

**TOWN OF HADDAM
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
COMMUNITY CENTER
7 CANDLEWOOD HILL ROAD, HIGGANUM, CT 06441
WEDNESDAY, 25 AUGUST 2021
*Approved as Amended at the 29 September 2021 Meeting***

ATTENDANCE

X	Mardi Hanson-d'Alessandro
X	Gail Reynolds, Chairman
X	Tom Worthley
X	Bunny Hall Batzner, Recording Clerk

1. Call to Order

Mrs. Reynolds, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

2. Attendance

Attendance was taken and Mrs. Reynold introduced guests, Howie Burr and Helen Luk.

3. Approval of Agenda

MOTION: Mardi Hanson motioned to approve the 25 August 2021 agenda as submitted. Tom Worthley second. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Approval of Minutes

MOTION: Tom Worthley motioned to approve the 28 April 2021, 26 May 2021, 30 June 2021, and 28 July 2021 minutes as submitted. Mardi Hanson second. Motion carried unanimously.

5. Public Comments

Mrs. Reynolds thanked Howie Burr and Helen Luk for attending. Mrs. Reynolds explained that the Commission is not regulatory, projects undertaken in the past (Welcome to Haddam signs, bike racks, mapping of easements, etc.), and how the pandemic has impeded any interaction with the public and progress with projects.

6. Old Business

a) Higganum Center Trails/Walking Path

Mrs. Reynolds and Mr. Worthley briefly explained the walking path project – project unable to be completed at the time (2008) due to unsettled business such as ownership of Higganum Cove, ownership of Haddam Elementary School, etc.

Mrs. Reynolds spoke in regard to property on High Street that is owned by the Haddam Land Trust (HLT) and how it could assist in connecting the pathway. Other connecting points could be Swan Hill (owned by HLT), Higganum Cove (owned by the town) and the Reservoir (owned by the state).

b) Open Space

Shopboard Rock – Mrs. Reynolds reported that she and Bill Cowan, President, HLT met with Bob McGarry, First Selectman, and Bill Warner, Town Planner, in regard to the town turning Shopboard Rock over to the HLT in exchange for an easement to drill community wells on Swan Hill. No decision has been made at this time.

Beaver Ledges – Mrs. Reynolds reported on a 50 acre parcel currently owned by the Connecticut River Conservancy (CRC) which was originally a part of the Beaver Ledges parcel. Mrs. Reynolds stated the HLT in the past had inquired about the parcel in the hopes of bringing it back under local conservation ownership, but the CRC was not interested at that time. Recently Steve Gephard, former fisheries manager for DEEP, has contacted the HLT and the CRC is now willing to donate the land.

Mr. Worthley stated the town owns a property across the road from Beaver Ledges; and asked if anything had been done with the parcel. Mrs. Reynolds stated she did not believe anything has taken place on the parcel. Mr. Worthley stated perhaps a project could be done there.

Marcus Property/Pond, Sima Road – Mrs. Reynolds reported the Marcus family has been talking with the HLT in regard to donating their property/pond.

Swan Hill – Mr. Worthley asked if RSD17 had turned Swan Hill over to the HLT. Mrs. Reynolds stated yes, that the HLT has owned the property since September 2019 and an A2 survey has been completed. Mr. Worthley asked if an updated management plan, perhaps looking at it from a regeneration (oak) standpoint, should be done. A brief discussion followed.

c) Budget

Mrs. Reynolds reported she was unclear as to the exact amount the Commission received this year, but that the Commission usually receives \$1,000 for Conservation Activities and \$1,000 for the Salmon River Watershed (contribution to the Salmon River Committee).

For Mr. Burr's and Ms. Luk's benefit, the Commissioners explained how funding has been spent in the past – maps, educational displays, signage, bike racks, etc. Ms. Luk suggested if/when the walking trail/path is completed, a plaque with a map of the walking trail/path be installed in the Center.

Recording Clerk's Note: After review of the approved budget, Mrs. Reynolds was correct with her line item amounts.

d) POCD – Conservation Action Items – Discussion Continued – Commission Report

There was nothing new to report at this time.

e) Reappointment – Tom Worthley

Mrs. Reynolds asked Mrs. Batzner if Mr. Worthley had been reappointed. Mrs. Batzner stated yes. Mr. Worthley was reappointed to another three-year term at the Board of Selectmen's 10 May 2021 meeting and a letter of reappointment should have been mailed to Mr. Worthley. Mr. Worthley's term will expire 1 May 2024.

7. New Business

a) Native Plant Ordinance

Mrs. Reynolds reported it might be a good time to draw up a native plant ordinance for town properties (maybe not completely native species, perhaps 80-20). Mr. Worthley asked would the ordinance be to bring town properties into balance or to prohibit the planting of non-native species. Mrs. Reynolds stated both, and that it would be for new work not retroactive. Ms. Hanson suggested looking into what other towns, if any, may already have in regard to this.

Mr. Worthley stated the justification for such an ordinance may rest in pollinators which are all in trouble due to the lack of habitat. Mrs. Reynolds stated she's not aware of a pollinator pathway in Haddam, but did recommend if anyone is interested to look at PollinatorPathway.org for information.

b) Communications/Publications/Correspondence

No communications, publications, or correspondence had been received.

8. Announcements

Mrs. Reynolds reviewed the announcements: a) **Haddam Neck Fair** – Friday-Monday, 3-6 September 2021; **River Days** – Saturday, 18 September 2021 - Rain date Sunday, 19 September 2021; and the **Farmers' Market** – Will resume on Friday, 17 September 2021, after a short hiatus.

9. Land Use Dept. Report

Mrs. Batzner reported it's been quiet over the summer.

10. Adjournment

MOTION: Mardi Hanson motioned to adjourn. Tom Worthley second. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bunny Hall Batzner

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Recording Clerk

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, 29 September 2021 and will be held in-person at the Community Center, 7 Candlewood Hill Road, Higganum, CT.