

East Lyme Commission for the Conservation of Natural Resources
Regular Meeting Minutes
April 11, 2012

Present: Penny Heller, Member
Marvin Schutt, Member
Tom Kalal, Member
Ron Nichols, Alternate
Laura Ashburn, Alternate

Absent: Arthur Carlson, Chairman
Mark Christiansen, Member

FILED April 16, 2012
AT 8:50 A.

L.A. Blais, TC
TOWN CLERK

Call to Order. Acting Chairlady Heller called the April 11, 2012 Regular Meeting of the East Lyme Conservation of Natural Resources to order at 7:02 p.m.

I. Additions to the Agenda. There were no additions to the Agenda.

II. Public Delegations. There were no public delegations.

III. Minutes.

A. Minutes of March 14, 2012. Mr. Carlson asked for additions, deletions or corrections to the March 14, 2012 East Lyme Commission for the Conservation of Natural Resources Regular Meeting Minutes.

MOTION (1): Mr. Schutt moved to accept the March 14, 2012 East Lyme Commission for the Conservation of Natural Resources Regular Meeting, as presented. Seconded by Mr. Kalal. Mr. Kalal abstained from voting. (4-0-1) Motion carried.

IV. Old Business.

A. Nature of East Lyme Programs.

i. Foot Paths (Nehantic Forest Update). Mr. Carlson informed Ms. Heller that Town Attorney has returned the legal document regarding liabilities.

ii. Forest Management. Ms. Heller reported she walked the Darrow's Pond property yesterday and observed invasive species. Mr. Carlson plans to attend an Invasive Shrub Control Workshop on April 21, 2012 at Goodwin Conservation and Education Center, 23

Potter Road, Hampton, Connecticut from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Mr. Nichols suggested inviting a member of the Fire Department to attend the workshop.

The Forester is about three quarters done with his survey. A report on his findings is expected by June.

iii. Water Quality Town wide. A meeting was held at Mr. Carlson's house to discuss water quality town wide.

Ms. Heller spoke with Don Danila, a Fisheries Biologist and member of the Niantic Watershed Committee. He informed her they are planning a Water Quality Study. He gave her data which should be useful for this Commission. She suggested that this Commission coordinate with the Niantic River Watershed Committee.

Ms. Ashburn will work on a Rapid Bio Assessment with her students. She was asked to prepare an inventory of what she will need for it by the next meeting of this Commission.

B. Open Space Plan Updates and Corrections. Mr. Carlson asked Mr. Schutt to organize site walks of the Samuel Smith House. The New London Day had a very nice article about the house. Barbara McGrath took photos which Mr. Schutt agreed to provide and asked that they be attached to the May Minutes. Every Saturday in April at noon the house will be open. (See attachments on "Why Efforts to Preserve the Samuel Smith Property and House" and July 1, 2010 information on the Samuel Smith House.)

V. New Business

A. DEEP-Open Space & Land Acquisition Grant Programs. The Forester looked at the Darrow's Pond property. It was noted that the Lee House is in close proximity to the Samuel Smith House.

VI. Reports and Communications

A. Staff/Communications. Mr. Goeschel was unable to be present, and there was no report.

B. Chairman's Report. Mr. Carlson was unable to be present, and there was no report.

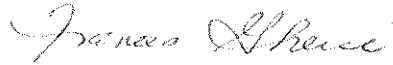
C. Ex-officio. There was no report.

VII. Adjournment.

MOTION (2): Mr. Schutt move to adjourn the April 11, 2012, Regular Meeting of the East Lyme Commission

**for the Conservation of Natural Resources
at 8:10 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Nichols. (5-0)
Unanimous.**

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Frances Ghersi".

Frances Ghersi, Recording Secretary

July 1, 2010

Samuel Smith House

The Samuel Smith House is rare surviving example of a late 1600s house in its original setting on approximately seventeen acres of rural land in East Lyme, Connecticut. Through the last 330 years it has been lived in by various families each leaving their history but remarkably none destroying the integrity of the house or the property. The house was built in three stages. The original c.1685 is a south facing "end chimney" on the west. In the 1730s or early 40s it became a "center chimney" with the addition on the west side of another late 17th or early 18th century house and finally in 1812 a small ell was added to the back. At the present time the only other buildings on the property are the small original barn very close to the house and an 1812 five-holer out-house that the Henry Ford Museum attempted to buy from Mrs. Rix in the 1930s which, thank goodness, for practical reasons she didn't sell.

