

**TOWN OF EAST LYME
CONSERVATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
EAST LYME TOWN HALL – CONFERENCE ROOM 1
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2022 – 7:00 PM**

FILED

Feb. 16, 2022 AT 1:55 AM/PM
Bethany Meehoff, ATC
EAST LYME TOWN CLERK

PRESENT

Art Carlson, Chairman
Laura Ashburn
Mark Christensen
Don Danila
Penny Heller
Marjorie Meekhoff, Alternate
Harvey Beeman, Alternate

ABSENT

Ron Nichols, Alternate

ALSO PRESENT

Selectwoman Rose Ann Hardy, Ex-Officio

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Carlson called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

I. PUBLIC DELEGATIONS – none

II. MINUTES – January 12, 2022 Regular Meeting

MOTION (1): Motion made by Commissioner Christensen, seconded by Commissioner Heller, to approve the Conservation of Natural Resources Commission January 12, 2022 Regular Meeting Minutes. Discussion: None. Voice vote, 4-0-1. Voting in Favor: Commissioners Ashburn, Christensen, Heller, and Carlson. Voting in Opposition: None. Voting in Abstention: Commissioner Danila.

Alterations to the Agenda:

The following items were added to the Agenda under Item III, New Business:

- a. Introduction of Alternate Commissioner Meekhoff
- b. Report of North Bridebrook Development
- c. Liasons to Other Commissions and Agencies

III. NEW BUSINESS

a. Introduction of Alternate Commissioner Meekhoff

Newly-appointed Alternate Commissioner Meekhoff, the Founder and President of *Pollinator Pathway East Lyme, Inc.*, was introduced and welcomed to the Commission. She distributed an informational brochure

regarding *Pollinator Pathway East Lyme, Inc.*, a 501(c)(3) organization interested in creating habitats for wildlife and native pollinators.

b. Report of North Bride Brook Development

Commissioner Danila was informed by CTDEEP (Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection) Eastern Coastal, Thames, Salmon, and Eight Mile Watershed Manager and Ex-Officio to the Niantic River Watershed Committee Eric Thomas that CTDEEP's Fisheries personnel discovered that sediments are not being properly retained on the construction site of the North Bride Brook Development, possibly due to inadequate or damaged erosion control measures. Commissioner Danila informed the Wetlands Enforcement Officer Gary Goeschel. Commissioner Danila stated the importance of urging the Inland Wetlands Commission to protect the Brook and Lake, which is the location of one of the largest alewife runs in the State.

Commissioner Christiansen suggested drafting a letter to the Inland Wetlands Commission regarding the issue and requesting that work be delayed until the end of the mud season. Commissioner Ashburn agreed, adding that the letter be cc'd to the Zoning Commission.

Ex-Officio Hardy reported that, upon receiving the notification, she met with First Selectman Kevin Seery, who met and directed the Wetlands Enforcement Officer Goeschel to inspect the site.

MOTION (2): Christiansen/Heller, to draft and present a Memorandum of Fact to the Inland Wetlands Commission regarding the siltation of Bridebrook deriving from a construction project being undertaken by Pazzaglia Construction, as notified by CTDEEP. The Memorandum will be cc'd to the Zoning Commission and Board of Selectman.
Discussion: The letter will be drafted by Commissioner Danila and sent to the Commissioners for review. Voice vote, 5-0, all in favor.

c. Liaisons to Other Commissions and Agencies

Ex-Officio Selectwoman Hardy reported that Zoning Enforcement Officer (ZEO) William Mulholland was agreeable to being part of a Subcommittee comprised of Municipal Utility Engineer Ben North, two members of the CNRC, two members of the Aquifer Protection Agency, Public Works Director Joe Bragaw, and herself. The ultimate goal of the Subcommittee

is to encourage the Aquifer Protection Agency to revisit and enlarge the Aquifer Protection Zone.

Discussion ensued regarding the importance of having all of the boards and commissions better informed and integrated empowering them to work together for the betterment of the town. Chairman Carlson also proposed the possibility of organizing a quarterly meeting between all of the board/commission chairpersons. Commissioner Heller proposed the Commissioner(s) attend the meetings of other boards/commissions, provide an informal introduction, gain knowledge of their discussions, and offer help. Chairman Carlson stated that he would speak with the First Selectman. The item will be added to their next Agenda and continue their discussion.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

a. SustainabiliteCT Program: Start of 2022 Recertification Process

Commissioner Heller reported that Nancy Kalal received approximately ten responses from local farmers regarding their concerns and ideas for the future. Alternate Commissioner Meekhoff is working to enhance the town's pollinator pathways. Currently, there are three pollinator gardens in town.

