

City of Shelton, Conservation Commission
 Minutes for the Regular Meeting on Wednesday May 7, 2008 at 7:00 P.M.
 Minutes should be considered a draft version until approved by CC at their next meeting.

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CORRECTED MINUTES*

Call to Order

Present: Tom Harbinson, Chairman
Bill Dyer, Vice-Chairman
Jim Tate, Commissioner
Hank Lauriat, Commissioner
Joe Welsh, Commissioner
Ed McCreery, Commissioner (arrived at 8:40)

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 7:05 p.m. All in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

B. Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Lauriat MOVED to approve the minutes from the April 2, 2008 Regular meeting. SECONDED by Vice-Chairman Dyer. All were in favor, MOTION PASSED.

C. Public Portion

Jim Flood, from Boy Scout Troop 28 came to talk about his Eagle Scout project. The project will consist of constructing a fishing area and canoe launch for the citizens of Shelton. We would like to be able to fish off the small ramp at the Hope Lake reservoir on Nells Rock Rd. This ramp would be within reasonable distance from the parking area and have an accessible ramp. This ramp would be approximately 6' wide and extend out approximately 4' into the lake. The launch would be easily used for canoes and kayaks. Although it would not fall under the ADA regulations it would be wheelchair friendly and made for easy use for handicapped persons. I would be organizing and supervising volunteers from my troop for this community project.

Chairman Harbinson asked if anyone had any questions about this project?

Commissioner Tate answered no; I think it's a great project.

Vice-Chairman Dyer MOVED to endorse the Eagle Scout project as outlined by Jim Flood as an amenity to our trails network and recommend for him to move on to the next step of obtaining a wetlands permit.

Commissioner Tate recommended sketching the project and Commissioner Lauriat recommended taking pictures. Commissioner Tate also suggested if there are funds needed to talk with Vice-Chairman Dyer so he could requisition the funds from the Conservation Commission budget. This should be done by June because the budget year runs from July to June.

SECONDED by Commissioner Tate. A voice vote was taken, all were in favor; MOTION PASSED.

Jennifer Geignetter-Cannatelli, 54 Magnolia Circle, representing Crescent Village for a request to donate trees and have them planted on the elevation for privacy. We have some wildflowers that we wanted planted as well and have been talking with Agent Gallagher. I wanted to get written consent and approval for us to move forward with our ideas and to help you guys out to make the neighborhood look better and to give us some privacy.

Chairman Harbinson commented that we are all aware of where she is talking about. This is where Agent Gallagher went out and planted the pine tree seedlings.

Commissioner Tate asked what is the condition of the area now?

Agent Gallagher responded that it is graded out (machine) and the stumps have been removed. It was a pretty good area for the planting except it was still a little hard. I planted 85 pine tree seedlings. It does need some ground cover because of all the grading that was done.

Commissioner Tate asked what Jennifer had in mind.

Ms. Cannatelli said first of all she wanted to thank the Commission for taking such speedy action. I appreciate all of your work. The way it's laid out is that there is an elevation and then it almost levels out going out to Long Hill.

Crescent Village is at the bottom. With the 85 seedlings, which are very small, is not going to give us privacy at all. We want to plant on the border where Crescent Village's property meets the City's property – just a little bit up from the bottom.

There were suggestions of red maple or spruce trees and something to blend in with the native vegetation. They also discussed consideration of cost as a factor.

Ms. Cannatelli asked if she needed any type of written consent or approval?

Chairman Harbinson suggested a motion.

Commissioner Tate MOVED to allow the Crescent Village homeowners association to do planting at the desired location with a mix of species discussed, providing the plan to Agent Teresa Gallagher. SECONDED by Vice-Chairman Dyer.

Discussion ensued regarding groundcover and Ms. Cannatelli noted that the primary reason for the groundcover was for water absorption. Commissioner Tate suggested a New England wildflower meadow mix. He also suggested keeping an eye on the white pines and perhaps the fire department above could assist in the watering. Chairman Harbinson suggested talking to Alderman Anglace for assistance in talking to the fire dept. about assistance with watering. Commissioner Tate suggested working with their landscaper for Crescent Village to assist in the maintenance of the planting area.

