

City of Shelton, Conservation Commission
 Minutes for the Regular Meeting of Wednesday October 3, 2007 at 7:00 P.M.
 Minutes should be considered a draft version until approved by CC at their next meeting.

Call to Order	2
A. Pledge of Allegiance	2
B. Approval of Minutes	2
C. Public Portion	2
D. Trails Committee Report	2
<i>Planned Projects for 2007</i>	2
A. <i>Recreation Path</i>	2
B. <i>Rec Path – Phase 2</i>	3
C. <i>2007 Recreation Trails Grant Application</i>	3
D. <i>\$2500 State Grant</i>	3
E. <i>Turkey Trot Trail & Shelton High School Cross Country Team</i>	3
F. <i>Trail at the old Master’s site, Rte 110 and Far Mill River</i>	3
G. <i>Well Springs Estates Trail</i>	3
H. <i>Connect Blue Dot Trail to Shelton Lakes</i>	3
I. <i>Trail enhancement efforts in 2007</i>	4
J. <i>Hikes scheduled for October 6</i>	4
K. <i>Shelton Day Participation with Land Trust</i>	4
L. <i>Work Party Schedule</i>	4
F. Review of P&Z Applications for Subdivisions and/or Development	5
Old Applications	5
<i>49 Wesley Drive, ZBA #907-3, reduction in rear setback to 6 feet from abutting open space for swimming pool.</i>	5
New Applications	5
G. Open Space Plan	5
H. Communications	5
I. Shelton Farm & Forest Protection Program 2005 Applicant 1 : Homestead Acres	5
<i>USDA Review of NRCS and Shelton’s FFPP Grant Award</i>	5
J. Conservation Agent Report	5
<i>Open Space Inventorying and Mapping:</i>	6
<i>Community Resource Inventory Committee</i>	6
<i>Open Space inspecting, signage, encroachment</i>	6
<i>Open Space Trust Account</i>	6
<i>Rec Path Grants Status</i>	6
<i>CT Grant of \$2500 for Rec Path courtesy of Dick Belden</i>	6
<i>Open Space Website</i>	6
<i>Land keeper Program</i>	7
<i>HVA River Sampling</i>	7
<i>HVA Brochure</i>	7
<i>Open Space Fines</i>	7
<i>Fee in Lieu of Payments</i>	8
<i>Plastic BBs</i>	8
<i>CACIWC annual conference</i>	8
K. Quality of Life - Executive Session	9

L. Comments by Members9
M. Adjournment.....9

Call to Order

Present: Tom Harbinson, Chairman
Bill Dyer, Vice-Chairman
Jim Tate, Commissioner
Hank Lauriat, Commissioner
Edward McCreery, Commissioner
Joe Welsh, Commissioner

The Commission currently has 6 active members.

Also Present: Teresa Gallagher, Conservation Agent
Marianne Chaya, Clerk

A. Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Harbinson called the meeting of the Conservation Commission to order at 7:00 p.m. All in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

B. Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Lauriat MOVED to approve the minutes from the September 5, 2007 Regular meeting. SECONDED by Commissioner McCreery. All were in favor, MOTION PASSED.

C. Public Portion

None

D. Trails Committee Report

Vice-Chairman Dyer reported as follows:

Planned Projects for 2007

A. Recreation Path

The preliminary spec has been generated for the engineering design effort for the Rec Path Phase I. Copies were passed to the Commissioners for review. The plan is to use the existing money for the engineering services effort. LOCIP would be funding the labor of the project.

Commissioner McCreery asked if this is to be ADA compliant, to which Vice-Chairman Dyer answered yes.

Vice-Chairman Dyer noted that Phase I is from Pine Lake to Constitution Blvd./Route 108 crossing.

Trails Committee representative, Terrance Gallagher commented that the goal is to have the entire 4 ½ miles handicapped accessible.

The Commissioners discussed the design specifications and the process involved in the proposal of the spec to the Board of Aldermen.

B. Rec Path – Phase 2

Location of path from Route 108 in front of white house to connect with existing trail. This will be a winter project to determine the route connection.

Commissioner Lauriat asked if Vice-Chairman Dyer knew of the status of the white house. Vice-Chairman Dyer said he does not know but our trail is going to go inside the stone wall. We will then cross the driveway and swing up the hill to the right, all the time trying to remain ADA compliant. This will connect to the Rec Path.

C. 2007 Recreation Trails Grant Application

Terrance Gallagher needs to submit a couple of letters but we are under the assurance that we will be a recipient of around \$75,000 for the 2007 Recreation Trails Grant program. The money will be coming some time next year.

D. \$2500 State Grant

We want to use this for logo work and signage.

E. Turkey Trot Trail & Shelton High School Cross Country Team

The high school is now using part of the trail. There will be 3 track meets this year, with a big one next week.

F. Trail at the old Master's site, Rte 110 and Far Mill River

The contractor is grading it down and we can now go in there ourselves. The area behind the driving range has not been cleared. I talked with Rick Schultz yesterday and he was able to give me the phone number so I can follow through with it.

