



City of Shelton Conservation Commission

Meeting Minutes for

June 7, 2017

Members Present: Tom Harbinson (arrived at 7:16 p.m.), Bill Dyer, Sheri Dutkanicz, Ed McCreery (arrived at 7:17 p.m.), Pat Gadjosik, Joe Welsh

Absent: Jim Tate

Also present: Teresa Gallagher, Natural Resource Manager; Terry Gallagher, Trails Committee.

1. **The meeting was called to order** at 7:14 pm by Bill Dyer.
2. **Meeting Minutes:** **Sheri Dutkanicz made a motion to approve the May 3, 2017 meeting minutes. Seconded by Pat Gadjosik. All were in favor.**
3. **Public Portion – for items not on the agenda:** Boy Scout Joe Singh presented his proposed Eagle Scout project to the Conservation Commission, consisting of a reroute of the Paugussett Trail north of Constitution Blvd. North. *(Tom Harbinson and Ed McCreery arrived).* **Tom Harbinson made a motion to approve the Eagle Scout project. Joe Welsh seconded. All were in favor.**
4. **Trails Committee Report.** Bill Dyer summarized the Trails Committee meeting held immediately before the Conservation Commission meeting. See the Trails Committee meeting minutes for more information. Terry Gallagher and Bill Dyer told the Conservation Commission that the City should hire a contractor to deal with much of the safety fence maintenance. The trail volunteers are spending too much of their time fixing the safety fence for the Rec Path when they need to be working on the hiking trails.
5. **Proposed Design Residential Development (DRD) Regulations.** Tom Harbinson explained that these new DRD regulations would replace the existing Planned Residential District (PRD) regulations. The public hearing date is scheduled for June 28. Committee members reviewed the regulations and had the following comments:
 - a Areas used for detention ponds should not count towards the required open space.
 - b On Page 4 “Ownership”: The City of Shelton should be listed as a possible owner of the open space. The proposed regulations don’t explicitly provide

that option. The Commission disagrees with efforts to avoid city-owned open space properties.

c On Page 6 there is a contradictory typo: “ten percent (15%)”

d On Page 5, for conservation easements, use the standardized language from the City’s Conservation Easement ordinance. Standardized language would be consistent with the stated objective of efficiency in Section 35.26.

e Section 35.11 requires a 100’-foot open space buffer around the entire development, except next to abutting open space. This section should be deleted in its entirety. This requirement would lead to open space configurations with less value than larger blocks, especially those contiguous to abutting open space. It would also push homes back away from the street and closer to abutting conservation areas.

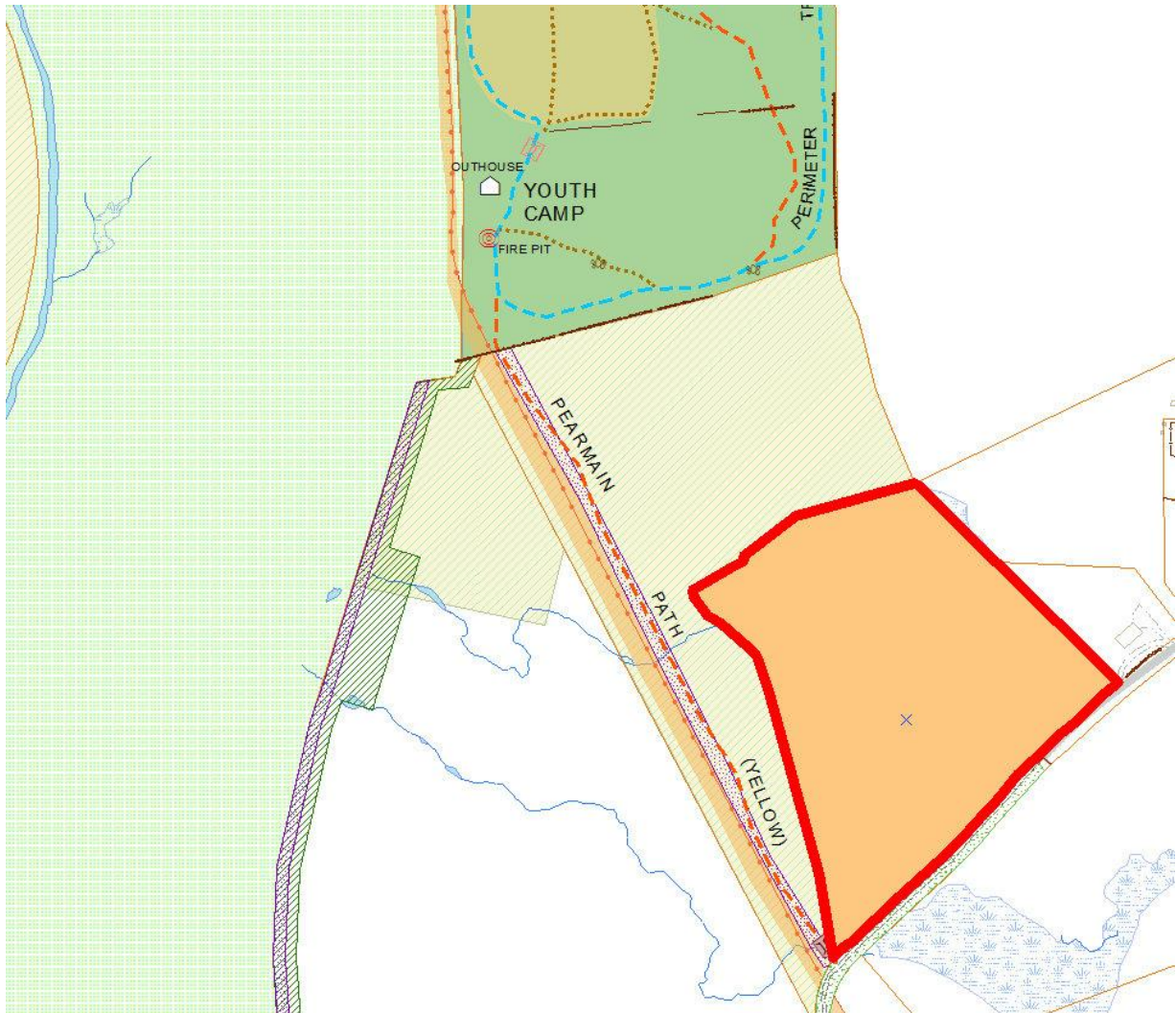
f Construction of private roads, detention basins, and other improvements in the private development should be subject to the standard bonding requirements.