A voice vote was taken, all were in favor; MOTION PASSED.

D. Trails Committee Report

Vice-Chairman Dyer reported as follows:

1. National Trails Day – June 7

We will be putting signs up around town and we will again do carpooling and will send a note to the Huntington Herald for advertisement.

We decided on having t-shirts with our new logo and giving them out to our trail volunteers. We figured on it costing about \$250. Do we have money in our budget to pay for them? Commissioner Tate suggested selling these as a way to offset some of our expenses. These could also be sold at Shelton Day. This logo is a real good marketing tool that we spent money to have designed.

The Commissioners discussed the cost and what to charge for each t-shirt and the basic design. They directed Agent Gallagher to go to Civitella's and spend up to \$500. The account to charge this to is Other Outside Services (#001-1300-414.30-23).

2. Planned Projects for 2008

A. Rec Path – Phase I –Construction Contractors meeting

We had our meeting on Tuesday. Seven contractors showed up. Everyone was provided with a copy of the map noting all the drainage plus a 3-page spec, and a document that the City requires. There is one issue that I don't know the answer to is regarding "prevailing wage". Commissioner Tate responded that you only need that if it is a state project.

Chairman Harbinson read the questions from Terry Gallagher's email and the Commissioners and Mr. Gallagher discussed each one.

Tape 1, Side B

The bids are due back on May 22. The question is how to pay this without a line item for it. Chairman Harbinson stated that in the City's 6-year capital outlay. He put \$50K per year for a Rec Path under our Conservation budget.

Vice-Chairman Dyer asked how it works using LOCIP funds.

Commissioner Tate made suggestions on whom to see about it and he would explain how it works.

B. Rec Path – Phase 2

The path was upgraded around the white house (Nells Rock Rd) directing you to continue on the Rec Path.

C. Rec Path – Phase 3

I have sent a fax to Tracey Lewis to get a quote for the wetland flagging of the Lane Street end of the boardwalk. I am unsure if they are going to give us a price or if they are going to do it gratis. This is needed for a wetlands permit.

We still have \$60K from the Huntington Woods subdivision to use. We are thinking once we get it we get a contractor to do this all the way to the boardwalk and then start where the Land Trust contractor ended and keep going the other way.

In order to get this money we have to go to P&Z with a plan and P&Z would contract out for the work.

D. 2008-09 Recreation Trails Grant application

We need to get ready for this grant application and one way to do that would be to spend the \$5K we have left.

E. \$2500 State Grant -Logo

What we used to call the \$2500 state grant logo has been spent from another budget item, so we still have the \$2500. We could use them for obelisks.

Chairman Harbinson said he emailed Agent Gallagher about a company down in Georgia that makes the granite markers and we could have any logo we want put on it.

It was suggested having a marker at the entry to Pine Lake.

F. New bridge over Curtis brook

It is complete and looks great.

G. Trail at Old Master's Site – Route 110 & Far Mill River

It has not been done yet. I am disappointed because he said it would be done by now. I will have to make a call tomorrow. There is a lot of junk (bags of leaves) left by the people up at the top of the hill. He said he'd remove them – especially for the benefit of prospective tenants.

H. Connect Blue Dot Trail to Shelton Lakes

We have not heard back from the Aldermen regarding the various routes we proposed.

I. Trail Enhancement efforts in 2008

The parking lots at Pine Lake, Nells Rock and the Abbey Wright have all deteriorated and have potholes. Can we buy some stone for these areas?

Chairman Harbinson suggested going to the Mayor to have it put on the list for public works. It needs to be done before the Trails Day in June (primarily Pine Lake).

J. Expenses for reimbursement

Terry Gallagher and myself have accumulated various expenditures and we need to be reimbursed.

Commissioner Tate MOVED to reimburse the Trails Committee expenses per the items listed on the receipts in the amount of \$320 or less. The payment is to come from Land Improvements. SECONDED by Commissioner Welsh. All were in favor; MOTION PASSED.

