

EAST LYME COMMISSION FOR THE CONSERVATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
APRIL 10, 2024

RECEIVED RECORD  
EAST LYME, CT

2024 APR 15 A 8:38

Present: Penny Heller  
Don Danila  
Mark Christensen  
Steve Dinsmore, Alternate  
Marjorie Meekhoff, Alternate

*Caren Hill*  
TOWN CLERK

Absent: Laura Ashburn  
Harvey Beeman

Also Present: Rose Ann Hardy, Ex officio

**I. CALL TO ORDER.** Ms. Heller, Chair, called the April 10 East Lyme Commission for the Conservation of Natural Resources meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

**II. SEATING ALTERNATES (IF NECESSARY)**

**MOTION (1):** Mr. Danila moved to seat Marjorie Meekhoff and Steve Dinsmore in place of Harvey Beeman and Laura Ashburn.  
(3-0) Unanimous.

**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 March 13, 2024.** Ms. Heller asked for additions, deletions or corrections to the March 13, 2024 Minutes.

The following correction was noted: On page 4, the last sentence of the last paragraph to be rewritten as follows: "The new Assistant Director of the library is organizing the book discussion for East Lyme residents on Bringing Nature Home being sponsored by the Brookside Farm Museum, the Library and Pollinator Pathways East Lyme."

**MOTION (2):** Mr. Christensen moved to approve the March 13, 2024 Commission for the Conservation of Natural Resources Regular Meeting Minutes, as amended. Seconded by Mr. Danila. (5-0) Unanimous.

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

**VII. OLD BUSINESS**

- a. **Plan for Darrow Pond Property.** Ms. Meekhoff reported she saw Todd Donovan who informed her he will inform everyone on when the next subcommittee meeting will be held.
- b. **East Lyme NDDB Mapping.** Mr. Beeman, who could not attend tonight, asked that the Chairman report that he met with Mr. Goeschel last week to get his thoughts on including instructions for consulting the State Natural Diversity Data Base in all Inland Wetland permit applications, not just the largest projects that usually require state permits as well. The justification for this was to encourage all permit holders to consider the effects of their projects on the habitat of threatened wildlife and vegetation. Mr. Goeschel did not embrace the idea of any further alteration of the permit process.
- c. **Affordable Housing Development – 91 Boston Post Road.** Mr. Danila went to four Zoning Commission meetings and provided testimony. Other town residents were also opposed to this 12-unit development. This is an 8-30(g) affordable housing development at 91 Boston Post Road, located just east of Latimer Brook. Save the River-Save the Hills had attorney Roger Reynolds of Save The Sound involved. He felt this Conceptual Site Plan had no basis for a Zoning Commission decision at this point. The attorney for the Zoning Commission didn't think it had merit either but felt the Commission could vote on it. In the applicant's plan residents would only be able to turn right upon exiting and cannot make a left turn onto the Boston Post Road. There was concern about stormwater runoff into Latimer Brook. The Zoning Commission determined that the risk for this development outweighed affordable housing benefits and denied the Conceptual Site Plan by a 5-1 vote. Ms. Hardy added that there are two parts to it as they will probably come in with a Final Site Plan if they are able to correct the problems. CT DOT would have to look at the Traffic Study prepared by Traffic Engineer Karen Clarke. Eight of the eleven acres would be open space.
- d. **Community Composting.** Joe Bragaw, President of SCRRA, is working on community composting to get monies for a process plant in Preston.

## VIII.REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

- a. **Communications.** No new correspondence was received.
- b. **Agribusiness Subcommittee.** Mr. Christensen reported the Agribusiness Subcommittee will visit Ledyard Agricultural School in April. The Ledyard faculty will give a tour. He added the subcommittee hopes to make East Lyme High School students more familiar with the Ledyard program so they are more comfortable applying to it.

On April 6 at 3 p.m. a lecture was held on acquiring local and sustainably grown food.

- c. **SustainableCT Subcommittee.** Ms. Heller reported the subcommittee members are in the final stages of planning for the April 15<sup>th</sup> "Community Resilience Building Workshop."

It will be held over Zoom and includes 13 invited participants from town commissions and staff. The workshop is a program initiated and run by the Connecticut Chapter of the Nature Conservancy in partnership with SustainableCT.

**d.Pollinator Pathways East Lyme (PPEL).** Ms. Meekhoff reported Pollinator Pathways East Lyme advocated for town financial support at the Board of Finance meeting on April 1 specifically for the Betty Murphy Memorial Garden.

On Saturday April 13 there will be a lecture on coyotes at the East Lyme Library. Information has been sent to Mike Mainz to request that he advertise it on the town website.

On Wednesday April 17 at 9 a.m. Pollinator Pathways East Lyme is having an invasive plant workshop at the Community Center. This workshop is open to the public.

A meeting is pending with Town Engineer Alex Klose and Parks and Recreation Director Jerry Lokken at Hole-in-the-Wall to begin renovation of the stormwater system demonstration project there and the removal of mugwort, which has blanketed the project.

Touch-a-Truck will be held on May 4, 2024  
On May 18, 2024 Earthfest will take place.

**e.Chairman's Report.** Ms. Heller had nothing in addition to report.

**f.Ex-Officio Report.** Ms. Hardy reported the conceptual plan for 91 Boston Post Road is the first time it has been used by a developer with the Zoning Commission. The eight acres of open space may not be accessible to the public. She thanked Mr. Danila for attending the Zoning Commission Meeting and speaking scientifically. The caretaker who has worked for Mr. Tytla discussed his wishes. He wanted the property left permanently as open space. He thought it was protected. It was felt affordable is not achievable. Mr. Dinsmore added we have a housing shortage at the present time.

Ms. Hardy stated the Board of Finance is working on budgets. They are trying to build up cash capital. Overall, she felt the budget seems fair. There have been many requests that are wants rather than needs.

## **IX. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION (3): Mr. Danila moved to adjourn the April 10, 2024 East Lyme Commission for the Conservation of Natural Resources at 8:00 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Christensen (5-0) Unanimous.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Frances Gherji, Recording Secretary**