

City of Shelton, Conservation Commission  
Minutes for the Regular Meeting on Wednesday July 1, 2009 at 7:00 P.M.  
Minutes should be considered a draft version until approved by CC at their next meeting.

Call to Order ..... 1  
A. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance..... 2  
B. Approval of Minutes ..... 2  
C. Public Portion ..... 2  
D. Trails Committee Report ..... 2  
    1. National Trails Day ..... 2  
    2. Planned Projects for 2009 ..... 2  
        a. Rec Path – Phase 3a & b ..... 2  
        b. Rec Path – Phase 3c ..... 3  
        c. Connect Blue Dot Trail to Shelton Lakes ..... 3  
        d. Riverview Trail stairs ..... 3  
        e. Gates, Signs, Fences and Landscaping ..... 3  
        f. Work Parties ..... 3  
        g. Other ..... 3  
E. Dog Park Status ..... 3  
F. Review of PZC or IWC Applications for Subdivisions and/or Developments ... 5  
    1. Old Applications/Monitor/Follow-up ..... 5  
        a. PZC #09-09 – 2-lot subdivision on Buddington Road abutting open space properties (OS# 27.10, 27.16 and 27.19) ..... 5  
        b. PZC #07-14 Cranberry Hill Estates, Armstrong Road. Removal of trees on designated open space. Stop Work Order was issued by Planning and Zoning. Applicant directed to submit survey and tree restoration plan. Status. .... 5  
    2. New Applications ..... 6  
G. 279 Soundview Avenue, OS #80.03. Request by BOA to review potential sale of existing house and once acre of a 14-acre parcel currently classified as open space. .... 6  
H. Communications ..... 6  
I. Budget Report/Open Space Trust Account ..... 6  
J. Executive Session ..... 7  
K. Comments by members ..... 7  
L. Adjournment ..... 7

**REVISED**

**Call to Order**

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

Also Present: Teresa Gallagher, Conservation Agent  
Terry Gallagher, Trails Committee member

Marianne Chaya, Clerk

## A. Call to Order/Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Harbinson called the meeting of the Conservation Commission to order at 7:10 p.m. All in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Chairman Harbinson reported that the Commissioners met at 6:15 P.M. at Eklund Native Species Garden at 10 Oak Valley Road to view recent work funded by a grant from Iroquois. See [www.sheltonconservation.org/eklund](http://www.sheltonconservation.org/eklund).

## B. Approval of Minutes

**Vice Chairman Dyer MOVED to approve the minutes from the June 3, 2009 Regular meeting. SECONDED by Commissioner Lauriat. All were in favor, MOTION PASSED.**

## C. Public Portion

None

## D. Trails Committee Report

Vice-Chairman Dyer reported as follows:

The Trails Committee approved minutes from May and June meetings. It was noted there was an article in the Huntington Herald by Jason Perillo talking about the trails and also gave an accolade to Agent Teresa Gallagher. A 14 yr. old Boy Scout came to the meeting looking for an Eagle Scout project. He is proposing to build a kiosk on Lane Street at the beginning of the Rec. Path. In addition to that they will widen out the area and mulch the area (Crabapple to the power lines). Agent Gallagher asked for some of the plants from the re-routed part that she will transfer to Eklund Gardens.

### 1. National Trails Day

Pictures of the events were passed around. We had about 15 people from New York to hike the Paugusset trail plus people from Stratford and Thomaston to do the hikes plus to see the Eklund Native Species Garden. They also had some people who work for Pitney Bowes staying at a local hotel hiking the paths.

### 2. Planned Projects for 2009

#### a. Rec Path – Phase 3a & b

The Mayor should sign the P.O. for Jim Swift now that it is past July 1. Jim can then proceed for the Inland Wetlands permit.

**b. Rec Path – Phase 3c**

The purchase order has been signed for Mucci Construction for the stretch from Lane Street to the Boardwalk. The problem is we do not have any millings. I have met with the Mayor and Ray at H/B and they have agreed that the next time they have millings available it would be diverted to them.

