



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

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**CONSERVATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
TUESDAY, JUNE 9, 2026, 7:00 PM**

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

PRESENT: Chairman Rebecca Quarno (left at 7:50 PM), Vice Chairman Robert Zielfelder, Jr., Regular Members James Gage, Sean Dwyer, Kathy Caton, Jamison Boucher (left at 8:07 PM), Kalagena Sullivan, Alternates Ann Harford and Matthew Shea (left at 7:50 PM)

ABSENT:

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

OTHERS

PRESENT:

I. CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Rebecca Quarno called the Conservation Commission meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

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

III. ACTIVE BUSINESS:

1. Determination of Open Space for a proposed subdivision of 20 acres in a Rural Agricultural Residential (RAR) Zone on Crane Road (APN 068-002-0001) for BDC Home Improvement Service LLC, owner/applicant.

Brian Denno of Denno Land Surveying & Consulting was present to review the open space request for the proposed 10-lot subdivision on a 20-acre Rural Agricultural Residential zoned property on Crane Road (APN 068-002-0001). The plan includes 4-bedroom homes served by private septic systems and public water, which will be accessed by a 22-foot-wide private road approximately 800 feet long. In total, the project requires 2 acres of open space to be dedicated to the Town and Brian noted Town staff recommended the fee-in-lieu-of option considering the 2-acre area does not abut any other town property. Commissioner Harford asked what would happen to the land if it did not become dedicated open space and Brian responded the land would be absorbed into the two lots it's originally apart of. Round table discussion ensued regarding the characteristics of the property and subdivision plan details.

MOVED (DWYER), SECONDED (ZIELFELDER JR.) AND PASSED UNANIOUSMLY TO RECOMMEND A FEE-IN-LIEU-OF OPEN SPACE for a proposed subdivision of 20 acres in a Rural Agricultural Residential (RAR) Zone on Crane Road (APN 068-002-0001) for BDC Home

Improvement Service LLC, owner/applicant.

2. Plan of Conservation & Development, Chapter 4-Conservation Strategies, Natural Resource Preservation: Historic Preservation – Historic Resources Inventory Update.

a. Review Historic Resources Inventory.

John Colonese, Assistant Town Planner, reported the inventory product comes in two parts, a 38-page write up summary and 490 pages of the 100 individual properties evaluated in detail. Commissioners will continue to review for feedback. State Historic Preservation Office will also review the inventory. Commissioner Harford requested a copy be sent to the Historical Society due to their plethora of resources on hand. Commissioner Shea asked if any specific feedback is needed and Chairman Quarno responded general feedback of product quality is sufficient. Commissioners agreed to have comments consolidated by the July meeting.

3. Report - Farmland Preservation Program.

Nothing new to report.

4. Report - Open Space Preservation Program.

a. Appraisal of a 20-acre parcel east of Somers Road, APN 191-001-0000.

Two bids for appraisals are in, one for \$5,000 and another for \$5,500. A third potential bid is still pending. John Colonese met with the landowner and reviewed documents to better understand if the property has any deeded access. The owner is still interested in moving forward with acquisition.

b. 16 Penfield Avenue – Response to Interest Letter.

John Colonese shared a recent discussion with the property owner regarding property limitations. They expressed interest in an offer from the town and declined to offer a selling price. The owner also commented that the radio towers are intended to be removed at some point in the future. Vice Chairman Zielfelder Jr. asked if the town's offer would only apply to Town of Ellington land, which John anticipates being the case. Commissioner Boucher suggested waiting on the owner's next steps, which the commission agreed to.

c. Executive Session to Discuss Possible Open Space Purchases.

The commission concluded an executive session was not necessary.

II. ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:

1. FY 25-26 Budget & Expenditure Update:

2. Approval of May 19, 2026, Regular Meeting Minutes.

MOVED (SULLIVAN) SECONDED (CATON) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE REGULAR MEETING MINUTES OF MAY 19, 2026, AS WRITTEN.

3. Correspondence/Discussion:

a. Ad Hoc Ellington Trails Committee – Update.

Ann Harford, Ad Hoc Ellington Trails Committee representative, shared the CT Trails Day event this past weekend, in combination with Vernon at Pinney St fields, was the best response to date. Another combination event with Somers will be held this upcoming September. Easement and usage challenges have been resolved on the Windermere trail. Easement and usage challenges continue with the West Rd trail system.

b. Community Voice Channel – Commission Participation in Discussion on Open Space.

The First Selectman is looking for participants for the August 18th Community Voice Channel event. Commissioners concurred participation later in the year would be more feasible.

c. Greenskies Clean Energy, LLC notice of filing a petition for declaratory ruling with CT Siting Council for the construction, maintenance and operation of 4.99-MW AC ground mount solar facility on School House Road, APN 146-007-0000. – May 21, 2026, letter.

The commission is being notified of a petition filed on behalf of Greenskies Clean Energy LLC with the CT Siting Council for the construction, maintenance and operation of a ground mount solar facility on School House Rd. The Town Planning and Zoning Commission have reviewed the petition and provided feedback on setback requirements and soundproofing of inverters. The commission expressed concern for a discrepancy in the soil classification maps, along with the growing interest in solar installations in town going against the Town's Plan of Conservation. More specifically, the plan to preserve working farms and the impact on natural resources. Commissioners commented on the growing interest in solar and its implications in town. Additional concerns included a lack of authority compared to the state siting council and timeframes in which towns must respond to the notices. John will draft a letter, to be reviewed by Chairman and Vice Chairman, on the concerns discussed, focusing on the incorrect map data and conflict with Plan of Conservation.

BY CONSENSUS, COMMISSIONERS DECIDED TO SUBMIT A RESPONSE LETTER TO GREENSKIES CLEAN ENERGY LLC NOTICE OF FILING A PETITION FOR DECLARATORY RULING WITH CT SITING COUNCIL FOR THE CONSTRUCTION, MAINTENCE AND OPERATION OF 4.99-MW AC GROUND MOUNT SOLAR FACILITY ON SCHOOL HOUSE ROAD, APN 146-007-000.

IV. ADJOURNMENT:

**MOVED (HARFORD) SECONDED (SULLIVAN) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO
ADJOURN THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION MEETING AT 8:08 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,

Ashley DuBois, Recording Clerk