Call to Order ................................................................. 1
A. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance ......................................................... 1
B. Approval of Minutes ............................................................................... 1
C. Public Portion (items not on agenda) ..................................................... 2
D. Shelton Lakes Recreation Path, upgrade to handicapped-accessible
   standards. Status .................................................................................. 3
F. Open Space Trust Account. Status .......................................................... 4
G. Budget Status ........................................................................................ 4
H. Bridge Street rain garden proposal ......................................................... 4
I. Open Space set-aside. Status of increase to 15% in subdivision regulations 6
J. Review of PZC or IWC Applications for Subdivisions and/or Developments 6
   1. Old Applications/monitor/ Follow-up .................................................. 6
   2. New Applications (Applications received between agenda creation and our
      Regular Meeting may be amended to this Agenda at start of regular meetings
      by a vote from the Commission.) ....................................................... 6
K. Communications .................................................................................... 6
L. Quality of Life – Executive Session (land acquisition and security issues) .... 6
M. Comments by members ....................................................................... 7
N. Adjournment ......................................................................................... 7

**Call to Order**

Present: Tom Harbinson, Chairman
         Bill Dyer, Vice-Chairman
         Jim Tate, Commissioner
         Joe Welsh, Commissioner
         Jim Goodman, Commissioner
         Ed McCreery, Commissioner

Also
Present: Teresa Gallagher, Conservation Agent
         Marianne Chaya, Clerk

**A. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance**

Chairman Harbinson called the meeting of the Conservation Commission to
order at 7:00 p.m. All in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

**B. Approval of Minutes**

Commissioner Goodman MOVED to approve the minutes from the February 1, 2012 Regular meeting. SECONDED by Commissioner Welsh. All were in favor, MOTION PASSED.
C. Public Portion (items not on agenda)

Patrick Salvati said I have been talking with Joe Welsh on and off for a few months. I have a farm on Birdseye, just down the road from Guy. I’m interested in exploring options to expand the operation by more land. I’m talking maybe a couple of acres. I plant primarily garlic and it needs a fairly good rotation, and I’m kind of maxing out with what I have now. I know there is at least one other farmer in Shelton that is using French’s farm for planting – I think Fred Monahan with Stone Gardens. I’m just trying to find out what the feasibility of that is and who do I speak to. There is a fair amount of land in Shelton that could be utilized. I need to find out about lease options.

Chairman Harbinson said that we do have a lot of open space and some of it is of agricultural value, some is meadow for grazing and some is farmed. We have two community gardens. What I would suggest is for you to get in touch with Teresa Gallagher, our Conservation Agent, and depending on what acreage you are looking for as well as what soil type, there may be a parcel that is suitable. Typically what the City does with our parcels is to lease it to a farmer. Right now what we have that is farmed is just hayed.

Mr. Salvati said he knows that corn has been grown at French’s Hill.

Chairman Harbinson said he knows Stone Gardens has been there as well as Linda Hooper did some farming at one time. We are amenable to the idea. It just is a matter of what your needs are and see what we have as resources. We’re purely an advisory Commission. We make suggestions to the Board of Aldermen, who are the fiscal governmental authority to approve the Mayor signing off on a lease agreement with a property owner. Typically with the haying operations we have going on is on a year-to-year lease. I would think yours would be unique.

Guy Beardsley, 276 Leavenworth Rd.

Mr. Beardsley apologized for not making the January and February meetings. He said I want to report on the December farmers market. Our November market was very successful, which I believe was due to the timely news article from Ann Amato that same day. The December market would have been better if we had more produce. Just two of us had produce. We didn’t have a market in January, February, and we won’t have one in March. We are not sure at this point if we will have one in April.

This Monday, March 12th @ 7PM at the Farmers Market, we will have our spring get together to make our plans. We also want to try and incorporate a coffee shop operation at the market. I have two possible vendors. We had one last year for a while until the Governor shut down the funds for the technical schools that were running it.