A series of public workshops are being planned, including:

February 16, 7:00 p.m., via Zoom

Suzanne Thompson, *Plant Invaders in our Landscape: What's so bad about them & how to manage them.*

March 30, 7:00 p.m., Community Center, Olive Chendali Room
Marjorie Meekhoff, *Pollinator Pathways*

April 27, 7:00 p.m., Community Center, Olive Chendali Room
Honeybees presentation

End of May, Samuel Smith House, *Composting* presentation

Early May or Late June, Kyle Corey, *Backyard Chickens* presentation

TBD, *Apples* presentation

Reservations are not required. The workshops are posted on the Town Hall website and board and will be included in the town's *Events* magazine. Commissioner Danila proposed including the events in future issues of *The Lyme Times* and *The Post Road Review*. Posters have been created and will be printed and posted at select locations. Invitations will also be sent to the Town Hall staff, schools, and Commissioners.

V. REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

a. Communications – *none*

b. Agribusiness Subcommittee

Commissioner Christiansen reported that, in addition to the SustainableCT workshops, a Farm Day at the Samuel Smith House is being planned.

Approximately five apple trees will be planted this Spring at the Samuel Smith house; the fruit will be donated to the Soup Kitchen.

c. Chairman's Report

Chairman Carlson reported that the Commission's submission for the town's Annual Report will be forwarded to the Board of Finance Chairperson.

In an effort to quell the issues with the motorcycles and ATVs riding along the Goodwin Trail, signage describing the impact of their activities was created and presented to the Commission. An Eagle Scout project, the 18" x 22" signs will be posted along the trail. It is hoped that hikers will help monitor and enforce the activities.

Two washouts have occurred at the Goodwin Trail. One of the washouts is on Town property and located at the beginning of the trail (Darrow Pond) and the other, larger washout is located on State property, south of Grassy Hill Road. While water bars were installed several years ago to protect the area, the recent heavy rainfall overwhelmed the area causing the washout. After inspecting the property with the Planning Director and Retired CTDEEP Forester Dick Raymond, it was estimated that the cost to repair the area would be approximately \$50,000.00. With the help of State Forester Gary Nestaika, an application requesting funding for the project was submitted to CTDEEP. The Town has been informed regarding the washout at Darrow Pond.

He recently learned of two limitations on Darrow Pond: (1) only residents who reside in the area are allowed to utilize the Pond for boating, per their Deed. The public is allowed to fish on the Pond. (2) the topsoil in the open fields located at the top of Darrow Pond was previously stripped off to eliminate the weed seeds in preparation for a proposed golf course. The area was not re-filled as the company went out of business. A request has been submitted to review the four-acre field for the possible location of a pollinator garden.

In addition, a map of a 300-acre parcel, named Oakwoods, was presented as a possible area to be utilized for agriculture. The property, which is owned by the East Lyme Land Trust, can also host hiking trails and cross-

country skiing. A bid has been submitted to a philanthropic group for the possibility of creating parking areas.

He recommended the Commissioners read the book, *The Climate Casino: Risk, Uncertainty, and Economics for a Warming World* by Yale Economist William Nordhaus. The book includes a broad discussion regarding climate change and possible ways to address the issue.

d. Ex-Officio Report

Selectwoman Ex-Officio Hardy proposed following up with Ben North's presentation with any comments the Commission might have. She also reported that the Town agencies are in the process of presenting their proposed budgets for the next fiscal year. Commissioner Heller will follow up with Mr. North regarding the status of his request to the CT DOT (Connecticut Department of Transportation) to install a spill mitigation system at Exit 74 to protect the Aquifer Protection Zone.

She proposed requesting the Aquifer Protection Agency to research the possibility of enlarging the Aquifer Protection Zone, especially based on this evening's discussions. The item will be placed on the Commission's next meeting agenda. Chairman Carlson will speak with Zoning Official Bill Mulholland for background information.

She also reiterated the possibility of forming a Subcommittee to help integrate the town's boards and commissions. Chairman Carlson also proposed the possibility of requesting the Board of Selectmen require that proposals submitted to the Aquifer Protection Agency be presented to the Commission for review and comment prior to the making of any final decisions. The same process could be required of the Town's other boards/commissions, including the Planning, Inland Wetlands, and Zoning Commissions, to improve their interactions and flow of information.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Motion (X): Christiansen/Ashburn, to adjourn the meeting at 8:18 p.m.
Discussion: None. Voice vote, 5-0. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Agnes T. Miyuki, Substitute Recording Secretary for the Town of East Lyme