City of Shelton Conservation Commission
Meeting Minutes for
September 5, 2018

Members Present: Tom Harbinson, Bill Dyer, Allison Menendez, Sheri Dutkanicz, Jim Tate, Ed McCreery. Absent: Also present: Teresa Gallagher, Natural Resource Manager; Terry Gallagher, Trails Committee

The meeting was called to order at 7:06 pm by Chairman Tom Harbinson.

Meeting Minutes: Sheri Dutkanicz made a motion to approve the August 1, 2018 meeting minutes. Seconded by Allison Menendez. All were in favor.

Public Portion: Harry and Eva Foothorap, 6 Centerview Drive, Shelton, voiced opposition to the recent PDD proposal on Ripton Road. Eva Foothorap said that the Planning and Zoning Commission did deny the proposal, but something is going to happen to the property and we feel it should be preserved. Mr. Foothorap said that early on they were told by the church that the development would be in the best interest of the neighborhood. Now he is concerned about the players involved with this development. What can we do to put this on the agenda to proposed to the Aldermen to have the land preserved?

Jim Tate said that the property doesn’t really meet Conservation’s criteria for priority open space acquisition. However, the church has been a part of the community for a long time, and the public, they would be the conduit I would explore. But for the Conservation Commission to recommend purchase, it just doesn’t fit the criteria. Mainly because it’s isolated. Ed McCreery said that Conservation looked at it about two years ago. Jim Tate agreed. Tom Harbinson explained that Conservation has a list of priority properties for open space acquisition, and the property is not on that list. We assemble these properties along greenway corridors, primarily along streams. That’s not to say that pocket parcels cannot be acquired for other purposes such as ballfields or fire houses. Ed McCreery noted that just because Conservation doesn’t have it on a list doesn’t mean the neighbors can’t go directly to the Board of Aldermen and ask for the land to be preserved. BOA can consider a variety of land uses purposes, not just conservation purposes. Tom Harbinson said that you need to the make the case why acquisition would be worthwhile to the City.
But it’s not something Conservation Commission would initiate. That said, there are cases for pocket parks in a neighborhood. The Huntington Green has a certain character, and the proposal would have altered that character. For open space acquisition this parcel is not at the top of the list because it’s not located in a greenway corridor, but that doesn’t mean there aren’t other reasons to acquire the property.

**Trails Committee Report.** Bill Dyer summarized the Trails Committee meeting held immediately before the Conservation Commission meeting. See the Trails Committee meeting minutes for further detail.

**Developments and Proposals:** No updates.

**Comments by Members:**

- Ed McCreery said he is redoing the Nicholdale sign that is located at the pipeline crossing. Teresa Gallagher suggested doing a similar sign for Willis Woods across the highway.
- Allison has been having a hard time getting volunteers at the Dog Park. She has heard a few negative comments about weeds at the garden. Conservation members suggested publicizing the fact that the garden is maintained by volunteers.
- Bill Dyer noted that Conservation is down a member and wondered if the Commission was going to recommend a member.

**The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 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.*