I want to leave this market folder with you that the CT Dept. of Agriculture put together. This is the first year of a three-year cycle that the CT Dept. of Agriculture runs on all the farmers markets in the state that they control. They
now require that all produce must be CT grown. We do have to have the majority of the crops shown on their crop plan that you sell have to be your own. This year we are going to have additional WIC (Women, Infants & Children) sales. The Dept. of Health has a separate WIC program. There are some strange restrictions, such as not allowing white potatoes. This is nationally funded. (He explained how the coupons worked)

I will keep you advised as to what our schedule will be for this upcoming season. A couple of weeks ago we were briefed by Nicole at City Seed regarding CT Farm Fresh, which is another umbrella organization I’m part of. Mr. Beardsley and Chairman Harbinson talked a bit about the Wooster St. market and the differences between that market and Shelton and the potentials.

I do want to continue to keep the City informed as to what is going on in the market and I will continue to make your meetings to keep you updated.

**D. Shelton Lakes Recreation Path, upgrade to handicapped-accessible standards. Status**

Vice-Chairman Dyer reported that the City has started on the Great Ledge portion. They have buried the first pipe just down from the gate. They put stones on top of it to hide the pipe. Dean did the work. Dean and I walked the area today and we know what still needs to be done. I did authorize him to pick up two rolls of filter fabric for just under $1000. He is planning to buy the processed material from Jim Blakeman. This is the same stuff Pruzinsky used on the section that came up to the power lines. The main problem now is the area where just before you get to the knoll where the drain is that the UI or CL&P put in that either collapsed or it’s clogged with silt. Our plan is to dig it up and put another pipe in there and cover it back up. Dean doesn’t think he can do it with his excavator so he’ll need to use one from Highways & Bridges. They placed a lot of rocks up the slope with the idea that it will slow the water down (picture shown to Commissioners). Dean thinks that he can get all the work done in the next two weeks.

I did get a quote from Bob Pruzinsky for the final section (gate to gate) for $30,250. This is twice as much as the grant money we’ve received. Chairman Harbinson asked about the cost comparison to previous jobs. Vice-Chairman Dyer said that it’s comparable but this section is a lot more difficult than the others due to more boulders and trees and power lines to avoid. We also have to figure on what we are going to do about relocating the driveway. The contractor is ready now to start. The Commissioners discussed the funding issue.

I don’t expect we will have all of this done by National Trails Day but hopefully by the summer. Chairman Harbinson agreed and said we shouldn’t try and rush it. There are a lot of activities that day anyway.
We are going to have a public hike on Saturday, March 24th called the Lollipop Loop. We will start at Lane Street and go up to the Rec Path and do a loop around and come back to Lane Street.

There is an issue about a fire pit on open space off of Gristmill trail. Agent Gallagher has been out there. It seems to be constructed by adults. The fort is quite large and has art work inside. They made a fire box. Last year they had put a bunch of plastic, which I removed to make sure it didn’t wash into the river. I dismantled the fire pit. Now I’m getting reports from people that there are men there and they are having fires. I did go there just after they had been there and I saw evidence that there had been a fire. It might be easier to take it down. They have cut down trees. The location is off of Mill St, at the foot of Judson, 200’ down the trail, on the water side. The Commissioners suggested that Agent Gallagher leave them a note.

Vice-Chairman Dyer talked about another problem with a pit bull that is terrorizing people on the Rec Path. Lynn Reid had a person show up at her house scared to death about the dog. There are actually 3 dogs, 2 of which are little and the pit bull off of the Lane St. Rec Path. They think they are coming from a house on Lane Street. The Commissioners said that this has to be reported to the Dog Warden. Lynn had contacted Agent Gallagher when it happened and the Commissioners said that she should have contacted the Dog Warden or the police instead. They were wondering if it was an isolated incident or if it happens often. Vice-Chairman Dyer said he is not sure if it’s open space or land trust property.

E. Trails Committee Report
Reported with item #D.

**F. Open Space Trust Account. Status**
No change.

**G. Budget Status**
Chairman Harbinson reported that he did appear before the Board of A&T and I made my comments about the community gardens. Hopefully they will approve the $200 line item for the gardens. Based on what Agent Gallagher has told me as to the number of lots we have, we should get just over $1200 in revenue. At this point the Board is meeting with all the departments and commissions to make their budget requests and then the Board will present the whole budget.

**H. Bridge Street rain garden proposal**
This is front of the downtown Post Office in the parking lot. The Mayor would like us to be involved in this project.
Agent Gallagher presented the drawing.
Chairman Harbinson explained that this project is a bio filter type of rain garden that will filter out some of the surface runoff in the parking lot in a natural manner. It’s basically a water control device in a natural environment.