The fact that the house was never "restored" has left us with a cultural jewel as evidenced by the following (incomplete) list of things that could easily be lost if the property falls in the wrong hands.

Original feather-edge paneling

Cased summer beams and beaded joist (very rare combination)

Remnants of the original whitewash on the ceiling

Original interior paint from the late 1600s including black paint emulating baseboards

Burn marks on the ceiling showing where a "betty lamp" hung

Ships carvings on the walls from early 1700s (probably Capt Johnson carved one and one of his children carved the lower simpler one)

A large summer kitchen fireplace in the cellar

Original nails used for bed hangings.

Most of the original ladder to the loft

Butterfly shelves and bottom door to the original corner cupboard

The date "1762" is chalked on a panel in a front room downstairs

The outline of an original leaded glass diamond pained window on the north side

Writing in chalk on the walls of the loft (pounds and pence, pre 1776) pertaining to the price of flax, wool, and sheep also other words and slash marks for counting. A loom must have been set up there.

In the original barn is a very elaborate chalk ships drawing now preserved under a board panel

The family dump is preserved and was in continues use from the late 17th century until the mid 20th century. It is waiting to be professionally excavated.

Three Native American graves remain undisturbed far back on the property

Artifacts found the property include a very early (about 4,000 years old) Native American point, and two large stone mortars (not transportable indicating a permanent settlement) found in Bride Brook, a large box full of pottery shards spanning three centuries, also pipe stems and boles, glass, etc.

A complete inventory of what was in the house and on the property in 1737 (an extremely important document)

The point of all this is, that this relatively untouched 17th century Connecticut farm is a national treasure and should be preserved for ours and future cultures to study and enjoy.

We owe a great debt of gratitude to all the previous owners of this property for preserving it either by their lifestyles or intentionally.

Thank you,

Stephen & Carol Huber (present owners)

WHY EFFORTS TO PRESERVE THE SAMUEL SMITH PROPERTY AND HOUSE?

1. The only privately owned, un-restored historic dwelling existing in East Lyme.
2. Rare surviving example of a late 1600's house in its original rural setting.
3. Registration: National Trust for Historic Preservation, June 1979.
4. A three-stage house construction dating from 1685 to 1812 with numerous historic details and cultural elements.
5. A barn/outbuilding built on the original barn foundation, useable for meetings and classes.
6. Potential for archaeological sites and artifacts per State Archaeologist. These include the family dumpsite from the 1600's to 1900's and three purported Native American graves.
7. Has not been restored and can be used immediately as an historical destination.
8. 17 acres of adjoining land makes it different from existing East Lyme preserved dwellings, and thus provides opportunities for additional uses.
9. Complements existing historic dwellings, supports the town's historic preservation commitment.
10. Carries on the POCD focus on preserving open space and cultural and historic sites.

Statistically, the citizen's responses to the Open Space survey were 96% in favor, supporting the acquisition of historical and cultural resources; 91% for the continuing acquisition of land for open space purposes;

11. Protects 800 feet of Bride Brook and a part of East Lyme's aquifer and watershed recharge area in the Bride Lake watershed.
12. Eligible for two grants: up to \$200,000 House; \$160,000 Open Space.
13. At estimated purchase cost of \$500,000, and 3% annual interest over 20 years, the annual cost to each of East Lyme's 9300 taxpayers would be \$3.58 per taxpayer. Receipt of both grants could cut the cost to an estimated \$ 0.86 per taxpayer annually.

14. Potential property uses: Meeting space for town public and private organizations
Archaeological digs for historians, public and schools
House as a museum tourist site
17 acres to develop with other historical units, such as a
blacksmith shop, etc.
Hiking, walking trails
Community Gardens
15. For future generations to share with their children., and the children's children
16. Preserving history provides concrete reminders and earmarks (the place, the people the issues of the time) for critical decision making for the present and future.

"As state archaeologist, we often get the chance to conduct field reviews of historic properties around Connecticut, but it is a rare opportunity to see a late 1600's house that has maintained such wonderful historic characteristics and adjoining property that has great integrity for archaeological resources. The property is a gem for both its natural and cultural resources and to preserve it for the community is a positive step to the future quality of life in your town."

Nicholas Bellantoni, State Archaeologist, November 17, 2010.