**c. Connect Blue Dot Trail to Shelton Lakes**

The Mayor asked Cyndee Burke to set up a meeting with the Mayflower residents to tell them that the Paugusset trail will go up Mayflower Lane. This will happen within the next couple of weeks and I will encourage all the Commissioners to attend and participate.

**d. Riverview Trail stairs**

We are going to work on the stairs July 11<sup>th</sup>.

**e. Gates, Signs, Fences and Landscaping**

Repairs will be done at the Abbey Wright gate and landscaping on July 25<sup>th</sup>.

**f. Work Parties**

Last month we did two work parties at Oak Valley trail and the Turkey Trot trail, plus work at Lane Street.

**g. Other**

Renovation work was done at the red barn.

Chairman Harbinson acknowledged a visitor to the meeting, who said she was here just to observe. Jodie Mozdzer, a reporter from the Valley Independent Sentinel explained that she is new to the Sentinel and spent some time telling the Commissioners a little bit about what they are all about. They are only online and work off a foundation grant. The website is

[www.valleyindependentsentinel.org](http://www.valleyindependentsentinel.org). To view the website is free.

Chairman Harbinson explained what the Conservation Commission is all about and the names of the Commissioners as well as our Conservation Agent, Teresa Gallagher.

## **E. Dog Park Status**

Vice-Chairman Dyer reported that there are two issues, the dog park and the animal shelter. The Trails Committee members discussed the dog park and the general consensus of the members that the dog park as flagged out next to the red barn is appropriate. We are all 100% against the animal shelter being in the same vicinity because the noise of the animals from the shelter would be

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detrimental of the intent of the dog park, which is socialization of dogs. We are also not in favor of just having the animal shelter at that location due to the close proximity of the Rec Path. Trails Committee member Terry Gallagher expressed the idea that the committee members would rather have the animal shelter built somewhere near downtown.

Chairman Harbinson asked if you were to make a case against having the animal shelter at that location, what would be your points?

Terry Gallagher said the first thing would be the co-action between the bark park and the animal shelter. If they were to propose it somewhere else they would evaluate it as well.

Commissioner Tate asked if we had representation on the animal shelter facility and the answer is no. Vice-Chairman Dyer is the representative for the dog bark park. Chairman Harbinson said that when the animal shelter committee was formed he was asked what properties we have in town. Commissioner Tate commented that this is the logical Commission to give some direction in regards to available properties. I think we should take some time and think of a direction that we could forward to the committee instead of just being negative. Since at the last meeting we pretty much said forget about it. We didn't really give them any options.

They discussed the letter they drafted after the last meeting that has not been sent as of yet.

Commissioner Tate expressed his views of the dog park and Chairman Harbinson said he wanted to see a process followed that the criteria for a dog park be explained and then we could look and see what parcels might fit that. The Commissioners feel that it's already gone beyond that and "that ship has sailed".

Commissioner Tate said that he felt that the animal shelter group probably doesn't have a good enough cross-section representation that understands the open space and its issues and the program requirements behind the dog shelter/park/recreation path, etc. and how they may conflict. Commissioner McCreery pointed out that by state statute this Commission is supposed to be the steward of open space and it boggles his mind that there is a committee out there that has nothing to do with our Commission looking at the open space that we are supposed to supervise to figure out where they can put a dog pound. No one thought to have a representative from our Commission. Commissioner Tate suggested when we address the two issues we keep them separate.

Commissioner McCreery suggested that we tackle this and make the suggestion of where we would recommend the dog pound to go. They need to know the parameters of the facility. They suggested writing a letter and to request having the committee come to a Conservation Commission meeting and bring the parameters of the project.

Commissioner Lauriat suggested the facility off of River Rd. but it was determined it was private property. He also suggested the area under the Route

8 bridge. Chairman Harbinson said there might be a problem because of the state right-of-way.

