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Call to Order
Present: Tom Harbinson, Chairman
Bill Dyer, Vice-Chairman
Jim Tate, Commissioner
Ed McCreery, Commissioner
Sheryl Dutkanicz, Commissioner
Joe Welsh, Commissioner (arrived at 7:35 P.M.)

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

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CC minutes, 2010-07-07 submitted via m.weber@CityofShelton.org email to City Clerk for legal posting requirements.
Tape recording of meeting available at City Clerk's office.
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
Commissioner Tate MOVED to approve the minutes from the June 2, 2010 regular meeting. SECONDED by Vice-Chairman Dyer. All were in favor, MOTION PASSED.

C. Public Portion

Ann Berman said she has been visiting many Conservation Commission’s around the area. There is a new law regarding a ban on pesticide for day care centers and kindergarten through 8th grade schools. We wanted to address the Conservation Commission because we know that you have an interest in the environment and the general good health of the community.

Ms. Berman said that she was a former chair of the environmental concerns coalition. They have been an advocacy group since 1999.

The first item I want to cover is the free lawn initiative, which we have been doing in Milford since 1996. We advocate no pesticides or chemical fertilizers on lawns. In 2002 we got the Board of Aldermen to pass a resolution asking for a volunteering non-use of the chemicals. I am hoping that you will be able to partner with some groups to promote a free lawn initiative particularly for protection of the water, especially since there are so many wells. This is for the safety of children, pregnant women and pets. The problem we have seen with pets is that the chemicals run off after a rain into a puddle and the pet drinks from it.

Dr. Silbert who is the Executive Director of the Watershed Partnership Inc. has been working with several communities to go from regular landscaping to organic land care.

She passed out some of the brochures to the Commissioners and pointed out some features.

Ms. Berman talked about the use of composting leaves in organic lawn care. Chairman Harbinson mentioned that we have a compost facility in Shelton but it is not actively utilized to the degree it could be.

Ms. Berman said that perhaps Shelton could partner with another town such as Stratford, who collects the leaves but ships them elsewhere because they don’t have the land to store them.

Ms. Berman discussed the composting process and the costs involved.

Ms. Berman talked about pesticides and pointed out some items in the brochures.

The new law on the ban of pesticides was passed in 2007 and the schools and day care centers were given three years to convert from the IPM (integrated...
pesticide management) to organic. She discussed the obstacles they had along the way to passing this new law. She also mentioned that the schools could only use pesticides only and if there is a threat to the health to the children. An example would be if there were wasp nests next to a playing field. Organic land care will produce healthy plants, protect itself from unwanted insects and seed, and free of toxic pesticide that kill all the good organisms. The soil can be maintained with less expense and involve less time and effort for its maintenance. If pesticides have been used, even not frequently, the soil has been compromised with the ability to recover and operate and or grow in a healthy way.

We also want to encourage composting. It keeps the heavy organic matter out of the waste stream.

There is no logic in using toxic chemicals where there is a playing field where children will be walking, playing or rolling on. There are enough products and techniques in the organic arsenal to solve any problem that should arrive. We need your support to make this a successful endeavor to keep this pesticide ban.

Who takes care of the lawns at the schools?

Commissioner Tate answered that it is done by the Parks & Recreation. They have a Commission that meets and they would be the group to talk to. They control all the grounds maintenance for any public and school property for the City.

Chairman Harbinson commented that the information you have passed on to Agent Gallagher will be forwarded to Parks & Rec. and will make it available to us via email.

Ms. Berman showed some calendars they produced showing some lawns that are maintained organically.

Chairman Harbinson suggested Ms. Berman contact Agent Gallagher who will give you contact information for the Parks & Rec Commission.

Commissioner Tate stated that he knows the Board of Ed is a pesticide free zone. Their only problem now is tick control.

Chairman Harbinson thanked Ms. Berman for the information.

D. Trails Committee Report – Bill Dyer

1. Buddington Road – 2-lot subdivision

Chairman Harbinson stated that this subdivision where the property is partially under the power lines. We reviewed this application previously where we gave our approval for open space dedication. ZBA had reviewed this as well. Vice-Chairman Dyer stated that we had asked that the trail be re-located from lot 2 to the open space. The Commissioners and Attorney Steve Bellis reviewed the property map. It was noted that the side road is the one that CL&P or UI uses to
Chairman Harbinson stated that this is a referral from Planning & Zoning. It is application #2010-15. The notes we have is that the applicant has received authorization from CL&P to conduct regrading up to the right-of-way. Please review relocated trail affecting lot #2.

The Commissioners and Attorney Bellis reviewed and discussed the trail location. After discussion they agreed on a location for the trail. **Vice-Chairman Dyer MOVED to recommend that the bypass trail be located within the City open space. We will give them grading rights within a certain distance from the roadway, +/- 30’ from the property line. Center-line flag the road and have Agent Gallagher do a field walk to review it. SECOND by Commissioner Tate. All were in favor; MOTION PASSED.**

2. General Maintenance

Since the dog park is going to go in at the Nells Rock Rd. location there is a red barn that needs to be painted. We have a volunteer to power wash it and then we can paint it.

This Saturday we will have a work party behind the ball field at Riverview Park.

3. Guided Hikes

There will be a public hike on July 31.

4. Boy Scout Projects

One of the Boy Scouts became an Eagle Scout after his bridge project.