Tape 1, Side B
Commissioner Tate explained the background of the project and talked about some of the features, such as solar bollard lights. Agent Gallagher will be in charge of the project. The plants will be native species and once established it will be maintenance-free. It will need to be pruned back late summer, early fall. Commissioner Tate volunteered to maintain it along with Agent Gallagher for the first year.

Commissioner Tate said that they would like the Conservation Commission to fund the plantings and stones. The bollards will be paid for by the City. Commissioner Tate talked about where he thinks the items should be purchased and acquired from. Chairman Harbinson stated that the funds could come from Land Improvements line item.

**Commissioner McCreery MOVED to allocate funds for the Bridge Street rain garden plantings and stones requested by the Mayor’s office, not to exceed $4500. SECONDED by Vice-Chairman Dyer. A voice vote was taken, all were in favor, with Commissioner Tate recused; MOTION PASSED.**

Commissioner Tate stated that he would like the Conservation Commission on a general basis, from now on, really be the leader in any kind of landscape improvement project that we do in the City. That is because we don’t seem to replace a lot of the landscape value that we have once it’s destroyed. It becomes either paved or mowed or lost. We have to keep watching and safeguarding our landscaping. That means our next year’s budget should have some landscape money in it. It’s an easy grant type of thing and there is a purpose for it.

Commissioner Tate asked how the Rec Path is maintained. Vice-Chairman Dyer said we do have plans with the Trails Committee. We do have a mower for meadow areas. They talked about how it’s being done now. Vice-Chairman Dyer said that they talked about that at their Trails meeting in that they ought to have another layer of filter fabric on the trail and another 3” of mulch now. Commissioner Tate suggested a bobcat type of machine that’s like a tiller and what it chews up and regenerates the material that’s already there. He talked about the specifics of this piece of equipment and the benefits.

Chairman Harbinson said he has a request from the Mayor’s office for Conservation to pay for an invoice from JJP Masonry for repair to the stone wall at Nells Rock Rd dog park. It’s $1075.00 for 43 hours’ worth of work. Charge it to Other Outside Services.
Commissioner Tate MOVED to approve the invoice for $1075.00 from JJP Masonry for repair of the stone wall at Nells Rock Rd., as requested by the Mayor to be paid by the Conservation Commission budget line, 414-30.23. SECONDED by Vice-Chairman Dyer. All were in favor; MOTION PASSED.

The Commissioners and Agent Gallagher discussed the parking lot at the dog park. The Mayor said that now is the time to give any input to the parking lot. Agent Gallagher gave the Mayor another copy of Commissioner Tate’s original plan.

I. Open Space set-aside. Status of increase to 15% in subdivision regulations
P&Z Commission has a public hearing on March 13th.

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

1. Old Applications/Monitor/Follow-up
None

2. New Applications (Applications received between agenda creation and our Regular Meeting may be amended to this Agenda at start of regular meetings by a vote from the Commission.)
None

K. Communications

- Newsletter from CACIWC
- Newsletter from Audubon Society

L. Quality of Life – Executive Session (land acquisition and security issues)

Vice-Chairman MOVED to go into Executive Session at 8:24 P.M. for the purposes of discussing possible land acquisitions. SECONDED by Commissioner Welsh. All were in favor; MOTION PASSED.

At 9:00 P.M. the Commissioners returned to regular session.

Chairman Harbinson stated that there were no motions made in Executive Session. We will discuss moving forward with a property discussed in Executive Session with the Mayor.
M. Comments by members
Commissioner Welsh said that the Land Trust is going to have a speaker from Farmland Connections at their annual meeting (April 11th @7PM @ Plumb Library). The program is called “growing opportunities for CT farmers through leased agreements with municipalities and land trusts”. It’s a project through UCONN cooperative extension system and partnership with the USDA and American Farmland Trust. This year the Land Trust is sponsoring a “What Earth Day and Shelton Means to Me” essay contest opened to grades 9-12, Shelton High School students only. There will be prizes for the top 3 winners. That essay is due April 22nd.

N. Adjournment
The meeting adjourned at 9:02 pm.
The next regular meeting is Wednesday, April 4, 2012.

Respectfully submitted,
Marianne Chaya
Clerk, Conservation Commission