



## City of Shelton Conservation Commission

Meeting Minutes for

December 6, 2017

**Members Present:** Tom Harbinson (arrived 7:15 pm), Bill Dyer, Ed McCreery (arrived 7:33 pm), Joe Welsh, Jim Tate, Sheri Dutkanicz

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

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 pm by Vice Chairman Bill Dyer.

1. **Meeting Minutes:** Sheri Dutkanicz made a motion to approve the October 4, 2017 meeting minutes. Seconded by Joe Welsh. All were in favor.
2. **Public Portion:** No members of the public attended.
3. **Trails Committee Report.** Bill Dyer summarized the Trails Committee meeting held immediately before the Conservation Commission meeting. See the Trails Committee meeting minutes for more information.
  - a Approval of invoice: Bill Dyer made a motion to approve payment of a \$1600 to Dan and Dave Landscaping for repairing a washout on the Rec Path near Lane Street and installing new drainage structures. Tom Harbinson seconded the motion. All were in favor.
  - b **Use of Rec Path as a city street during bridge construction:** Bill Dyer said he was very concerned about the planned conversion of the Rec Path between Lane Street and Wesley Drive to a city street during construction of the Lane Street bridge over Means Brook. Joe Welsh said the plan was absolutely ridiculous. Bill Dyer continued that they are going to wipe out stone walls and take down large trees. Tom Harbinson said he didn't mind as long as it was temporary. Jim Tate said the concern should be whether they are going to truly restore the path after the bridge is completed. Bill Dyer said they can't restore large trees that have been cut down. He and Terry Gallagher were planning on speaking with Jack Bashar. Tom Harbinson said that would be appropriate.
4. **Applications for Development**
  - a **PZC #17-18 at 801 Bridgeport Avenue (former UI property)**  
"Fountain Square." Proposed PDD to build a mixed-use project including

retail, office space, and a hotel within an IA-2 zone.

Tom Harbinson said he attended the presentation by the applicant before the Planning and Zoning Commission and thought it was very thorough. The applicant stated the amount of impervious surfaces would decrease compared with the current use, and the amount of greenspace would increase.

Bill Dyer noted some people are opposed to the project due to traffic concerns. Tom Harbinson said traffic was not the Conservation's Commission purview. Joe Welsh wanted to know if the site drained to the Far Mill River. Tom Harbinson said it did, and this is something Conservation should look at. The water temperature and quality are important. The decrease in impervious surfaces should help.

Jim Tate wanted to make sure Bridgeport Avenue was well landscaped. Some previous developments had landscaping along the road. In some cases this was necessary to protect stream corridors or provide stormwater detention, such as at Walmart. This is in contrast to someplace like Route 1 in Milford where the shops and parking areas extend right up to the road. Interior pedestrian walkways would also be important.

Joe Welsh commented on trash containers in retail areas and how these containers are often open and overflowing, and some of this trash ends up in waterways. Teresa Gallagher said this is something the Anti-Litter Committee had discussed over the years; also the practice of landscaping crews cleaning off parking lots by blowing litter over embankments. This was reported in Huntington Center several years ago, where litter was blown into Means Brook, and also at the old ASF Sports on River Road. Jim Tate said in this type of situation a fence would help.

The commission directed Teresa Gallagher to draft a letter to the Planning and Zoning Commission with the comments discussed.

## **5. Communications**

**a** Teresa Gallagher spoke with Mike Maglione, Director of Public Safety & Emergency Services, about having street addresses assigned to trailhead locations that have kiosks. She had been hiking in New Hampshire where there was a town open space that had a street number posted on a tree along the road at the parking area, and a notice in the kiosk that said, "In case of emergency, call 911. You're address is..." The Shelton emergency response system is based on addresses, which can cause confusion when there is an emergency in a location that does not have an address. People also prefer to use addresses when navigating to trailheads by gps. Mike Maglione thought it was a good idea and had Teresa Gallagher prepare a packet of maps showing the kiosk locations. After the Mayor approves the addresses it goes up to the state.

**b** Shelton Canal Conveyance of Easement: As part of a lawsuit settlement, the City of Shelton entered into a land preservation agreement with McCallum Enterprises (Shelton Canal Company). The canal area shall be “maintained and preserved for purposes of open space, conservation, watershed protection and/or passive outdoor recreation.” The agreement maintains public access and allows the City of Shelton to extend the Riverwalk along the Canal property.

**c** Open Space Trust Account. Teresa Gallagher spoke with Rick Schultz, Planning and Zoning, about how best to track ‘payment-in-lieu-of’ open space fees. Mr. Schultz said he can add this topic to his annual report, including payments pending and the balance in the Open Space Trust Account. Tom Harbinson directed Teresa Gallagher to inquire with Jack Bashar as to whether this would meet the open space ordinance requirement for annual reports.

**6. Executive Session: At 7:52 p.m. Tom Harbinson made a motion to go into executive session for the purpose of discussing potential land acquisitions. Ed McCreery seconded. All were in favor.** The Commission came out of Executive Session at 8:20. Members will look into the Quality of Life list of potential open space properties. It would be helpful to be able to view the properties on GIS maps.

**Ed McCreery made a motion to send a memo to the Mayor urging full GIS access by the Natural Resources Manager in order to facilitate open space planning and management. Jim Tate seconded. All were in favor.**

**7. Comments by members**

**a** Tom Harbinson noted the commission is short a person. No one seemed to be able to find a potential new member who would agree to serve. Jim Tate suggested advertising for someone. There was general agreement.

**The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 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.*