

# OPEN SPACE COMMITTEE MEETING

## *Minutes*

*Craft Room 2, Community Center*

*Shelton, CT*

*Monday, October 24, 2005*

**Members Present:** Dave Zamba  
Tom Harbinson  
Paul Gabor  
Regis Dognin  
Ralph Rotondo  
Celeste Beattie

**Members Absent:** Harriet Wilber (excused)  
Ed Conklin  
Ken Olin  
Neil Hayes

Dave Zamba, called the regular meeting of the Open Space Committee to order at approximately 7:35 p.m. All in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **REVIEW OF MINUTES**

Tom Harbinson made a motion to accept the minutes of the June 27, 2005 meeting. Regis Dognin seconded the motion. All were in favor, motion passed.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

Dave Zamba reviewed the correspondence prior to the meeting & found it to be too old to act on.

### **BOARD OF ALDERMEN OPEN SPACE AUTHORIZATIONS**

None

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Tom Harbinson reported that there are several transactions including *fee in lieu of on a per-lot basis* not yet posted to the financial statement. Noted for the record is the fact that the Committee has not received the Budgeted Funding Allocation from the Board of Aldermen because Board of Aldermen has chosen not to fund the account. The account balance as of August 2005 is \$177,688.30. **A MOTION to approve the finance statement** was made & seconded. All were in favor; motion passed.

## **SUBDIVISIONS**

### **Brushy Meadow Estates**

The developer paid a *PER LOT FEE IN LIEU OF* in the amount of \$3,600 on September 29<sup>th</sup> 2005.

### **163 Leavenworth Road – Doctor Linden’s Office**

September 27<sup>th</sup> letter from Rick Schultz to Board of Aldermen cc’ing Open Space Committee regarding subdivision of this oversized Lot. This is not a free split. The open space dedication coming from this split is located along the Old Leavenworth road right of way.

### **Greg Savignano Proposed Subdivision – Wall Street**

This subdivision is located by the Timber Bridge by Meadow Street. No further comment from Open Space is required.

### **Robert’s Place – Scott Wasilewski – Wabuda Place**

This CRD application abuts Toll Brothers Subdivision & consists of four new homes plus one existing house. Total Open Space is 2.35 acres, 1.2 of which is wetlands leaving 1.15 acres of qualified open space. The location of this open space is somewhat good in that it is located next to the pentway. The corridor located under CL&P power lines currently being created would have linked Shelton Land Trust property though Mr. Wabuda’s property through Resnick’s property to French’s Hill. However, Resnick’s free split without an open space donation requirement interrupts the “corridor.” The “corridor” wasn’t reviewed holistically during the review of subdivision applications.

Per Regis Dognin, CRD means the City should get more than 10% open space. Dave Zamba added acreage of the lots and determined that the City is getting the appropriate acreage of dry, qualified open space.

Tom Harbinson made a **MOTION** in reference to the Robert’s Place Subdivision that a **letter be sent to Planning & Zoning** regarding Application 05-55 named Robert’s Place remitted to the Open Space Committee on September 28<sup>th</sup> 2005, step 2 of the CRD *to approve the Open Space dedication of 2.35 acres of which qualified acreage is 1.15 acres. The committee expresses disappointment that the open space was not viewed in a holistic manner for all of the developments in this area.* Dave Zamba seconded the motion. All were in favor. Motion passed.

### **Resnick**

The committee reviewed the site map. Tom Harbinson outlined the surrounding subdivisions. This property is entitled to a “Free Split” so long as the property is

deed restricted for use by family members for up to three or five years. The Open Space dedication primarily abuts French's Farm as negotiated by Planning & Zoning.

A "Free Split" is only allowed with properties that have not gone through a subdivision application or been subdivided since the regulations were adopted. Tom Harbinson made a **MOTION to write a letter to the Planning & Zoning Department in regards to "free split" issues.** *"We ask that investigation be looked into identifying remaining properties within the bounds of the City of Shelton that can obtain a free split and avoid a dedication of open space during division of property."* Motion was seconded; all were in favor; motion passed.

Tom Harbinson made a **MOTION to write a letter to the Planning & Zoning Department** regarding the Resnick subdivision being a free split and that investigation occur regarding acquiring a pedestrian or conservation easement to make a corridor primarily under the CL&P right of way connecting the Toll Brothers parcel on Sachem Drive, continuing to open space @ French's Hill to the lower area of the Roberts Place subdivision under the Wasilewski's and continuing on towards the Shelton Land Trust property. Dave Zamba seconded the motion. All were in favor; motion passed.