K. Gates – Abbey Wright

We have a quote for the gate at Abbey Wright – to replace the ballards (wooden) that got knocked over. It is for \$288 plus tax. If the City issues the check we save the tax.

There was discussion of why wood is being used. The Commissioners agreed that it would be ok to use the wood one and to monitor to see how it holds up.

It was suggested to get a P.O. from the City so they could pay it. The line item would be Land Improvements.

Vice-Chairman Dyer MOVED to approve the purchase of the wooden ballards for the gate at Abbey Wright in the amount of \$288. Funds are to come from the Conservation Commission budget item – Land Improvements. SECONDED by Commissioner Lauriat. All were in favor; MOTION PASSED.

L. Gator Lift bed status

The gator lift worked remarkably well. There is a picture of it on the Shelton Trails website as well as in the newspaper.

M. Shelton Clean Sweep Day

It was a great success and everyone is so excited and pleased. The Trails Committee was very pleased with all the work done and next year we hope to get more people out to clean more trail areas.

N. Long Range Plan – Big Loop Trail including Monroe

This would be done in cooperation with Monroe to build a 10-mile trail. At this point we are getting an understanding of it and interest. We want this to be part of the open space plan because it highlights some of the acquisitions. It is all either City land or land trust. We need to get the rights to go through the Aquarion property. The Commissioners were shown a map of the projected path and

discussed possible uses of the path, i.e. camping. Commissioner Welsh suggested contacting Aquarion as soon as possible.

O. Birchbank Mountain Trail

This trail has been blazed and is now officially a part of the trail loop. Agent Gallagher asked if she could use an open space sign at this trail and also for the area by the train track parking area. The Commissioners said it would be ok for her to place the signs.

3. Potential Work Party – schedule

A. Wood chips at Silent Waters bridge

This would be next to road millings at the bridge. Dean Cawthra has already dropped them off. It would be done Saturday, May 10.

B. Lane Street

Two weeks later we will be at Lane Street to do the wood chipping and clear out the area of vines and sticks. This will be done prior to Trails Day. Terry Gallagher asked Commissioner Welsh if it would be ok to do this near the area where they just worked on. Commissioner Welsh said it would be ok but to be mindful of the haying operation.

E. Review of P&Z Applications for Subdivisions and/or Developments

1. OLD APPLICATIONS

None

2. NEW APPLICATIONS

None

F. Shelton Canal – Proposal to fill canal for residential development

Related documents posted on:

www.sheltonopenspace.googlepages.com/sheltoncanal

The Army Corp is having their public meeting June 25.

G. 784 Long Hill Ave/Wintergreen Lane – Restoration of cleared areas.

85 white pine seedlings planted by Agent Gallagher. Need a groundcover to stabilize slope.

This item was covered in the public portion of the meeting with one of the homeowners.

H. Conservation Agent Report

1. Shelton Clean Sweep

Over 40 Events were registered involving hundreds of people. An estimated 400 – 600 bags of litter plus other junk such as tires and water heaters were collected. Per Tom & Bill's direction I'm awarding Land keeper patches upon request to everyone that helped out, and re-ordered 300 more patches.

2. Budget Report:

Acct No.		<u>07-08 Budget</u>	<u>Balance</u> <u>4/9/2008</u>	<u>Pending</u>
001-1300-414.				
10-01	Regular Payroll	1	1	
10-02	Part Time Employee	13,000	1170	**
11-01	Mileage	350	350	
11-05	Meeting, Travel, Confer	400	360	
30-23	Other Outside Services	15,000	5127	\$900 Logo
40-05	Postage	1	1	
40-09	Program Supplies	600	355	Patches - \$300
40-45	Signs/Plaques	600	534	500 more maps will be printed.
50-03	Clerical/Steno Fee	2,000	980	
50-04	Dues & Subscriptions	520	460	
60-01	Land Improvements	10,000	7170	
80-40	Program Development	4,000	3768	Use for part time employee shortfall?

