

**City of Shelton
Trails Committee**

Meeting Minutes for
January 4, 2017



Present: Bill Dyer (Chair), Bob Wood, Sheri Dutkanicz, Richard Skudlarek, Jim Taradine, Terry Gallagher, Sandie Skudlarek, Val Gosset (new member)

Also present: Teresa Gallagher, Natural Resource Manager

The meeting was called to order by Bill Dyer, Chairman, at 5:35 pm.

1. **Meeting Minutes:** Bob Wood made a motion to approve the December 2016 meeting minutes. Seconded by Sheri Dutkanicz. All were in favor.
2. **Public Portion:** No one wished to address the committee.
3. **Membership Issues:** Sheri Dutkanicz made a motion nominating Val Gosset for membership on the Trails Committee. Seconded by Richard Skudlarek. All were in favor.
4. **Recent Trail Activities**

A. The Trails Barn was reorganized.

B. Rec Path resurfacing: A contract was obtained from Brennan Construction with a price of about \$8.25/ton for the surfacing material. This was much lower than the next lowest price of \$21/ton. Dan & Dave will be doing the work for about \$7,000. The Mayor is having the purchase order prepared.

C. The Bluff Walk at Riverview

Park was rerouted from the back side of the two ballfields and War Memorial Building down onto the wooded riverbank in order to reduce summer maintenance. This required a lot of benching in (photo). The previous trail route behind the ballfield fences was sunny and became overgrown very quickly during the summer, especially with poison ivy.



- D. Tahmore Trail** was rerouted by the Gallaghers (CFPA Trail Managers) for about 100 feet in order to eliminate a steep section where leaves piled up. This section also required extensive benching.

5. Projects planned for the near future

- A. Trails Challenge:** Teresa Gallagher reported that 50 participants completed the 2016 Shelton Trails Marathon. Bill Dyer asked for everyone's thoughts about having a new challenge for 2017. Teresa Gallagher said she has a trial GIS license for about another five months that allows her to input data for Trails and Conservation five days a week, but after that she can only access the GIS software on Mondays when Regis Dognin, the City's GIS specialist, is not at work. Only one person at a time can use the City license. The preparation for the 2016 challenge was not difficult but it was very time consuming during a time of year when she is also doing the community garden registrations and gearing up for Clean Sweep. She asked the Committee if they plan to host a challenge every year, or if they might consider doing the challenge once every two or three years. Bill Dyer didn't think much work was involved because many of the hikes were exactly the same as in 2016 and the committee members could do most of the work. The consensus was for members to see how much they could get done over the next month and discuss next at the next meeting.

- B. Shelter Ridge Development, Mill Street & Bridgeport Avenue.** Bill Dyer reported that it looks like the Planning and Zoning Committee is going to approve the PDD and wondered if Committee members had any interest in asking the developer to use his equipment to build a path along the slope above Mill Street down to Bridgeport Avenue. Teresa Gallagher said that she did not want to see a big wide path constructed above Mill Street and she didn't think people in the existing neighborhood would, either. Sheri Dutkanicz said no. Terry Gallagher said he had no enthusiasm at all and no desire to be walking past dumpsters and such. Richard Skudlarek wanted to see what it looks like first. Jim Taradine said he had not seen the area but expressed an interest in connecting to the unmarked trail along the Far Mill River south of Farmill Crossing which goes all the way to Rt 110. Teresa Gallagher noted that any such trail would not qualify as the Paugussett Trail. She previously contacted CFPA with the site plans and was told that CFPA would be "very unlikely" to approve a blue-blazed trail alongside the development if built as proposed. Bill Dyer noted that the Mayor and four members are for the development and everyone else is against it. But unfortunately, that's all it takes.

Teresa Gallagher reported that a mason has been stealing rocks from the stone wall on Old Kings Highway next to where the proposed apartment would be located where we had hoped to route the Paugussett Trail. It had been very scenic and the loss of the rock along the historic road is upsetting. She met with the Police. Another trail issue she noted that afternoon was a massive pile of woodchips dumped on the Dog Paw Path. It was spread out but still was up to three feet thick. She suspected it was from when a contractor was hired to

cut down the big pine trees around the Pine Lake dam. She had been asked by Highways & Bridges if it would be OK for the contractor to spray the chips at the Pine Lake trailhead and had said no, it would be unsightly. The contractor was supposed to haul the chips away per the contract.

- C. Lane Street bridge - replacement impact on Rec Path.** Terry Gallagher attended a public informational meeting on December 14 and summarized the meeting.

Terry Gallagher: Bob Kulacz has confused the Rec Path with a “hiking trail.” The City’s consultant did nothing for pedestrian safety. All they talked about was the aesthetics of the bridge. The people who attended seemed to be interested only in the traffic detour. The construction has been pushed back to 2018. I think we should push for this [pedestrian safety] hard. Bill Dyer: How about pushing for the single lane bridge during construction? Terry Gallagher: That, too. I am passing around a photo of pedestrian safety measures taken from a job I’m working on at Orange Street in New Haven (see photo below). There are Jersey barriers separating the pedestrians from the traffic, special signs, etc. Shelton’s contractor didn’t explore any of the options.

Bill Dyer asked Terry Gallagher to draft a letter to Engineering, the Mayor, Paul DiMauro, with a cc to the consultant Milone & MacBroom.



Terry Gallagher added that Shelton could get a sidewalk along Lane Street from the bridge to the Rec Path entrance as part of the construction process.

6. Guided Hikes/Events – Publicity and logistics

- A. Moonlight Hike Jan. 12.** Committee members decided to cancel if it is cloudy.

7. Potential Work Parties

- A. Benches.** Committee members will meet at 9:00 am on January 14 to move the park benches donated by Anthony Simonetti.
- B. Relocating the Paugussett Trail off the Wiacek Meadow.** Committee members will meet on January 28 at 9:00 am on Constitution Blvd North at the powerlines to explore the feasibility of rerouting the trail off of the meadow.
- C. Kiosks.** Sheri Dutkanicz asked if they could hire someone to repair the kiosks because some are in bad shape. Members thought that the Hope Lake kiosk was the only one that was really bad. The other kiosks mostly needed new material inside them. Teresa Gallagher said she hopes to prepare large hiker map displays after she gets all the data into the GIS system.

8. Comments by Members:

- A. Terry Gallagher** showed two signs painted by Emma Gallagher that say Trail Work Ahead.

9. The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 pm

The next meeting will be held on February 1, 2017.

Minutes were prepared by Teresa Gallagher and should be considered a draft until approved by the Trails Committee.