

EAST LYME COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES
REGULAR MEETING
November 10, 2021

Present: Penny Heller
Don Danila
Laura Ashburn
Mark Christensen

Absent: Art Carlson, Chairman
Ron Nichols

Also Present: Rose Ann Hardy, Ex-officio
Harvey Beeman, Alternate

FILED

Nov, 17 20 21 AT 10:20 AM/PM
Bruce Jensen ATC
EAST LYME TOWN CLERK

CALL TO ORDER. Acting Chair Heller called the meeting of November 10, 2021 to order at 7:05 pm.

MOTION (1): Mr. Danila moved to seat Harvey Beeman for Arthur Carlson.
Seconded by Mr. Christensen. (4-0) Unanimous.

MOTION (2): Mr. Danila moved to add to this evening's Agenda, under New Business
3c. RVB sampling results. Seconded by Mr. Beeman. (4-0) Unanimous

- I. **PUBLIC DELEGATIONS.** There were no guests.
- II. **MINUTES of October 13, 2021.** Ms. Heller asked for additions, deletions, or corrections to the October 13, 2021 Minutes of the East Lyme Commission for the Conservation of Natural Resources.

On page one the next to the last sentence should be deleted.

MOTION (3): Mr. Danila moved to accept the October 13, 2021 East Lyme Conservation of Natural Resources Minutes, as corrected. Seconded by Ms. Ashburn. (4-0) Unanimous.

III. **NEW BUSINESS**

- a. **Recommendation by the Commission for the Town to purchase the Hathaway Farm.** A letter of support was sent to the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Danila stated commission members were disappointed that they did not have an opportunity to review a draft of the letter prior to it being sent. Commission members agreed with the contents of the letter but feel it should have been reviewed by all. Also, Laura Ashburn's name was omitted from those listed as Commission members.
- b. **Schedule of 2022 East Lyme Commission for the Conservation of Natural Resources Meeting Dates.** The Commission reviewed the schedule of meeting dates for 2022.

MOTION (4): Ms. Ashburn moved to accept the East Lyme Commission for the Conservation of Natural Resources 2022 meeting dates, as presented. Seconded by Mr. Christensen. (4-0) Unanimous.

- c. **RVB Sampling Results.** Mr. Danila thanked the other participants: Penny and Ray Heller, Steve Loomis, and Karen Bishop and also Tom and Nancy Kalal for allowing access to Cranberry Meadow Brook through their property. Our preliminary results at the four Riffle Bioassessment for Volunteers (RBV) stations sampled in town show the following types of aquatic organisms as defined by CT DEEP: Latimer Brook behind IGA Plaza-3-4 most wanted types, 4 moderately wanted, 1 least wanted and 2 others. Cranberry Meadows Brook in Nehantic Forest-4-6 most wanted, 7-8 moderately wanted, 1 least wanted and 2 others. Latimer Brook upstream of Colony Road bridge-4-6 most wanted, 7-8 moderately wanted, 2 least wanted and 1 other. Specimens of each type were reserved and final identifications will be made by CT DEEP. If our results hold up, the Cranberry Meadow Brook site should be one of the best in the state.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

- a. **Follow up on Discussion of Newly Published EL Annual Water Quality Report, rising salt levels.** Mr. Carlson was not present and there was no report.
- b. **Follow up on potential composting project.** Ms. Heller has been considering holding a workshop on home composting and pollinator pathways for your home. Mr. Kalal has agreed to work on it. Ms. Heller agreed to request Mr. Putnam to have it placed on the town marquee and in the Parks and Recreation brochure. Ms. Hardy suggested that it be advertised in the Lyme Times. Ms. Ashburn suggested an article in the Post Road Review. Tom and Nancy Kalal will be asked to put it on Facebook. Ms. Hardy suggested advertising on Channel 22. Ms. Ashburn suggested having information on how to avoid invasive species and a water protection plan. Mr. Christensen suggested sustainable gardening. Ms. Heller suggested public TV.
- c. **SustainabilityCT Program: Start of 2022 Recertification Process.** Ms. Heller reported we are working quickly so that our personal time for the holidays is free. There have been 30 different items that the Town has done or has been involved in. Ms. Heller agreed to have discussion with David Putnam on the Miracle League. Ms. Hardy stated no Town funds were used for the Miracle League.

V. REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

- a. **Communications.** There were no new communications received.
- b. **Agribusiness Subcommittee.** Mr. Christensen reported we are trying to work on sustainable agriculture. We would like to make ourselves more resilient. An example would be to make the community gardens at the Samuel Smith House like Liberty Gardens from WW II, including vegetables such as potatoes, butternut squash and turnips. The subcommittee has been successful in changing regulations to allow most homeowners to have bees for honey and keep chickens for eggs. Mr. Christensen stated he would like to have more programs like those so average homeowners can be involved.

He invited members of this Commission to attend a Potluck for Preservationists Dinner to be held in January.

- c. **Chairman's Report.** Ms. Heller reported that Mr. Carlson told her that the East Lyme Land Trust is moving along with the purchase of Oakwood, a large tract between Holmes Road and Walnut Hill. Mr. Christensen stated it is now open to two-acre zoning. The total land is 335 acres to be broken up into three parcels. Test holes have been done. Ms. Hardy inquired whether or not they need a permit and was told by Zoning officials that if you have an option

on the property, you are allowed to dig test holes. Ms. Heller reported that Mr. Carlson wants the Commission to consider writing another report to explore issues involved in protecting the Four Mile River Watershed. East Lyme owns the Bobrow Property, across the highway from the Rustic Café Ms. Hardy added the Town bought that property for an additional well which would tap into the Four Mile aquifer, but the water volume was inadequate. There is interest in finding a location north of I-95 in case of a spill. Ms. Hardy stated there already is a well at Spring Rock.

Ms. Hardy stated the Aquifer Protection Committee might be interested in an analysis of the Four Mile aquifer capacity. Ms. Ashburn felt some reports may have already been written. Ms. Hardy will meet with the new First Selectman and suggest it to him. Ms. Ashburn asked how often does the Aquifer Protection Committee meet? She was informed they should meet at least quarterly.

It was felt when Mr. Nichols position expires that he be replaced with an alternate. Ms. Heller suggested Margorie Meekhoff. She would be interested in being an alternate on this Commission.

- d. **Ex-Officio Report.** Ms. Hardy had discussion on the Darrow Pond parking area. There is the potential for 20-25 parking spaces.

There has been nothing new on the Noble Gas permit controversy. Mr. Danila felt he did a thorough job when speaking at the Zoning Commission meeting about this proposal. Nothing more has come forward on it. He spoke with Ledge Light about their permit. Steve Mansfield is only responsible for making sure there are proper containers for the septic system and its capacity. Mr. Danila reported there is an issue with the CAM review by DEEP. The Town went to DEEP in August, but no DEEP review was completed. Save the Hills/Save the River wants DEEP to do its due diligence. Mr. Danila felt that the town has major projects close to the Niantic River with little or no review. The Wetlands Enforcement Officer gave Noble Gas a permit without a public hearing. Ms. Hardy stated the traffic pattern at this site could be a problem, but was considered the state's responsibility. Ms. Hardy expressed concern if there is a toxic spill. Ms. Ashburn stated that area once had light traffic on I-95 but now traffic is heavy.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION (5): Ms. Heller moved to adjourn the November 10, 2021 East Lyme Commission for the Conservation of Natural Resources Regular Meeting at 8:30 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Danila. (4-0) Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Frances Gheri, Recording Secretary