**PT Employee at \$16.50/hr, 50 weeks, 20 hrs/week = \$16,500 per year.
 Estimated shortfall in line item is \$3,500 to \$4,000
 (note unpaid vacation occurred for 1 1/2 week just after this was printed out)

All expenses for this fiscal year must be submitted for payment by JUNE 1.
 No invoices will be paid in June
 Fiscal year is July 1 to June 30.
 Funds may be encumbered.

Chairman Harbinson reported that the reports he was receiving from the Finance Dept. were not accurately showing the allocation of wages for one of the part-time employee items.

Commissioner Lauriat MOVED to transfer \$3500.00- Program Development to Part-Time Employees. SECONDED by Vice-Chairman Dyer.

Vice-Chairman Dyer asked, isn't it \$3768? Chairman Harbinson said yes, but \$3500 is approximately what I will need to cover the part-time employee through

the end of the year. Teresa has been working on the open space plan and did things for the Shelton Clean Sweep program, I find justification to do that. The reason why the amount wasn't in the part-time budget to the amount needed is that I didn't realize what the amount needed was based on looking at the finance dept. reports. It has been corrected for next year's budget.

All were in favor; MOTION PASSED.

Commissioner Tate asked for Agent Gallagher and Terry Gallagher to leave for just a bit. I want to ask a question and go into Executive Session.

Commissioner Tate MOVED to go into Executive Session for the purposes of discussing employment issues. SECONDED by Vice-Chairman Dyer. All were in favor; MOTION PASSED.

Commissioner Tate MOVED to come out of Executive Session and return to regular session. SECONDED by Commissioner Lauriat. All were in favor; MOTION PASSED.

Agent Teresa Gallagher returned to the meeting.

Commissioner Tate MOVED to propose to the Mayor that our part-time employee, Teresa Gallagher receives a 7.5% pay rate increase. SECONDED by Vice-Chairman Dyer. All were in favor; MOTION PASSED.

Chairman Harbinson said to Teresa, you're doing a good job. She said, thank you.

Commissioner Tate MOVED to reimburse Agent Teresa Gallagher \$303 for the Land Keeper patches used at the Shelton Clean Sweep and \$80 for the pine seedlings. This would come from the Land Improvements line item. SECONDED by Commissioner Lauriat. All were in favor; MOTION PASSED.

3. Community Resource Inventory Committee

I went on vacation and the committee did not meet last month, no progress was made.

4. Open Space mapping

Regis still needs to add proposed trails including the Rec Path and Paugusset Trail. There is also a potential big loop trail in the White Hills extending into Monroe making use of the following trails: Paugusset, Webb Mountain trails, Nicholdale and Tahmore Land Trust trails. Potential route is nearly all preserved, including Aquarion property.

Commissioner Lauriat asked if this mapping would be on the computer for access for the Police Dept. Chairman Harbinson said that the Police Dept. use an entirely different computer system.

Commissioner Lauriat asked if there is a way for their computer to talk to ours to access this information? Commissioner Tate said no and he wasn't sure if the laptops in the police cars had Internet access.

Agent Gallagher said that the problem is there is no communications with engineering updates for things like new lot lines. They are not reflected in our GIS mapping and Regis just kind of eyeballs them in. This would mess us up in the future.

Commissioner Tate explained how the GIS system works.

Commissioner Lauriat asked if the maps sufficient for the police dept. so if he were to call and ask them to respond to open space #12, would they know where it is? Yes.

Agent Gallagher said that if one were to go to our open space web site but I don't think they know that.

Chairman Harbinson directed Agent Gallagher to write a letter to the Police Chief to make him aware of the open space mapping for identification purposes.

Chairman Harbinson said he drove by the Tall Farm on Long Hill Ave. that we talked about last month where the ***Shelton Youth Lacrosse Team is using the field**. They are actively using it. They have been parking in the field and have the Lacrosse area mowed in both fields. It is pretty nice to see people using the open space instead of just sitting there but I still do have a problem with the process as to which it got approved. That is just my personal complaint. Commissioner Welsh noted that when he drove by it looked like there were signs at the edge of the field. Chairman Harbinson said that was where the Tall family's portion is.