#### **Woods at Lake Road – P&Z Application 04-46 dated 9/4/04**

Letter to Inland Wetlands – no action required.

#### **Mountain Laurel Ridge, Ronic Enterprises – P&Z Application 05-54**

This subdivision is located off of Independence Drive; the developer is Roger Spinelli. The City of Shelton did not accept part of the open space dedication on Independence Drive because it was at one time a landfill of sorts. Rubber products were dumped there at one time. One lot was/is land-locked. Roger is proposing access through the land-locked lot & using some of it for the legal confirmation of lots and accessing the property from Independence Drive with a shared driveway. The developer approached the Conservation Commission more than a year earlier regarding this project; the developer was informed of the Conservation Commission's concerns regarding some trails in the area that the Commission would like to route through Open Space. The Tom Harbinson made a **MOTION to write a letter to the Planning & Zoning Department** that the committee is in favor of the open space dedication and conservation easements and pedestrian easements for this application and **commend the developer** for location of easements and open space. Regis Dognin seconded the motion. All were in favor; motion passed.

#### **UI Property Proposal – Buddington Road – Added to Agenda**

Regis Dognin made a **MOTION that the UI PROPERTY be added to the agenda** under "New Subdivisions." The motion was seconded; all were in favor, motion passed.

This UI parcel abuts property owned by James Blakeman & Monty Blakeman. James Blakeman owns property along Buddington Road and Monty Blakeman owns one lot on Doe Place. James Swift, engineer for the developer provided Tom Harbinson with a set of drawings for review prior to the presentation to the Board of Aldermen. This proposal was also presented to the WPCA in advance of the presentation.

Tom Harbinson read a letter addressed to John Anglace, President, Board of Aldermen from the Conservation Commission regarding Conceptual Proposal for Development and Open Space Dedication which was submitted for the record.

United Illuminating must follow certain state mandated procedures for disposing of excess property whereby a minimum price is established. The only bid received was from Jim Blakeman in the amount of \$120,001. In the State mandated process the municipality is given the first right of refusal, whereby the City can match the bid price and purchase the parcel. The developer made a proposal to the BOA including a request that the City not exercise its right of first refusal. The proposal is an 11 lot CRD.

Surplus utility properties: While the parcel contains underground infrastructure & associated easement for the Iroquois Gas transmission line and both electrical and gas infrastructure(s) have access via maintenance road that is a distance away from the infrastructure the parcel does not contain any UI transmission lines. Other open space parcels owned by the City contain similar infrastructure with no adverse affect.

The Open Space Committee concurs with the Conservation Commission with regard to timely action by the Board of Aldermen to acquire the subject property. This "significant corridor" provides "real quality open space" and connectivity of open space parcels. This parcel is quiet & serene and offers a consistency in attempting to create a quality open space corridor.

Due to the quality nature of the subject parcel as well as the connectivity issues, Regis Dognin made a **MOTION to write a letter to the Board of Aldermen** to endorsing the Conservation Commission's recommendations in their letter dated October 5<sup>th</sup> 2005 with regard to the City's purchase of the subject parcel by the deadline of November 8<sup>th</sup>. The Open Space committee has the funds in place for this purchase. Tom Harbinson seconded the motion. All were in favor, the motion passed.

## **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Tom Harbinson made a **MOTION** to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing Land Purchase issues. An invitation was extended to the new clerk to remain during executive session. The motion was seconded, all were in favor; motion passed.

Tom Harbinson made a **MOTION** to come out of Executive Session and resume regular session. Regis Dognin seconded the motion. All were in favor; motion passed. No activity or actions took place in executive session.

Regis Dognin inquired about the database mapping system used for Open Space, specifically the disposable Open Space parcels in the Long Hill area, small 1/4 and 1/3-acre parcels. What is meant by disposable? What is the theory? Regis feels it's not a bad thing to have many little pockets of open space if said parcels provide buffers to people in tight neighborhoods. Tom Harbinson randomly selected a parcel on the list and explained that it does not link with any open space property. Tom went on to say that Mary Beth Banks & Harriet Wilber went through the property lists via previous applications & so on to try to comprise a list [of disposable parcels] and then they worked with Jim Tate whose company created AutoCAD mapping. A draft copy was reviewed for changes, mistakes, etc., & the final copy was presented to the Board of Aldermen. The mapping is now two years old so perhaps next year a revision project could be undertaken to provide updated information. This project should work in conjunction with the revision to the Open Space plan in conjunction with the Plan Update Advisory Committee doing the planned conservation development. This revision project would provide an opportunity to review & question the "disposable lot" counts.

