

## CONSERVATION COMMISSION

### REGULAR MEETING

MAY 9, 2024 – 6:00PM (HYBRID)

1. Call to Order. The meeting was called to order at 6:00pm at Town Hall.
2. Roll Call. Present: Lee Potter, Tom Blagden, Susan Rand and Miles Todaro (Land Use Tech Specialist). Absent: Zach Sadow, Maria Grace, Steve Fitch (Alternate), Sarah Webb (Alternate) and Abby Conroy (Land Use Director).
3. Hydrilla Update – Russ Conklin  
Russ Conklin gave a presentation on the Hydrilla problem, first identified in June, 2023, in the water at Twin Lakes; in September the marina area was treated. (The presentation can be viewed in the Zoom recording at: <https://www.salisburyct.us/conservation-commission/>)  
There is a coalition of over a dozen groups working on the problem. It was pointed out that Hydrilla looks similar to a native plant in the lakes; also it fragments so cannot be harvested. So far, the Hydrilla seems to be confined to the east bay of East Twin Lake; barriers have been set up to try to control the spread. There will be boat monitors this season and the State boat launch area has been modified. There is also new signage for the Town, but not yet for the State launch. Mr. Conklin commented that this is the correct approach, but permits must still be obtained. (M. Todaro noted that Sarah Webb had joined the meeting.) S. Rand asked if there was going to be signage at the State launch; Mr. Conklin indicated that it is not obvious. T. Blagden asked about the boat monitoring; Mr. Conklin answered that it is mainly used for the bass tournaments, when boats are coming in and going out to different lakes. He also pointed out that it is important to make sure the bottoms of the boats are clean before they go into the water. S. Webb asked if boats going around the lakes would spread the Hydrilla; Mr. Conklin answered that the marina area has been treated and will be treated again. At this time, a buoy system can't be used to block off areas of concern. L. Potter asked if there had been any pushback from the Twin Lakes community; Mr. Conklin answered no, but they have had offers of support and donations. He added that newsletters may become more frequent. Curtis Rand commented that there is some pushback coming from Lakeville Lake because it has been shut down to outside boats; Long Pond is restricted to no trailers, car top only. He noted that rental boats are now available for fishing on Lakeville Lake, but stay in that lake. L. Potter asked if grant money was sought; Mr. Conklin replied that they did apply last year to Fisheries and got \$75k. C. Rand noted that there is some money in the budget for treatment, as well. Mr. Conklin was thanked for his presentation.

4. Centennial Forest Plan Review – Curtis Rand

The Centennial Forest block is the 400 acre piece around the reservoir, which had some conservation restrictions placed on the watershed land in the past; here it is to the south and west of Mt. Riga. Historically, reservoirs have large tracts of protected land around them. Both the Nature Conservancy and DEEP have some protections there. C. Rand commented that he had just received the plan for the Centennial Block; he pointed out that the Salisbury Association had requested that he and this Commission weigh in on the matter. The Salisbury Association (SA) is protesting the proposed management plan written by the DEEP. C. Rand explained that he had written to back to the SA, expressing that he is not the right person to comment. The proposal involves 300 acres to be preserved and have logging operations on an additional 94 acres. C. Rand expressed that his personal view is that all cutting shouldn't be limited forever. He asked that this Commission should read the plan, be well informed and noted that forestry and logging are two different things. C. Rand explained that logging is part of forestry for the economy of it and the products; forestry management determines that some trees may need to be cut, if well-conceived by trained people. C. Rand expressed his views and suggested that this Commission get informed and make their own decision. The Plan can be reviewed at: <https://www.salisburyct.us/wp-content/uploads/2024/05/LAKEVILLE-RESERVOIR-BLOCK-mgmt-plan-3-25-24.pdf> There is also a letter from the Salisbury Association on the Conservation Commission website. C. Rand explained that there are many different types of habitat that are needed, not just large shady old trees; he also mentioned the importance of the regional economy. A forest walk may be planned later in the summer. C. Rand described some of the history of the forest land on Mt. Riga, the results and the importance of the restoration of species, some of which need disturbance to perpetuate.

5. **Approval of the Minutes of March 14, 2024. So Moved** by L. Potter, seconded by S. Rand and unanimously **Approved**.

6. **Approval of the Minutes of April 11, 2024.** Under Item #6, T. Blagden noted a correction to a misspelling which should read "John Coston." A **Motion to Approve the Minutes of April 11, as amended**, was made by L. Potter, seconded by S. Rand and unanimously **Approved**.

7. Public Comment – None

8. Aquarion Water Company Environmental Champions Discussion -- Not addressed

9. Vernal Pools Study Update – Not addressed

10. Bioblitz Discussion – Not addressed

**Adjournment. So Moved** by L. Potter and **Approved**. Meeting adjourned at 7:04pm.