5. Open Space Trust Account

I was not able to get any information from Kathy in Finance.

6. Ct State Grant of \$2500 for Recreation Path/LOGO

Mayor signed grant agreement.

7. Ecklund Garden

Troop 512 is proposing to make small signs for the wildflowers they have planted, as well as one larger sign for the garden, to be cedar boards with lettering burnt into the wood followed by a sealer.

J. Communications

- Memo regarding the deed for the open space dedication was received for the Blue Stone project (off Ivy Brook Road).
- Memo from Rick Schultz regarding a possible conveyance of Shelton Canal park property to the City. (Memo read & plan

reviewed and discussed). There is a small portion of the canal that would have to be filled in for the street improvement to be done. The developer would do the work (park and 8 parking spots) and then deed it over to the City. The Commissioners decided it would be best to find out more information on this proposal before making comment.

L. Quality of Life - Executive Session

Commissioner Lauriat MOVED to go into Executive Session at 8:45 P.M. for the purposes of discussing land acquisition issues as outlined in the agenda. SECONDED by Vice-Chairman Dyer. All were in favor, MOTION PASSED.

Tape 2, Side A

Commissioner Tate MOVED to return to regular session at 8:55 P.M. SECONDED by Vice-Chairman Dyer. All were in favor; MOTION PASSED.

No votes were taken in Executive Session.

M. Comments By Members

Commissioner Tate expressed the concern that we, the Commissioners need to do a little better job in understanding our budget. Perhaps monthly or quarterly we should review these to understand what our line items are.

Commissioner Lauriat suggested doing this every month and it can't take a lot of time.

Commissioner Tate stated that it is important to know where we sit routinely. There may be certain applications where we could use Conservation money. It is pretty obvious that our responsibilities since I have been around here have increased from a \$1.50 and expenditures of \$100-\$150 to now in excess of \$50K. With the amount of different segments that we are trying to be responsible for, such as Clean Sweep programs, Natural Resource programs, some one has to understand that and the budget. I think we have to keep proving that the Conservation Commission is budgeting that item.

Commissioner Tate said his second comment has to do with the open space plan update. It wasn't discussed here tonight and it's critical in my mind, and we talked about this earlier in the year as one of our goals. That plan has to get done so others can take a look at it. We have to get it out to get comment and do whatever we need to do to it to get this thing adopted. I think at some point quickly that that plan is going to mean something and we are going to have wasted all this effort up to that point by not having an enforceable document. That document, from my standpoint, was kind of Terry Jones' calling card to acquire the farmland in White Hills. That greenway plan was his mode of operation to move in that direction for funding and grants, year after year. We're

now in an update; we may have another direction to go. There may be other directions in that plan that we may want to follow. That document is critical. Agent Gallagher noted that the map has to be finished and you wanted the scenic resources in it as well.

Chairman Harbinson said he thinks at the pace Regis is going it may be an appendix.

Commissioner Tate suggested asking Regis for the map you need. There are so many maps with all different layers and segments. We really don't have one reference document that we can use.

Agent Gallagher stated that we were going to have two different maps. One was just greenways and the other was open space with trails.

Commissioner Tate asked if they were available? Agent Gallagher said not quite yet.

Vice-Chairman Dyer suggested getting something out and calling it a draft because we probably will be making changes.

Agent Gallagher said she wanted the proposed trails on it. Regis hasn't gotten to it yet.

Commissioner Tate suggested Agent Gallagher get with Regis to get something for them for the next meeting. Agent Gallagher said Regis told her he was having problems – things were not getting backed up.

***Commissioner Tate suggested to burn the mapping data being done by Regis onto a CD to avoid it's loss due to reliance on current back-up procedures.**

They discussed the pictures taken at the Clean Sweep.

N. Adjournment

Next regularly scheduled meeting will be Wednesday, June 4, 2008.

Commissioner Tate MOVED to adjourn. SECONDED by Commissioner Lauriat. MEETING ADJOURNED at 9:03 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Marianne Chaya
Clerk, Conservation Commission