Ed McCreery made a motion for Teresa Gallagher to draft a letter to the Planning and Zoning Commission that includes all the comments just listed. Tom Harbinson seconded the motion. All were in favor.

- 6. 69 Pearmain Estates, PZC #17-09, 7-lot subdivision on 10.6 acres.** Tom Harbinson gave an overview of the location and noted that the development was a standard subdivision and therefore ‘as-of-right.’ The property is located in the Means Brook Greenway and the applicant is asking to make a payment in lieu of an open space contribution. There are substantial wetlands on the northern portion of the site (2.1 acres) that drain into Means Brook and Means Brook Reservoir, which is fed into Trap Falls Reservoir for drinking water. The houses would be served by septic systems. The City has invested in preserving nearby properties, including Guy Beardsley’s abutting property on the west, which has a hiking trail called the Pearmain Path that leads from Pearmain Road to the nearby Scout camp on Nicholdale Farm. Pearmain Road is a very narrow asphalt road up to the existing driveway on the subject property, after which the road becomes gravel and there is a gate to prevent people from dumping and partying. There have been chronic problems in this regard. The gate will need to be moved to allow for the new cul-de-sac shown on the proposed site plan.

Ed McCreery said the real issue is whether open space is preferable to payment. Also, should Conservation recommend purchase of the property? Tom Harbinson thought the open space should be along the western property line to buffer the Pearmain Path from the new homes.

Teresa Gallagher noted there is hunting with firearms on the abutting properties to the west, which is a valuable for deer control and the ecosystem. Tom Harbinson said the setback from buildings for firearm use is 500 feet, which would effectively prohibit future hunting with firearms.



Ed McCreery recommended sending a letter to the Planning and Zoning Commission that states: The subdivision is in the middle of a greenway. The City expended significant resources to preserve nearby properties including the Beardsley Purchase of Development Rights, Nicholdale Farm and the Scout camp; and Jones Farm. The site encompasses feeder brooks to Means Brook Reservoir, a drinking water supply. The City should be interested in acquiring the entire property as open space. If this is not possible, then the Conservation Commission asks that the Planning and Zoning Commission recognize the importance of the site and ask the developer to redesign it accordingly. The ten percent open space required under the subdivision regulations should be shown along the western property line. A conservation easement should be placed over the wetlands as well as a 50-foot wetlands buffer.

Tom Harbinson made a motion to send a letter to the Planning and Zoning Commission containing those comments. Seconded by Sheri Dutkanicz. All were in favor.

7. Executive Session: At 8:30 p.m. Bill Dyer made a motion to go into executive session for the purpose of discussing potential land acquisitions. Sheri Dutkanicz seconded. All were in favor. The commission came out of executive session at 9:00 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:02 pm.

Meeting minutes were prepared by Teresa Gallagher and should be considered in draft form until adopted at the next meeting. Audio tapes of the meeting are on file in the Town Clerk's office.