

**TOWN OF HADDAM
CONSERVATION COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
COMMUNITY CENTER
7 CANDLEWOOD HILL ROAD, HIGGANUM, CT 06441
WEDNESDAY, 30 MARCH 2022
UNAPPROVED MINUTES
*Subject to Approval by the Commission***

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 7:05 p.m.

2. Attendance

Attendance was taken.

3. Approval of Agenda and 4. Approval of Minutes

Correction to the 23 February 2022 minutes: page 3, bottom of page, The next meeting is scheduled – change “23 March 2022” to “30 March 2022”.

MOTION: Tom Worthley motioned to approve the 30 March 2022 agenda and 26 January 2022 minutes as submitted and the 23 February 2022 minutes as amended. Gail Reynolds second. Motion carried unanimously.

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

Connecticut River Conservancy (CRC) Property Donation - Mrs. Reynolds report the Haddam Land Trust (HLT) has closed on the 50 acre parcel adjacent to Beaver Ledges.

Shad Museum – Mrs. Reynolds reported the Shad Museum will be relocated to the HLT's Saraceno Preserve, Tylerville. The structure will be set up on the flat area. The Historical Society will cover the insurance.

c) Budget

Mrs. Reynolds reported no money has been spent from this fiscal year's budget.

d) POCD

Conservation Action Items – Discussion – Mrs. Reynolds reported some of the Action Items included drafting articles to educate residents on specific topics and getting P&Z to identify an industrial area instead of spot zoning; however, to date nothing has transpired.

PIC Meeting – Update - Mrs. Reynolds reported that the POCD Implementation Committee (PIC) had met on Monday, 7 March 2022, and Kate Anderson is the new chairman.

e) Native Plant Ordinance – Review Draft Language - Update

There was nothing new to report.

f) Swan Hill – Management Plan – Student Fellow - Update

Mr. Worthley reported he had invited the students to breakfast at his house prior to going to the site; and once on site, they hiked the trail to the top of the hill and then up and around the northern loop of it. Did not view the site where Mr. Worthley had previously logged and were unable to look at whole property. Mr. Worthley stated he will probably return to the site to take pictures to include in the document. Today the students talked about an outline for the management plan and how the task will be divided. Mr. Worthley stated he doubted there would be very specific vegetation management recommendations – the recommendation will be to gather the detailed information you need in order to develop those prescriptions.

Mrs. Reynolds stated one woman sent an email with questions. Mr. Worthley stated he saw the email and that one of the questions had to do with herbicide use. Mrs. Reynolds stated so far HLT board members do not want herbicides used (not within the by-laws, but a long standing policy). A brief discussion followed.

Mr. Worthley stated he believes the recommendations will start with arresting the spread of Japanese Barberry where it is now (don't let it spread to new areas) and continue chipping away at it. Mrs. Reynolds spoke in regard to State Botanist Bill Moorehead – noting that prior to becoming the state botanist he had done a lot of work on the Farmington Watershed where he used the honeysuckle popper tool to remove barberry. Mr. Worthley stated there needs to be a plan to replace the barberry with something as there's fresh soil all turned up. A brief discussion followed. Mrs. Reynolds stated she could get master gardeners to help with the removal of the vegetation. Mr. Worthley stated there is more than one forest health issue on site.

Mrs. Reynolds asked when the suggestions may be available. Mr. Worthley stated in at least in draft form before the end of the month, but the final copy may not be available until the end of the semester. Mrs. Reynolds stated she felt the students all asked very good questions. Mr. Worthley stated there will be an opportunity to react to the recommendations.

Mr. Worthley stated he may hire the young man who worked down at Beaver Ledges as an intern and that he had spoken to him about it. If there is a core of interested people, they may be able to get some work done there. Mr. Worthley stated given the place that Swan Hill occupies in the community and there's so much visibility, it's worth it to make the effort. Mrs. Reynolds agreed.

Mr. Worthley stated before the property came to the school district it was donated to be used for educational purposes. Mr. Worthley also stated there was an active group who built and maintained the trails.

Discussion followed in regard to the following: 1) volunteer help such as the UConn Master Gardeners, Aetna Corporate volunteers, and Yale Day of Service; 2) starting small; and 3) publicizing the positive then more people will begin to take ownership meaning more people care and will put pressure on those who don't want to do the right things.

Mrs. Reynolds reported the HLT will meet next Tuesday. Mr. Worthley stated he will try to get notes to the HLT by then and if the HLT has any suggestions in terms of signage (informative) someone may be able to work up a sample. Mrs. Reynolds stated she likes the signs she worked on at Chatfield Hollow (board walk) that explain natural features. Mr. Worthley stated signage that explains why the place is unique and special is important.

g) Battery Grid Parcel 05-64 - Update

There was nothing new to report at this time.

7. New Business

a) Communications/Publications/Correspondence

No communications, publications, or correspondence had been received.

Habitat Newsletter – Mrs. Reynolds asked if The Habitat is still available electronically.

8. Land Use Dept. Report

Mrs. Batzner reported: **New Zoning and Wetlands Enforcement Officer and Building Official** – Leon Mularski and Bob Ruzzo have been hired to fill the two positions, respectively. Mrs. Reynolds spoke highly of Mr. Mularski and Mr. Worthley spoke highly of Mr. Ruzzo. Welcome Leon and Bob! **Higganum Cove Committee** – Selected a landscape architect – Kent and Frost. **Wetlands** – Pool application, 13 Summersweet Drive – Proposed location of pool in the 100 foot wetland review area. Site Walk scheduled for Saturday, 2 April 2022, 10:00 a.m. Discussion on the application was continued until Monday, 18 April 2022, 7:00 p.m. **ZBA** – Meeting Thursday, 31 March 2022, 7:00 p.m., to hear requests for variances for a pool, 13 Summersweet Drive, and a garage, 27 Filley Road. **P&Z** – Lisa Wadge, Member, DBP, LLC, 1572 Saybrook Road – Special Permit Application for retail/office space. Public hearing continued until Thursday, 7 April 2022. **EDC** – Their March meeting cancelled due to the lack of a quorum. Have heard the Farmers' Market will continue on Fridays and opening day will be on Friday, 3 June 2022, 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

9. Adjournment

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

The meeting was adjourned at 7:42 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Bunny Hall Batzner

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Recording Clerk

**The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, 27 April 2022, at the
Community Center, 7 Candlewood Hill Road, Higganum.**