G. Well Springs Estates Trail

A letter has been given to Royal Wells via Planning & Zoning.

H. Connect Blue Dot Trail to Shelton Lakes

We sent a formal report to the Board of Aldermen regarding the alternatives. We have not had any feedback. We voted at this

meeting last month to erect a split rail fence. Have the bids gone out?

The Commissioners recalled that they voted to recommend the split rail fence to the Board of Aldermen.

Chairman Harbinson commented that informal meetings have taken place regarding the proposed trail behind the residences on Mayflower Lane.

We are working with DEP to approve the northern end of the extension – the one that goes from the Indian Well parking lot to Route 110.

I. Trail enhancement efforts in 2007

We did replace rails at the north dam near Silent Waters and the plexi-glass at the kiosk at the Turkey Trot trail that was vandalized. We had a work party of about 30-40 high school kids (from the men's/women's cross country teams) on the Turkey Trot Trail. We also had another work party cutting brush at the Oak Valley Trail.

J. Hikes scheduled for October 6

- a. Big Brothers Mentoring Group
- b. AMC (Appalachian Mountain Club)10 mile walk.

K. Shelton Day Participation with Land Trust

We will hand out trail maps and bring some mementos for show.

L. Work Party Schedule

- a. October 25 – Riverview Park

Commissioner Lauriat MOVED to authorize the funds from the \$2500 State Grant to be used for LOGO design and signage. SECONDED by Commissioner McCreery. A voice vote was taken; all were in favor, MOTION PASSED.

The Commissioners asked Agent Gallagher to contact Peter Stockwell.

F. Review of P&Z Applications for Subdivisions and/or Development

Old Applications

49 Wesley Drive, ZBA #907-3, reduction in rear setback to 6 feet from abutting open space for swimming pool.

Nothing to report. Agent Gallagher reported that the ZBA minutes are not online.

New Applications

NONE

G. Open Space Plan

Agent Gallagher reported that she is still in need of Chairman Harbinson's comments.

H. Communications

Chairman Harbinson reported on the following:

- American Farmland brochure
- CT Agriculture Natural Resource Journal
- Working Lands Alliance-Farmland Preservation session at Hartford.
- American Planning Association magazine
- CACIWC brochures

I. Shelton Farm & Forest Protection Program 2005 Applicant 1 : Homestead Acres

USDA Review of NRCS and Shelton's FFPP Grant Award

Commissioner McCreery recused himself from the discussion.

Chairman Harbinson reported that the appraisal is greater than 12 months old and needs to be updated for a closing. That is in process and is going out for bids.

The survey work was awarded by the Board of Aldermen for the perimeter and interior parcels will be done to an A2 standard, which is a requirement for title insurance. That is now in process and should take about 2 months. The tentative deadline is December 15.

J. Conservation Agent Report

Agent Gallagher reported on the following:

Open Space Inventorying and Mapping:

No new progress.

Community Resource Inventory Committee

The Committee will tentatively be meeting on the 2nd Weds of the month at 7:00 pm. The first meeting has been scheduled for November 14.

Open Space inspecting, signage, encroachment

The ability to locate the approximate location of property lines is critical, and should be possible when leaves are off the trees using a GPS receiver IF accurate property line coordinates can be obtained from the City's current Engineering or GIS mapping systems. One obstacle is the City's use of an older datum (1927 CT Datum), which must be converted to the universal datum used by satellites and GPS receivers (WGS84). GIS software and some later versions of CADD (Engineering uses CADD) have the ability to convert to the new datum, however, I have spoken with Dave Kosakowski (Engineering), surveyor Tracy Lewis, and Regis Dognin (City GIS system) about the problem and none know how to convert to the correct datum. I hope to have the problem resolved by November when the leaves are down (better GPS reception).

Open Space Trust Account

The Finance/Accounting Department is planning on setting up a system that will allow Conservation to view the account via the City computer network. Our current balance is \$356K. There were funds of approx. \$60-70K removed for the Old Farm Rd. open space.

Rec Path Grants Status

Still need 'services in kind' data from Engineering, Public Works, and the Trails Committee in order to submit package to DEP for reimbursement of \$75,000.

CT Grant of \$2500 for Rec Path courtesy of Dick Belden

Application was prepared and submitted by Charlene DeFilippo, Community Development. Application states that it will be used "for the general purpose of clearing the land to expand the trails, as well as to provide enhancements along the trails such as signage, rest areas, kiosks, etc."

Open Space Website

A new website has been established at www.sheltonopenspace.googlepages.com including maps, photos, ordinances, open space plan, land keeper program, etc. The open space properties are listed by open space number, referenced by online maps.

Land keeper Program

Proposed Scout patch would be awarded to any individual or group that has been the land keeper for an open space for one year (or one school year) and submitted a report on the open space to the Conservation Department. Patches would cost approximately \$1 per patch if 200 were purchased (depending on quantities and size). GS Troop 363 has adopted the eastern side of the Huntington Wellfield property (OS90), and other troops have expressed an interest in the program. The open space website and patch program are designed to attract land keepers. A new high school club, the Green Tees, a new environmental club, is in the process of forming and has expressed an interest in the program.

