

East Lyme Commission for the Conservation of Natural Resources
Regular Meeting Minutes
May 9, 2012

Present: Arthur Carlson, Chairman
Mark Christiansen, Member
Penny Heller, Member
Marvin Schutt, Member
Tom Kalal, Member
Ron Nichols, Alternate

Absent: Laura Ashburn, Alternate

Also Present: Robert Foster
Gary Goeschel

Call to Order. Chairman Carlson called the May 9, 2012 Regular Meeting of the East Lyme Commission for the Conservation of Natural Resources to order at 7:07 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 April 11, 2012. The April 11, 2012 Regular Meeting Minutes were tabled.

IV. Old Business.

A. Nature of East Lyme Programs.

i. Foot Paths (Nehantic Forest Update). Mr. Carlson reported a tentative footpath of approximately one mile in Darrow Pond has been established. He showed Commission members the area on a map.

ii. Forest Management. Mr. Carlson and DEEP Forester walked Darrow Pond. The DEEP Forester will give a report on how it should be managed. It has many invasive species.

He will also check on Oswegatchie Hills and Plants Dam Road.

for him to qualify to submit an application to the state, he will need a letter of agreement from the Town of East Lyme to the State of Connecticut by May 31.

Mr. Nicolas asked if the state will give Mr. Foster money for development rights? Mr. Foster replied they will.

Mr. Foster stated he owns Old Orchard Farm. It has a Cider Mill in the barn; he has honey bees, apple trees and a small bakery. It is an 18 acre parcel of land with 2 ½ acres abutting the center of Four Mile River. One acre is dedicated to the homestead. He would like his sons to take over the farm. He would like to take advantage of this grant.

Mr. Foster would like to expand his existing operation to include six acres of a vineyard and to upgrade the orchard with new stock, upgrade his tractors and spray equipment to make it more viable for agriculture. We would like to keep it in the family as a farm/agri-business and to develop it as a farm to its fullest potential.

Mr. Foster attended an East Lyme Agri-business Subcommittee Meeting on April 18 and informed them of this entire idea. He received a letter from Mark Christiansen and Tom Kalal stating that they endorsed the proposal.

Mr. Foster met with Gary Goeschel and the Planning Commission. Mr. Goeschel discussed it with First Selectman Paul Formica. Mr. Christiansen stated it will have to be signed off by the First Selectman.

Mr. Foster obtained the following soil maps: Town of East Lyme Farmland Soils, Farmland Soils of Old Orchard Farm and New London County Farmland Soils from NRCS which he shared with the Commission.

Mr. Christiansen stated we believe he meets the six pre-qualifications from the state, the Plan of Conservation and Development, and the map shows its prime farmland.

MOTION (1): Penny Heller moved to authorize the Chairman to compose a letter with Gary Goeschel stating that this Commission endorses this program. Seconded by Mark Christiansen. (5-0) Unanimous

Mr. Goeschel stated these are cooperative agreements with the state and the town. There is \$2 million in place for this.

Mr. Foster stated this is a state pilot program to insure that this property remains as farmland.

Mr. Christiansen stated once the town is pre-qualified there may be other farmers that want to take advantage of this program too.