City of Shelton Conservation Commission
Meeting Minutes for November 6, 2019

Members Present: Tom Harbinson, Bill Dyer, Jim Tate, Ed McCreery, Sheri Kutkanicz.

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm by Tom Harbinson.

Meeting Minutes: Bill Dyer made a motion to approve the October 2, 2019 meeting minutes. Seconded by Sheri Dutkanicz. All were in favor.

Trails Committee Report. Bill Dyer summarized the Trails Committee meeting that preceded the Conservation Commission meeting. For details, see the Trails Committee meeting minutes.

Ed McCreery made a motion to add two items to the agenda: 1. The Dikovsky buildings on open space and 2. Potential restoration of the Canal Street locks. Seconded by Bill Dyer. All were in favor.

Dikovsky Buildings: There are a number of old farm buildings at 27 Old Town Road, which is now open space owned by the City. Conservation previously submitted a letter to Corporate Counsel Fran Teodosio asking about the legal process for dealing with items that had been left behind by the family. No response was received. Teresa Gallagher reported that the Maintenance Department had been instructed to take a look at the buildings and had done so. The issue is being handled by the Mayor’s office.

Old Applications:
- PZC #19-23 “Permar Grove”, 605 Long Hill Avenue, 2 lot subdivision on 3.17 acres. Tom Harbinson reported that he was very familiar with the history of the property and when he saw it on the Planning and Zoning agenda recently, he attended their meeting. The agenda item was for acceptance, review, and possible decision, which seemed very fast. The subdivision was not referred to Conservation for review as required under the subdivision regulations. At the Planning and Zoning meeting, there was no opportunity for the public to comment, and the subdivision was immediately approved. Later at that meeting
during the public portion, he addressed the commission and objected to the lack of communication with Conservation and brought up the deed restriction that prohibits subdivision of the property. Further, there was no open space dedication. The Planning and Zoning Commission seemed to be aware of the deed restriction and still approved the subdivision.

In 2002, the City of Shelton made an open space purchase from Harry Klapik for $1,000,000 which included most of one large parcel except for about two acres that were carved off of the larger property and merged with a small abutting building lot to create an oversized building lot of 3.17-acres at 605 Long Hill Avenue. The purchase deed clearly states that this merged property cannot be subdivided in the future and that only one dwelling could be built on the property. It was part of the agreement for which the City paid $1,000,000 to the family.

Ed McCreery stated that if the City wants to release the restriction, it needs to go through the Board of Aldermen. Planning and Zoning approval does not release the landowners of their deed restriction. The restriction still applies.

Jim Tate wondered why the City would consider releasing the restriction without compensation. And why did the landowner think they could do this?

**Ed McCreery made a motion to send a letter to the president of the Board of Alderman with copies to the Mayor and Planning and Zoning Commission setting forth the history of the property and the recent subdivision approval and noting that the Board of Aldermen needs to decide whether it wants to release the restriction. Seconded by Bill Dyer. All were in favor.**

**Historic Shelton Locks:** Ed McCreery reported that about two years ago, SEDC had approached the Conservation Commission with the hopes of using some of Conservation’s budget to pay for an engineering study of the locks. The historic locks are not functional and are falling apart. Recently, Paul Grimmer (SEDC), Tom Harbinson, and Ed McCreery met onsite.

Ed McCreery has tracked down two companies that restore locks. They are probably the only two such companies east of the Mississippi that do so. It looks like the gates and hardware are original from the 1890’s. It may be possible to restore Locks 1 and 2 so that they are functional for demonstration purposes. They want to bring the Riverwalk there eventually. One of the bridges over the locks needs to be taken out.

At this time, Ed McCreery wants to prepare a Powerpoint presentation of the potential restoration and would like to use high resolution historic photographs from the National
Park Service, who did a study in 1987. NPS charges $15 per photo for the high resolution versions.

Jim Tate made a motion to approve up to $150 for the acquisition of high resolution photos of the Shelton Locks from the National Park Service. Seconded by Sheri Dutkanicz. All were in favor.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 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.