

EAST LYME COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
FEBRUARY 14, 2024

Present: Penny Heller
Don Danila
Laura Ashburn
Mark Christensen
Steve Dinsmore, Alternate
Marjorie Meekhoff, Alternate
Harvey Beeman

Also Present: Rose Ann Hardy, Ex officio

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EAST LYME, CT
2024 FEB 20 A 8:45
Caulfield
TOWN CLERK

I. CALL TO ORDER. Ms. Heller, Chair, called the East Lyme Commission for the Conservation of Natural Resources of February 14, 2024 to order at 7:03 p.m.

II. SEATING ALTERNATES (IF NECESSARY) A quorum was established.

III. CALL FOR ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA. There were no additions to the Agenda.

IV. CALL FOR PUBLIC DELEGATIONS. There were no guests.

V. REVIEW OF MINUTES OF JANUARY 10, 2024. Ms. Heller asked for additions, deletions or corrections to the January 10, 2024 Minutes.

The following correction was noted: On page 1, item VI a. the third sentence be revised as follows: "Ms. Ashburn reported that Superintendent of Schools Jeffrey Newton wrote a letter of support for the subcommittee's plan."

MOTION (1): Mr. Danila moved to approve the January 10, 2024 Commission for the Conservation of Natural Resources Regular Meeting Minutes, as amended. Seconded by Ms. Ashburn. Mr. Beeman abstained from voting. (4-0-1) Motion Carried.

VI. NEW BUSINESS There was no discussion of new business.

VII. OLD BUSINESS

- a. **Plan for Darrow Pond Property.** Ms. Ashburn and Rich Williams will meet once a month regarding the educational piece. They will meet next on February 22.
- b. **East Lyme NDDB Mapping.** Ms. Meekhoff reported we need to meet with the Town regarding funding for an intern.

Ms. Heller would like to see the town website user friendly. She would like residents to be aware that endangered wildlife and vegetation need special attention.

Mr. Danila suggested working with commissions and agencies that have authority on development. Mr. Christensen suggested a checklist for the Planning Commission. Mr. Dinsmore added on commercial projects they are required to do an assessment on the environmental impact. Part of it would be a review of NDDB. Ms. Heller added large projects are required by the state. Mr. Dinsmore stated smaller projects are required to do an environmental impact. Mr. Beeman felt there should be an additional checklist for any other applicants. He agreed to put together a draft for review by this Commission.

VIII.REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

a. Communications. There were no new communications.

b. Agribusiness Subcommittee. Mr. Christensen reported the Agribusiness Subcommittee is visiting Ledyard Agricultural School to determine what they are teaching students. The Agribusiness Subcommittee wishes to integrate agricultural educational in the East Lyme Middle School.

Ms. Heller reported Ledyard Agricultural School raises seedlings for the East Lyme Giving Garden

Mr. Christensen reported the Potluck Supper had thirty in attendance. The speakers were interesting.

Mr. Tom Kalal has resigned from the Agribusiness Subcommittee, because he was appointed to the Inland Wetlands Commission. We now have five members.

c. Sustainable CT Subcommittee. Ms. Heller reported the SustainableCT Subcommittee is working with town staff on several elements required to achieve Climate Leader Certification for the town:

- A Community Composting Program for East Lyme will be part of a regional initiative to remove organics from the waste stream in partnership with SE CT Regional Resources Recovery Authority (SCRRA), according to Joe Bragaw who is current President of the Authority. The initiative includes a compost processing facility to be built in Preston.

- The subcommittee has completed preliminary steps for a 'Community Resilience Building' Workshop to analyze the town's climate change vulnerabilities. The Workshop will be held this spring.

- Mr. Beeman has made progress on an Energy Management Portfolio for town-owned buildings. Currently we have all the information for five schools. We will meet tomorrow with Joe Bragaw to discuss oil consumption over the last five years. This information will be given to Amy Thompson of Connecticut Center for Advanced Technology (CCAT) for our normal application.

- d. **Pollinator Pathway East Lyme (PPEL).** Ms. Meekhoff reported East Lyme is a member of SECOG. The Zoning Commission is looking very carefully into lighting for businesses. Ms. Heller had a draft proposal about lighting, but it was voted down by the Zoning Commission.

Connecticut River Gateway Commission has adopted a night sky pollution standard.

PPEL is sponsoring a lecture on the DOT 161 interchange on March 8 from 10 a.m. to noon. Pollinator Pathway East Lyme Board voted that there should be extra signage placed within the town about this event. Ms. Hardy informed Ms. Meekhoff that East Lyme has a sign ordinance that needs to be followed.

The next PPEL lecture will be about coyotes on March 29 at 2 p.m. in the East Lyme Room.

On Friday February 16, PPEL will have a workshop in the East Lyme Library on invasive plants at 10:00 a.m. followed by a field walk.

- e. **Chairman's Report.** Ms. Heller gave testimony at the February 1 meeting of the East Lyme Zoning Commission Public Hearing concerning the application of Bride Lake LLC for site plan approval to expand the multi-family units from 80 to 100 on the westerly side of North Bridebrook Road. Following testimony by Mr. Danilla at earlier Zoning hearings, the primary concern voiced was the potential and actual contamination of Bride Brook from sediment washout from this construction site which endangers the largest alewife run in the state.

Ms. Heller again asked the Zoning officials to give extreme scrutiny to the stormwater plan as a tributary to Bride Brook that crosses diagonally through this development.

Ms. Heller also contacted Ben North for an update on the town's plans for improving summer water levels in Bride Lake and Bride Brook. He responded the Water Department is in discussions with CT DEEP and has taken first steps with construction of a raw water transmission main from Well 2A to connect to the Bride Lake Treatment Facility. This will allow greater withdrawal from wells outside of the critical area of Bride Brook due to increased production of Well 2A. DEEP has been asked to improve their control structure at the discharge point of the lake into the brook, and

add a fish ladder, so they have greater flexibility in adjusting lake levels and facilitating fish passage.

Mr. Danilla stated the Pattagansett Lake Association has applied for an \$18,000 CT DEEP AIS grant. The PLA will need a 25% match for this grant and have requested \$1,800 from the town. Mr. Danila drafted a letter to the EL Rowing Association to request a donation. Since they use the lake, the PLA will be asking that they wash their boats and trailers to avoid introducing hydrilla into Pattagansett Lake.

f. **Ex-Officio Report.** Ms. Hardy reported the Board of Selectmen have been reviewing budgets. The Budget Hearings dates are posted on-line.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION (2): Mr. Danila moved to adjourn the February 14, 2024 East Lyme Commission for the Conservation of Natural Resources at 7:55 p.m. Seconded by Ms. Ashburn (5-0) Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Frances Gheri, Recording Secretary