Rev. A 8/8/11

APPENDIX

POTENTIAL PROJECT PARTNERS

East Lyme property owners

East Lyme residents

East Lyme, Town of:

Board of Education

Commission for the Preservation of Natural Resources

Department of Parks and Recreation

Department of Public Works

Economic Development Commission

Ag-Business Committee

Historic Properties Commission

Planning Commission

Inland Wetland Agency

Smith-Harris Commission

Zoning Commission

East Lyme Cemetery Association

East Lyme Garden Club

East Lyme Historical Society

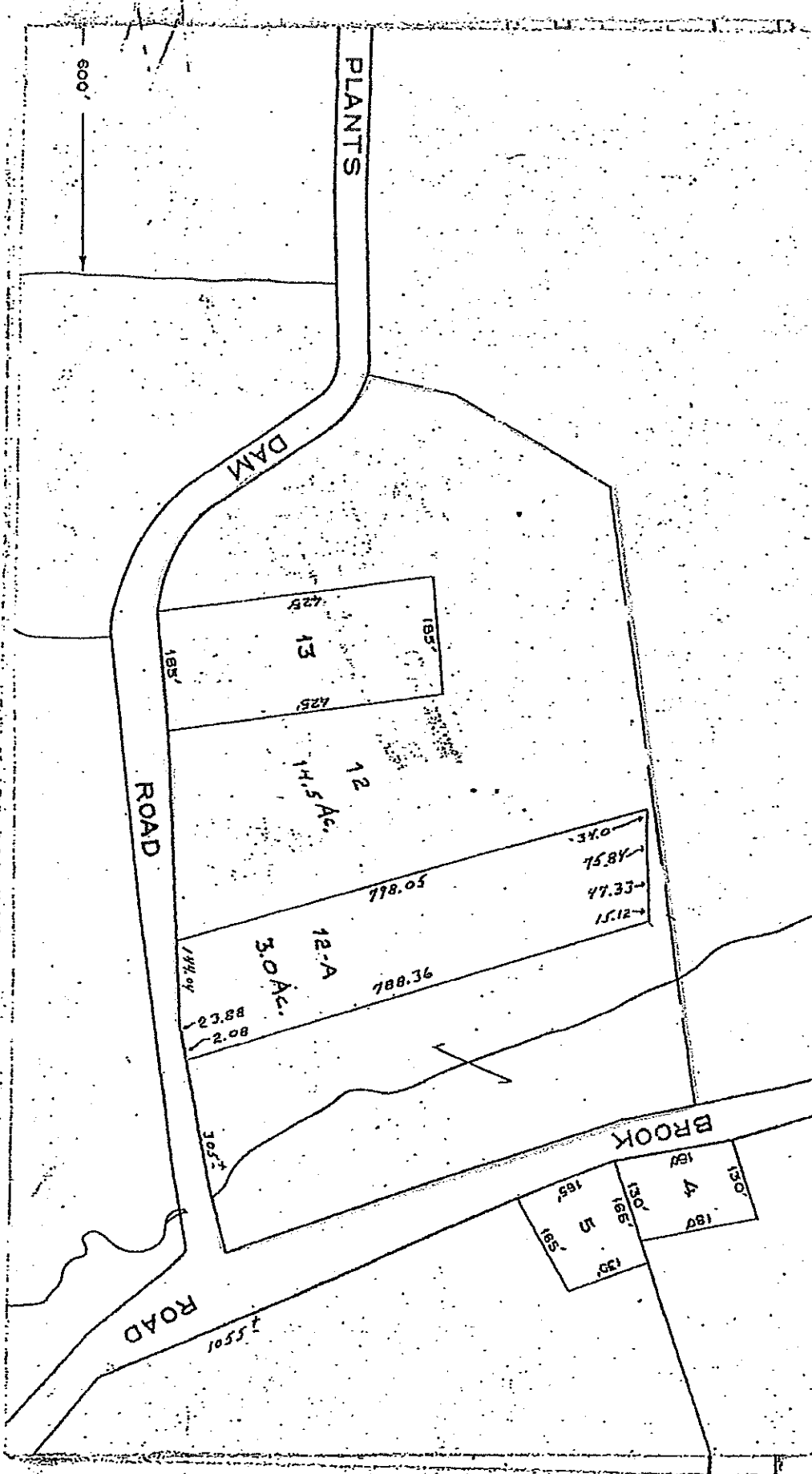
Friends of Smith-Harris House

Indian Nations

Niantic Lions Club

Niantic Rotary Club

Universities



RED OUTLINE - ORIGINAL SQUARES