Call to Order

Present: Tom Harbinson, Chairman  
Bill Dyer, Vice-Chairman  
Joe Welsh, Commissioner  
Jim Tate, Commissioner  
Ed McCreery, Commissioner  
Teresa Gallagher, Conservation Agent

Also
Present: Terry Gallagher, Trails Committee  
Helen Solotruk, Clerk

A. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Harbinson called the meeting of the Conservation Commission to order at 7:05 p.m. All in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.
B. Approval of Minutes
A motion was made by Commissioner Tate, seconded by Commissioner Welsh, to approve the minutes of the December 4, 2013 meeting. Vote – All in favor. MOTION PASSED.

C. Public Portion (Items Not on Agenda)
Guy Beardsley reported that the Farmer’s Market was a huge success right up to the Saturday before Thanksgiving. Shelton vendors did not grow enough crops to support a winter market, therefore, he will be running a winter market at Agway in Monroe on Fridays from 2:00 – 5:00 p.m. through March 7th. Discussion. Guy Beardsley discussed kale and it’s many uses.

D. Trails Committee Report
Vice-Chairman Dyer reported that in December, the CFPA, formally voted to accept the six mile Paugussett Trail Extension and they have put up signs across Route 108 stating “Paugussett Trail”. Discussion.
Vice-Chairman Dyer reported that National Trails Day is going to be held on June 7th and the Trails Committee is planning on sponsoring two hiking events:
• Rec Path Hike – Bridge to Bridge
• Shelton Intermediate School to Buddington and back
Discussion. Both hikes will be listed in the CFPA Booklet.
Vice-Chairman Dyer reported on the goals of the Trails Committee in 2014. One of the goals is to look into a bridge to cross from Wellfield back to the Rec Path. Vice-Chairman Dyer reported that the Trails Committee will find out what is required to accomplish this. Discussion.
Vice-Chairman Dyer reported that there will be a President’s Day Hike on Monday, February 17th at Abbey Wright at 1:00 p.m. Vice-Chairman Dyer reported that the Marshmallow March will be held on Sunday, March 2nd at 1:00 p.m. with a rain date of March 9th.
Vice-Chairman Dyer reported that there were six Eagle Scout projects completed this past year. Discussion.
Vice-Chairman Dyer reported that one of the main goals of the Trails Committee is to resurface the Rec Path from Lane Street through the meadow. This will require adding another 2” layer of stone dust. Discussion of how this can be done and whether we can receive a grant or city funding.
Vice-Chairman Dyer discussed Shelton Trails Network tee shirts. A logo would be on the front and all of the town trails would be listed on the back. Discussion. Chairman Harbinson requested that the Trails Committee get a proof and pricing and report back at the next meeting for review.
E. Open Space Trust Account Status
Chairman Harbinson sent an e-mail to Finance Director, Paul Hiller, to get a copy of the budget report.

F. Budget Status
No report.

G. Review of PZC or IWC Applications for Subdivisions and/or Developments

1. Old Applications/Monitor/Follow-up
   None.

2. New Applications
Chairman Harbinson announced that Commissioner McCreery has recused himself from all discussion regarding Hawk’s Ridge.
The Conservation Commission reviewed the Hawk’s Ridge application and plans that were submitted for approval. After review, Commissioner Tate suggested hiring a professional to review and promote our concerns and voice our interests in all venues to get a better understanding of the project and what is involved. Commissioner Tate feels that volunteers cannot commit the time and resources needed to attend meetings and review paperwork that is required to understand a project of this magnitude. Commissioner Tate suggested that there should be a concept page included which would show all areas protected, how they would be protected and a summary of all the benefits and protections of the natural resources that are site specific. Discussion.
Discussion of contacting the Southwest Conservation District’s Environmental Review Team for help in reviewing these plans, which is a free service.

Tape 1, Side B

Discussion of holding an open forum hosted by the Conservation Commission to ask people to volunteer who would like to help protect property interests in the City of Shelton.
Chairman Harbinson recommends responding to the request from Planning and Zoning for comments on this project and state that it is a complicated application and that in our volunteer and laymen capacity, requires extra attention with individuals who have expertise in the aspects of the application and the environmental attributes to the property, for which we do not see any documentation with the application. A site analysis is required along with the
measures incorporated into this plan of development that protects, enhances or accentuates the natural environmental resources on the property before we can make any decision on the project moving forward. Discussion.

A motion was made by Commissioner Tate, seconded by Vice-Chairman Dyer, to have the Conservation Agent attend and follow through on all meetings relevant to this project and will compensate her out of the Conservation Commission budget. Discussion. Vote – All in favor. MOTION PASSED.

Chairman Harbinson requested that Teresa Gallagher reach out to the Southwest Conservation District’s free review service to see if they can help with the review of these plans. Discussion.

Chairman Harbinson recommends sending a letter to Planning and Zoning stating that the Conservation Commission respectfully requests more time to review the Hawk’s Ridge Development application due to its complicated nature and attributes to the environment with their impact which are not illustrated on the documents supplied to us. Discussion.

Chairman Harbinson made a motion, seconded by Vice-Chairman Dyer, to write a letter to Planning and Zoning regarding the application for Hawk’s Ridge Subdivision #13-17 zone change for a PDD stating that the drawings presented show the development of the parcels of land for single family dwellings, multi-family units and assisted living facilities on the multiple parcels that collectively make up the application and, while that rightfully changes the economic output for the applicant, we do not have enough documentation provided for us to properly analyze the change in environmental impact for such an application versus the underlying LIP (Light Industrial Park) use that currently exists. In order to do such an analysis, the Conservation Commission requests an extension for our ability to review it with professionals that can make such review with additional supplemental documentation. We would also request more site analysis information to include soils, drainage, natural features, green roofs, inventories, etc. Discussion. Vote – All in favor. MOTION PASSED.

Teresa Gallagher will draft this letter and send to the Conservation Commission for their review before it is sent to Planning and Zoning.

Chairman Harbinson again noted that Commissioner McCreery has recused himself from all conversations involving the applicant.

Tape 2 – Side A

H. Communications (Sent or Received)

No report.
I. Quality of Life – Executive Session (Land Acquisition and Security Issues)

A motion was made by Vice-Chairman Dyer, seconded by Commissioner Welsh, to go into Executive Session at 8:30 p.m. to discuss land acquisitions and security issues. Vote – all in favor. MOTION PASSED.

A motion was made by Chairman Harbinson, seconded by Vice-Chairman Dyer, to end the Executive Session at 9:00 p.m. Vote – all in favor. MOTION PASSED.

Chairman Harbinson reported that during Executive Session the Conservation Commission discussed a property which has open space acquisition potential. The Conservation Commission received a letter from the owners offering to sell their property to the City for open space. Chairman Harbinson will contact the Mayor to discuss the possibility of pursuing the acquisition of this property.

J. Comments By Members

Chairman Harbinson expressed the Conservation Commission’s sadness regarding the fire downtown and have collected donations toward gift cards for those impacted by the fire.

K. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:02 P.M.

The next regularly scheduled meeting is Wednesday, February 5, 2014.

Respectfully submitted,
Helen Solotruk
Clerk, Conservation Commission