5. Trail Brochures

Agent Gallagher said that we are out of brochures for the Shelton Lakes trail maps. Last time we got them printed it was $775. for 5000. The Commissioners gave her the ok to have more printed as long as it is under $1000. **Chairman Harbinson MOVED to authorize Agent Gallagher to have 5000 trail brochures printed at a cost not to exceed $999. Vice-Chairman Dyer SECONDED the motion. All were in favor; MOTION PASSED.**

6. Shelton Day

The Trail Committee will have a booth again this year and Commissioner Dutkanicz will orchestrate it with the Rotary Club. The cost will be about $75.
E. Shelton Lakes Recreation Path – upgrade to handicapped accessible standards

1. Section 3 upgrade via DEP grant (LT meadow to Wesley Drive)

Vice-Chairman Dyer reported that we have a bid package ready to put out. I will meet with Gene Sullivan and then we will put an ad in the paper in the next few days. Most likely the date when they are all due will be around August 26. There has to be a mandatory meeting when the prospective bidders will come and pick up the package.

Agent Gallagher commented that we had gotten a call that we were awarded the DEP grant but we have not received an official letter.

2. Section 2 millings project (Oak Valley Road north towards Shelton Ave/Nells Rock Rd. intersection)

Vice-Chairman Dyer reported that nothing has happened with the millings in the last few weeks. The Mayor did say that we are going to get more millings and where do we want them. The millings will come from Mohegan Rd. The millings could be used at the Pine Lake parking area (both sides of 108). We also need them at Oak Valley Rd. There was discussion about the millings and when Dean can spread them. Vice-Chairman Dyer reminded everyone that they authorized the rental of a skid steer so they could get the millings in the Oak Valley Rd area.

F. Dog Park Status

Vice-Chairman Dyer reported that the fence-funding item is on the Board of Aldermen’s meeting agenda for this month.

G. Community Garden

The Commissioners commented that there was an article about the garden in the Huntington Herald.

Agent Gallagher reported that since we met in June they have registered all the spaces, figured out where all the plots will be, and installed the deer fence using volunteers saving $5000 in labor costs. The gardeners have planted and they have started harvesting.

Parks & Rec brought in a portable water tank that holds 330 gallons.

Tape 1, Side B
H. Open Space Trust Account/Budget: status
Agent Gallagher reported that we have about $14K in the open space trust account. Under the ordinance we are supposed to have $250K deposited within the first 45 days of the fiscal year, and there is nothing in the budget for it. I did email John Anglace and I have not heard back. Commissioner Tate suggested that this Commission remind the Board of Aldermen that we are aware that the open space trust account should be funded in the amount of $250K within 45 days and we would encourage the city to do it. Vice-Chairman Dyer asked if we could use those funds for the Rec Path? Chairman Harbinson said yes, it could be used for it. The Open Space Trust Account ordinance was made so that we could build up funds so we could act on something promptly. Commissioner Tate suggested that in the letter we say that we recognize the fact that the City may have alternate ways of funding but that we look at the trust account as saving for a future large purchase and based on things that could happen in future would hate to see that fund jeopardized because of non-contribution through other means or methods. Based on past successes as a tool as illustrated in our community, etc. Commissioner Tate stressed the need to point this out as our obligation as a Commission.
Commissioner McCreery MOVED to send a communication via letter signed by the Chairman to the Board of Aldermen and the Mayor regarding the funding of the Open Space Trust Account by ordinance. SECONDED by Commissioner Tate. All were in favor; MOTION PASSED.

I. Open Space set-aside: Status of increase to 15% in subdivision regulations
Chairman Harbinson asked Agent Gallagher if Rick Schultz is going to schedule a joint meeting? Agent Gallagher responded that right now they are working on their sign regulations.

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

1. Old Applications/Monitor/Follow-up
None

2. New Applications
None
K. Communications
None

L. Executive Session
None

M. Comments By Members
Marianne mentioned that she went to the Jones Farm Harvest Kitchen cooking class. The one I went to was the strawberry class. They limit the class size to 12 people. They took us out to the field and talked about the vegetables they grow and we picked some greens for our salad. We broke up into 4 groups and we each were tasked to make one or more of the menu items. They give you all the recipes of the things you made plus additional strawberry recipes.
The Commissioners talked a little more about the talk Ann Berman gave them about pesticides and herbicides. They also talked about the concern is really about the pets coming in contact with these and having health related issues and death. Commissioner Tate talked about the chemicals used in the past and how they used to be made to stay in the system a long time and how they make them now where they have no residual effect (systemic). The problem is when you use a slow-reacting chemical on your lawn which is being absorbed by contact over time. Things like weed-be-gone is a pesticide that can get in your water supply. Products like Round-up are a contact herbicide and has a low toxicity to it. The treatment that Ms. Berman was talking about is where you would use compost –T. The problem with composting is has to be treated. If you put one piece of pressure-treated wood in the compost it ruins the whole thing. You have to have a very tight control on the compost. It’s all by concentration. If you follow the exact 4-step program it would be safe.
What they are talking about is your property has chemicals, your neighbors yard has chemicals and it all funnels to one central swale, and now all the chemicals are in a concentrated form and it sits in water and pets may get into it.
Commissioner Dutkanicz mentioned that the schools use only organic cleaning supplies.
Commissioner Tate added that the city is going to start enforcing the grease separation in restaurants, where it used to go into the sewers.
Commissioner Welsh said that this weekend Stone Gardens is having an open house where they will give a tour of their farm and farm stand. They now are selling meat. Then the Commissioners got into a discussion of raising animals for meat.
Commissioner McCreery said that he was in Bermuda and was surprised to see that they had a Bermuda Land Trust and open space.
N. Adjournment

The next regular meeting is Wednesday, August 4, 2010.

Vice Chairman Dyer MOVED to adjourn. SECONDED by Commissioner Welsh. All were in favor; MEETING ADJOURNED at 8:35 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,
Marianne Chaya
Clerk, Conservation Commission