

**TOWN OF HADDAM
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
COMMUNITY CENTER
7 CANDLEWOOD HILL ROAD, HIGGANUM, CT 06441
WEDNESDAY, 23 FEBRUARY 2022
APPROVED MINUTES
*Approved as Amended at the 30 March 2022 Meeting***

ATTENDANCE

A	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.

3. Approval of Agenda

MOTION: Tom Worthley motioned to approve the 23 February 2022 agenda as submitted. Gail Reynolds second. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Approval of Minutes

The Commission agreed to table the approval of the 26 January 2022 minutes.

5. Public Comments

There was no one from the public present.

6. Old Business

a) Higganum Center Trails/Walking Path

There was nothing new to report.

b) Open Space

There was nothing new to report.

c) Budget

Mrs. Reynolds reported that Bill Warner, Town Planner, had submitted the Commission's proposed budget for 2022-2023 - Conservation Activities - \$1,000 and Salmon River Watershed - \$2,000.

d) POCD – Conservation Action Items – Discussion – Update on PIC Meeting

Mrs. Reynolds reported that the POCD Implementation Committee (PIC) had met on Thursday, 27 January 2022, and discussed obtaining updated reports from the various departments. Mrs. Reynolds stated she believes some committee members are trying to push their own agendas rather than work with the

appropriate commission(s) and made her thoughts known at the PIC meeting. PIC will meet again on Monday, 7 March 2022, 7:00 p.m., Town Hall, 21 Field Park Drive, Haddam.

e) Native Plant Ordinance – Review Draft Language - Update

There was nothing new to report.

f) Swan Hill – Management Plan – Student Fellow

Mr. Worthley reported he will send out a Zoom invitation to a meeting for Wednesday, 2 March 2022. Mr. Worthley stated a meeting was conducted today and the students reviewed the old management plan, the context of the greater landscape, and what is taking place in town. The students are looking at Swan Hill as a parcel that could be classified as urban/exurban forest (this would open up different opportunities in terms of grants).

Mrs. Reynolds asked if the state had hired a new urban forestry coordinator since Chris Donnelly retired. Mr. Worthley stated yes, Danica Doroski is the new coordinator.

Mr. Worthley reported the state is providing funding for urban forestry - UConn will oversee some mini-grants and the Connecticut Urban Forest Council will oversee some small grant projects.

Mr. Worthley stated tentatively, on the morning of Wednesday, 9 March 2022, he and the students will go on a site walk and there may be another walk. Mr. Worthley also stated a lot of questions will be asked about the use of the property. Mr. Worthley asked if the Haddam Land Trust (HLT) would be interested in publicity regarding the project. Mrs. Reynolds will present it to the HLT Board of Directors and provide Mr. Worthley with a response.

g) CACIWC Membership

Recording Clerk's Note: Mr. Warner paid for the Commission's membership.

h) Battery Grid Parcel 05-64 - Update

Mrs. Reynolds reported she and Bob McGarry, First Selectman, attended the meeting with the energy people. Mrs. Reynolds reported the East Point Energy Co., based out of Charlottesville, VA, will be working with Eversource on this project. East Point Energy was founded in 2018 and they have worked on wind and solar projects, but this will be their first attempt at rechargeable batteries. The batteries, a household type material that can be recycled, will be attached to the power lines and will save up energy; and when there's a brown out, they will release the energy back into the system. This will help prevent the building of additional transmission lines. There will be no air/water admissions and minimal noise. The proposal will not benefit power availability at the Haddam level, but will be for the regional area.

East Point Energy has an option to lease the parcel (lease agreement as already been worked out) and will use about 10 acres of space. They will only clear what's needed and leave the balance of the site as is. Construction is not expected to begin for three years. Noted that the parcel abuts the Middletown line and it's believed there are any wetlands on the site.

The project will not create jobs or bring in people that will patronize local businesses; however, they will have some permanent part-time jobs and people will be on the site once a week. The project can bring in tax revenue, but East Point Energy wants a tax break (will need to go to a town meeting); and it will need Siting Council approval.

Mr. Worthley asked how big the footprint would be. Mrs. Reynolds provided Mr. Worthley a copy of a handout that was distributed at the meeting. As it appeared that the footprint for this project would not require the entire 10 acres, Mr. Worthley asked if P&Z believes this project to be a good idea, is there an

additional use that could be put on the site making it worth going to the trouble of developing it. Mrs. Reynolds stated it appears the property is privately held. A brief discussion followed.

7. New Business

a) Communications/Publications/Correspondence

No communications, publications, or correspondence had been received.

8. Land Use Dept. Report

No report was given.

9. Adjournment

MOTION: Tom Worthley motioned to adjourn. Gail Reynolds second. Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:32 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bunny Hall Batzner

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Recording Clerk

**The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, 30 March 2022, at the
Community Center, 7 Candlewood Hill Road, Higganum.**