The Commissioners discussed the idea of plaques versus patches and the cost.

Commissioner Tate MOVED to approve Agent Teresa Gallagher purchasing 200 scout patches in the amount of \$232.00 to recognize land keepers. SECONDED by Commissioner Lauriat. All were in favor, MOTION PASSED.

HVA River Sampling

Three macro invertebrate samples were collected on the Far Mill River (Rte 110, Mill Street, and Roaring Brook Lane) and one at Indian Hole Brook (Indian Well Rd) over the past week. The samples are processed and forwarded to the DEP for analysis. The DEP published their report for the 2006 round of samples, which is online at http://www.ct.gov/dep/lib/dep/water/volunteer_monitoring/2006rbvreport.pdf. This is the third year of macro invertebrate sampling. The results show that the water in both streams is oxygenated enough to support a few sensitive species such as stoneflies. However, the majority of organisms found (mostly net spinner caddis fly, finger net caddis fly, black fly and midge larvae) are associated with elevated organic loads, most often associated with lawn fertilizer and grass clippings. A fourth sampling point is planned for Means Brook at Lane Street. Agent Gallagher explained the sampling report to the Commissioners.

HVA Brochure

HVA has applied for an Iroquois grant to publish a pamphlet for our section of the river that will list recreational features in the watershed as well as information about stormwater runoff.

Agent Gallagher showed and explained the HVA pamphlet and how our area would be included in the new pamphlet.

Open Space Fines

Current maximum fines per Ordinance #799 for Open Space violations are \$100. Conservation can ask BOA to increase these fines to a maximum of \$250, which would apply to ATV usage, air soft or paintball games, clearing, dumping or any other open space violations.

Commissioner Lauriat MOVED to authorize Agent Gallagher to write a letter to the Board of Alderman asking them to increase the fines for open space violations in line with the increase they recently gave to other ordinance violations; from \$100 to the maximum of \$250 and application of enforcement. As an attachment to the letter include various examples of violations she has witnessed. SECONDED by Commissioner Tate. All were in favor, MOTION PASSED.

Fee in Lieu of Payments

A tracking spreadsheet has been set up by Conservation. In the process, several missed payments were noted and brought to the attention of Rick Schulz in Planning and Zoning, who tracked down the missing payments. As a result, \$10,000 has been received for the Windy Field subdivision, \$5000 more is expected soon, and another \$5000 will be received after the last lot is completed. Another \$7500 for the Cross Road Estates subdivision is reportedly on the way. Rick Schultz has amended the permit application process by adding a line item on the Application for Certificate of Zoning Compliance. Chairman Harbinson directed Agent Gallagher to follow up with Rick Schultz every week.

Plastic BBs

Non-biodegradable plastic BBs are a growing problem on City open space throughout the City. Wal-Mart sells both biodegradable and non-biodegradable BBs, but the vast majorities are the non-biodegradable type, and they come in containers of up to 18,000 BBs, all of which likely end up in the environment and in the waterways. Options: Community education, letters to BB sellers, letters to representatives.

Commissioner McCreery MOVED to authorize Agent Teresa Gallagher to write a letter to our local legislators (State Representative and State Senator) proposing legislation where it would describe how this is becoming a problem and suggest Connecticut move to the forefront with proposed legislation that requires retailers to only sell biodegradable plastic pellets. SECONDED by Vice-Chairman Dyer. All were in favor; MOTION PASSED.

CACIWC annual conference

Scheduled for Saturday, Nov 10, \$40.

Vice-Chairman Dyer MOVED to approve the expense of \$40 to send Agent Teresa Gallagher to the CACIWC annual conference November 10, 2007. The money is to come from the Conservation Commission budget. SECONDED by Commissioner Lauriat. All were in favor, MOTION PASSED.

K. Quality of Life - Executive Session

Commissioner Lauriat MOVED to go into Executive Session for the purposes of discussing land acquisition issues at 8:11 P.M. SECONDED by Vice-Chairman Dyer. All were in favor, MOTION PASSED.

Commissioner Lauriat MOVED to return to regular session at 8:47 P.M. SECONDED by Commissioner McCreery. All were in favor; MOTION PASSED.

L. Comments by Members

Commissioner McCreery asked to put an item on the next month's agenda regarding whether it is City owned land along the Far Mill River, the corner of Mill Street and Buddington Rd. where there is a person using it for his garbage, his fill, parking his camper, nailing his advertisements. Agent Gallagher said she knows where it is and it is not City land. Commissioner McCreery then suggested turning him into the Zoning Enforcement Officer for nailing his signs on the trees. He said he would take care of it.

Commissioner Tate asked Chairman Harbinson about the status of the appointment of the vacant Commissioner position. Chairman Harbinson commented that the Mayor is not making any appointments at this time.

M. Adjournment

Next regularly scheduled meeting will be Wednesday, November 7, 2007.

Commissioner Lauriat MOVED to adjourn. SECONDED by Vice Chairman Dyer. All were in favor, MEETING ADJOURNED at 8:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Marianne Chaya
Clerk, Conservation Commission