



## **City of Shelton Conservation Commission**

Meeting Minutes for March 3, 2021

Meeting held via Zoom due to the pandemic. Video recording is posted on the Conservation Commission's YouTube channel: <https://youtu.be/GIG2HFq4NfQ>

**Members Present:** Tom Harbinson (Chair), Jim Tate, Sheri Dutkanicz

**Members Absent:** Bill Dyer, Ed McCreery

**Also present:** Teresa Gallagher, Natural Resource Manager

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

**Meeting Minutes:** **Sheri Dutkanicz made a motion to approve the February 15, 2021 meeting minutes. Seconded by Jim Tate. All were in favor.**

**Trails Committee Report:** Tom Harbinson reported that he spoke to Bill Dyer, Trails Committee Chairman, before the meeting. The City received quotes to paint the new Trails Barn on the order of \$8,000 for the exterior and \$9,000 for the interior (polyurethane). They both think that painting the exterior is something that the volunteers might be able and willing to do. The current barn was painted by members of the Trails Committee. The interior treatment is optional. Bill Dyer obtained all the necessary permits for the barn from City Hall.

**Shelton Canal & Locks:** Jim Tate stressed the importance of long-range planning for the canal & locks area, including potential connections to the River Walk as well as Riverview Park and Indian Well State Park via the railroad bed. The railroad is currently technically 'active', but that might not always be the case. Things can change, and we need to be ready with a master plan for the area. It would be nice to walk from the canal & locks to the state park. And the Mayor has said he wants a connection from the locks to Riverview Park.

Jim Tate continued that the property to the immediate south of the locks (Map 139 Lot 3) has been of special interest for a park since the mid-1990s and is now collapsing into the river in places. We need to be diligent in terms of making sure this property doesn't get thrown away. It has water resources, history, recreation, and potential parking.

Jim Tate asked about the ongoing Canal Street development to the north of the Avalon apartments. He did not think that site plan came before the Conservation Commission for review. We need to check up on that with regards to the River Walk.

**New Applications: PZC#21-02, Subdivision of 762 River Road.** (Public hearing scheduled for Feb. 17). Plans posted at <http://cityofshelton.org/21-02-762-river-road-pdd-72-subdivision/>

Tom Harbinson reported that at their public hearing, the Planning and Zoning Commission did not include Conservation's recommendation for a conservation easement across the remaining vegetated slope along the Housatonic River. P&Z members commented that there is already protection of that area under the original PDD and voiced concerns that the Board of Aldermen would have to approve to accept the conservation easement. Is it true that BOA needs to accept a conservation easement? Teresa Gallagher noted that conservation protections under PDDs tend to be vague compared to a conservation easement filed on the land records.

**Ivy Brook Informal PDD 58 residential units on 3.07 acres in a Light Industrial zone.** Tom Harbinson shared that this proposal is in a conceptual stage. It is located between existing industrial buildings, and seems like it would create a conflict between new residents and the adjacent industries, especially regarding noise. Jim Tate countered that is a matter for Planning and Zoning, not Conservation. Tom Harbinson wondered about the increase in demand for our open space-related recreational needs. This type of development, by using the PDD mechanism, is not providing for any sort of open space, or fee in lieu of open space, yet is increasing the need for those spaces. Jim Tate noted the development is done in isolation. There are no sidewalks. It needs to be part of the community.

**The meeting was adjourned at 7:56 pm.**

*Meeting minutes were prepared by Teresa Gallagher and should be considered in draft form until adopted at the next meeting.*