



City of Shelton
Trails Committee
Meeting Minutes for
July 10, 2019

Present: Bill Dyer, Terrance Gallagher, Mark Vollaro, Val Gosset, Bob Wood, Mike Flament **Absent:** Jim Taradine. **Also present:** Teresa Gallagher (Natural Resource Manager).

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Bill Dyer at 5:40 pm.

1. **Meeting Minutes:** Bob Wood made a motion to approve the June 5, 2019 meeting minutes. Seconded by Terry Gallagher. All were in favor.



2. **Recent Trail Activities:**

- A. A work party was held at Lane Street to clear vegetation from the Rec Path (30 hours), with a group splitting off to clear the Paugussett Trail near Constitution Blvd (6.0 hours). Nine volunteers participated. (36 hours total).
- B. A work party was held at Constitution Blvd to clear vegetation from the Paugussett Trail (photo). Nine people participated. (37 hours total).
- C. Val Gosset handled Trails Communications (3 hours)
- D. Bill Dyer cleared overgrowth along the Rec Path near Pine Lake (1 hr)
- E. Mark Vollaro cleared overgrowth along the Rec Path at Wesley Drive (3.0 hr)

- F. Polly Buckley reported 11.75 hours working on the Paugussett Trail South along with and additional 2.0 hours for Allan Robertson. (13.75 hrs total).
- G. Teresa Gallagher cleared overgrowth along the Paugussett at Indian Well (4.0 hr)
- H. Terry Gallagher used a chainsaw to remove multiple blowdowns from the Paugussett at Indian Well (4.0 hr)
- I. Staff cleared overgrowth along the Bluff Walk behind the Veteran's Memorial Building at Riverview Park, from the Birchbank Trail entrance, and from the Paugussett entrances at Round Hill Road, Princess Wenonah Drive, and Thoreau Drive.
- J. Staff repaired blazing and posted trail notices along the Paugussett near the Dog Park associated with a reroute of the trail to the Shelton Ave crosswalk.
- K. **Total volunteer hours since the last meeting: 101.75 hrs** (*Hours do not include events or meetings*)

Fence Rails: Bill Dyer reported that Dan and Dave Septic & Landscaping had replaced sections of the split rail fence at the top of the Silent Waters dam.

Chestnut Tree: Mark Vollaro gave an update on the American Chestnut tree that abuts the Rec Path between Lane Street and Wesley Drive. Jack Swift, president of the Connecticut chapter of the American Chestnut Foundation, visited the tree with a group of men from UI and a bucket truck from Lewis Tree Services with the goal of bagging the female catkins in order to control pollination. Unfortunately, the tree had been attacked by gall wasps and this prevented it from flowering.

3. Potential Projects

- A. **Paugussett reroute at Wiacek** to reduce length of hayfield walking. Terry Gallagher reported a route through the woods to bypass a portion of the meadow walk is mostly pretty clear except for at the edge of the meadow, where there is heavy brush. Also there is a ditch that needs to be crossed. The reroute had been previously discussed with CFPA Trail Manager Polly Buckley and she was on board. Mark Vollaro countered that she later told him she had changed her mind and liked the trail the way it is. Teresa Gallagher asked if she had seen the meadow section when the grass was four feet high. Mark Vollaro said, no the grass was still short at that time. Committee members discussed the issue and determined they wanted to complete the reroute in order to reduce the meadow clearing that the Committee needs to do each summer. With the reroute, the meadow crossing would be short and straight across the meadow, while currently there are turns through the meadow that can be confusing, especially when the grass is tall. Also, the corner of the meadow is extremely wet.
- B. **Tahmore Trail:** Luis Isaza had submitted photos of Tahmore Trail, which has not been maintained for several years pending a routing decision by the Land Trust board. Teresa Gallagher explained that Tahmore Trail is a CFPA-managed trail on Land Trust property. Portions of the trail are in very rough shape, including a significant bridge that is collapsing as well as steep sections that need side-hilling or steps. One section has no blazes. A large new

home was constructed in the formerly scenic meadow and this is located right next to the trail. Another section runs along the edge of backyards, some of which are unsightly.

As the CFPA trail managers for Tahmore Trail and the adjacent Paugussett Trail at Indian Well, the Gallaghers asked the Land Trust for permission to shift the trail away from the homes and reroute it to the top of the hill, which is more scenic, with seasonal views. The Land Trust has discussed the issue, with some in favor and some opposed, but never took a vote. If the trail cannot be rerouted, it will likely be delisted by CFPA on the grounds that it is not a scenic trail.

It has been over three years since the rerouting request was made to the Land Trust and volunteers do not want to work on a section of trail that is substandard and may be abandoned. Val Gosset said that it seems the priority now should be in getting the Land Trust to make a decision. Teresa Gallagher agreed and said she sent another email to Joe Welsh, the Land Trust president, asking for a vote. Bill Dyer also sent an email to Mr. Welsh. The next Land Trust meeting is on September 11. Committee members discussed attending the meeting.

4. Guided Hikes/Events:

- A. The next event is the Full Moon Hike on October 13 at 7:00 pm at Nicholdale Farm.

5. Work Parties Scheduled:

- A. July 13, 8:30 am. Paugussett Trail from Mayflower Lane to Rt 110. Meet at Sinsabaugh Heights. Leader: Jim Taradine
- B. July 27, 8:30 am. Nells Rock Trail. Meet at the Abbey Wright lot. Leader: Terry Gallagher.

6. Expenses & Equipment: Mark Vollaro submitted expenses totalling \$14.81 for gas.

7. The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 pm.

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