**Commissioner McCreery MOVED to table sending the letter drafted from the June meeting regarding the dog bark park. SECONDED by Vice-Chairman Dyer. All were in favor; MOTION PASSED.**

**Commissioner McCreery MOVED to invite the dog pound relocation committee to join us at our next monthly meeting to discuss their site selection process and program requirements and possible site the Conservation Commission could recommend to their committee. SECONDED by Commissioner Lauriat. All were in favor; MOTION PASSED.**

A few of the Commissioners gave their commentary on the necessity of a dog park and the propriety of getting this done.

## **F. Review of PZC or IWC Applications for Subdivisions and/or Developments**

### 1. Old Applications/Monitor/Follow-up

- a. PZC #09-09 – 2-lot subdivision on Buddington Road abutting open space properties (OS# 27.10, 27.16 and 27.19)

Agent Gallagher presented the revised plans submitted. It appears that the plans represent the request from the Commission to shift a road to open space.

**Commissioner McCreery MOVED to write a letter to the Planning & Zoning Commission indicating that we have reviewed the proposed subdivision map of Buddington Road and Old Kings Highway prepared for James Blakeman, dated December 18, 2008, revised April 26, 2009, and that the Commission approved the proposed changes shown on page 2 of 3 with the date of December 18, 2008 with relocating the Woods Road onto the City open space. We suggest that the Commission require that the relocation on the north side of the property be mandated as a condition of approval. Posting of the border along the northerly boundary line of the open space and westerly side of the property be required with open space signs provided by the City of Shelton Conservation Commission at distances designated by the Conservation Agent. SECONDED by Vice-Chairman Dyer. All were in favor; MOTION PASSED.**

- b. PZC #07-14 Cranberry Hill Estates, Armstrong Road.  
Removal of trees on designated open space. Stop Work

Order was issued by Planning and Zoning. Applicant directed to submit survey and tree restoration plan. Status.

Chairman Harbinson reported that there would be a tech session regarding the tree removal that occurred on the site within the approved open space dedication of the development.

## 2. New Applications

None

### G. 279 Soundview Avenue, OS #80.03. Request by BOA to review potential sale of existing house and once acre of a 14-acre parcel currently classified as open space.

Chairman Harbinson commented that the city is following the ordinance for the city to dispose of city-owned property requiring the BOA to request comment from the Conservation Commission and the Parks & Recreation Commission. Both Commissions gave their commentary in the negative, that the City should not sell the property. The Parks & Rec Commission members seemed to be concerned about the sale of the property when it had future potential to be a park or ball field plus access to the site.

The Commissioners discussed the article in the CT Post and the comments from Alderman Anglace.

Agent Gallagher reported that she has spent hours trying to get someone from UCONN to come down to evaluate the property for the farm link program.

## H. Communications

- Various newsletters
- Expense voucher for the plant signs for Eklund Gardens

## I. Budget Report/Open Space Trust Account

Agent Gallagher was unable to get the either the budget report or open space trust account status.

Commissioner McCreery asked if Agent Gallagher was able to get info from the neighboring towns as to whether they have an actual open space trust account or a virtual one, as Shelton does. She said she has found a couple that do, but most Commissions don't really know.

Chairman Harbinson explained what the open space trust account is to Jodie Mozdzer (Valley Independent Sentinel).

Tape 1, Side B

## J. Executive Session

None

## K. Comments by members

Vice-Chairman Dyer commented that the Commission is still one member short and Commissioner Lauriat said he wants to retire soon. Vice-Chairman Dyer mentioned that there is one person interested, Sherry, who has been involved in trails and is interested in conservation, and is a farmer. He said he would contact her and suggest she come to the next meeting. The Commissioners suggested having Cyndee fill out the paperwork so that the Mayor could sign it.

## L. Adjournment

**Commissioner Lauriat MOVED to adjourn. SECONDED by Vice-Chairman Dyer. All were in favor, MEETING ADJOURNED at 8:10 P.M.**

Next meeting date is Wednesday, August 5, 2009.

Respectfully submitted,

Marianne Chaya