer assist a farmer or aspiring farmer? What can be done in the face of extreme weather and national challenges?

The good news is that everyone can play an important part. Sometimes it's leasing your land to a farmer or conserving it. Other times, it may be as simple as providing a tax-deductible contribution to increase the pace of farmland conservation throughout the state.

Tax-friendly Ways to Give

- Contribute a one-time special gift, including by check or online. You may find that donating **appreciated securities**, like stocks, help you avoid capital gains tax.
- Make a qualified charitable distribution (QCD) from your **IRA** and reduce income tax on your required minimum distribution.
- **Give monthly** to make an impact all year long, while supporting your budget. People contribute anywhere from \$5 to \$500 or more per month.

“Giving monthly was easy to set up and it feels good every month to see that I’m protecting more farmland. Because I do it through my work, my employer matches me 100%!”

– **Aimee Hoben**, donor for 20 years and employee at The Hartford

Cash-free, Tax-savvy Ways to Give

- Include a gift to Connecticut Farmland Trust in your **will or living trust**. For bequest language and more information, contact Kimball Cartwright at kcartwright@ctfarmland.org.
- Name Connecticut Farmland Trust as a beneficiary of your **retirement plan, life insurance policy, or financial account**.
- Recommend a gift to Connecticut Farmland Trust from your **donor-advised fund (DAF)** or name Connecticut Farmland Trust as a successor of interest.

Other Ways to Give

Please visit our website at ctfarmland.org, or call Kimball Cartwright at 860-247-0202, ext. 223 or email kcartwright@ctfarmland.org to brainstorm about other ways you can help, including gifts of land or underwriting a program.



Business Leaders Show Up, Make a Difference

Community wellbeing. Local food.

A strong agricultural economy. Cultural heritage

All across the state, businesses recognize the importance of conserving farms and connecting people to those farms.

Thanks to these businesses, we are able to help local farm families explore conservation options, support local land trusts that are advancing farmland protection,

and develop partnerships to ensure the future viability of farming in CT.

If you know of a business that would like to help sponsor a program or join us in conserving farms, please be in touch with Kimball Cartwright at kcartwright@ctfarmland.org.

Please join us in thanking the following businesses for their 2025 support:

- Cork and Antler Club
- Farm Credit East
- Harney & Sons Fine Teas
- Long Table Farm
- Northwest Community Bank
- United Ag & Turf
- White Flower Farm

Have you signed up for our free eNewsletter?

You'll read breaking news, updates on farmland conservation, and information about upcoming programs and events.

Sign up at CTFarmland.org

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**YOU CAN
PROTECT
FARMLAND**

FOREVER

with a gift in your will.

We are inspired by your stories and reasons for wanting to protect farmland. Please contact Kimball Cartwright anytime for a confidential discussion regarding how you can protect CT farmland forever.



You're Invited to... OUR UPCOMING EVENTS

BAYLEE DROWN, LONG TABLE FARM



A Farm Tour You Won't Forget

June 7 • 12:30-2:00 pm
Long Table Farm, Lyme

Innovative always, farmer Baylee shares how she has built systems at her small farm to mitigate climate change and yield an abundant harvest.

BRIAN WILCOX-CONNECTICUTPHOTO.COM



Love the Land

September 20 • 2:00-4:00 pm
Sharon

Join us in the beautiful Northwest Corner for an on-farm harvest celebration that will feature locally grown food and great company. Save the Date!

Visit our website CTFarmland.org to learn more details.