### **TRAILS REPORT**

Bridge-to-Bridge guided hikes have been canceled & postponed due to rain.

Tom Harbinson reported regarding Kayaking on the Far Mill River as being one of the best kayaking places in the State. An organized Kayak group kayaks from the Bridgeport Avenue by Blockbuster Video to Masters Restaurant by the transfer station. A tree had toppled over the river blocking the way & the group got together to remove the tree.

Trails Committee is working on maintaining the trails, leaf blowing, tending to blow-downs, etc.

Theresa Gallagher has revamped her website @ [www.borntoexplor.org](http://www.borntoexplor.org). She has incorporated trails maps for every trail system in Shelton including Shelton Lakes, Riverview Park, Pine Rock Park, along Farmill River and for surrounding areas as well, including Webb Mountain Park, Osborndale, Roosevelt Forest in Stratford, Old Mine Park in Trumbull.

### **2006 MEETING SCHEDULE**

A **MOTION** was made to approve the proposed 2006 meeting schedule of the Open Space Committee as outlined below. The motion was seconded. All were in favor; motion passed.

Meetings will be held at 7:30 p.m. at the Shelton Community Center in Craft Room 2 on the forth<sup>1</sup> Monday of each month as follows:

January 23<sup>rd</sup>  
February 27<sup>th</sup>  
March 27<sup>th</sup>  
April 24<sup>th</sup>  
May 22<sup>nd</sup>  
June 26<sup>th</sup>  
July 24<sup>th</sup>  
August 28<sup>th</sup>  
September 25<sup>th</sup>  
October 23<sup>rd</sup>  
December 4<sup>th</sup>

## **ROUND TABLE**

Lori Gibson presented the committee members with proposed Open Space letterhead & requested confirmation of members contact information.

Meeting attendance was discussed. Dave Zamba inquired if Karen McGovern is still part of the Open Space Committee. Tom Harbinson suggested a letter be written to Planning & Zoning to request that they allocate the appropriate Planning & Zoning representative. There was neither motion nor further discussion on this suggestion. Dave Zamba inquired about member Neil Hayes. Tom Harbinson mentioned that Aldermen have not attended open space committee meetings in quite some time.

Celeste reported on literature received from John Cook, Wetlands Coordinator, regarding State Bonding program for Open Space. Dave Zamba confirmed that Charlene Defilippo, Community Development is the grant writer for the City.

Regis reported on Constitution Park. It was a very dry summer and 40 or 50 plants were lost due to lack of irrigation. Regis has gathered some irrigation information & presented it to Stan Kudej & John Anglace who requested that the committee present the information to the Board of Aldermen after the election. Tom Harbinson inquired about draught resistant plants being used in lieu of irrigation. Regis indicated that the extreme lack of water was the cause of the loss. He also indicated that he personally tended to watering areas of the park, particularly the area around the flagpole. LOCIP funds may be available for an irrigation system.

Dave Zamba reported on the Farmer's Market. The grant has been received and soil remediation is proceeding. The project is behind schedule due to weather conditions & it is hoped that the project will be completed in a timely fashion. "Grass blocks" will be installed. The grass blocks allow water to filter in naturally rather than creating additional runoff from impervious surfaces.

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<sup>1</sup> November / December exception(s) noted.

Tom Harbinson reported on the progress of the Plan Update Advisory Committee. Final comments were presented regarding the comprehensive draft plan encompassing everything that's going on in the City. Planimetrics is going to prepare the final draft for publishing. It will be available to the public and on the City's website around Thanksgiving of this year. Some final build-out analysis of fiscal impact must be completed for inclusion in the plan, which will take a couple weeks and which also required coordination with ConnDOT. Press Releases will make public aware of its availability; a public information meeting will be held and is tentatively scheduled for December 5<sup>th</sup> @ the Intermediate School Cafeteria. It was noted that the next Open Space Committee Meeting is scheduled for the same date.

At the public information meeting the public will have an opportunity to make comments concerning the draft. The draft will be revised reflecting said comments. The Plan Update Advisory Committee then will make final recommendation of a plan to the Planning & Zoning Department. Planning & Zoning will have to hold a Public Hearing thereby giving the public the opportunity to comment again. It is up to Planning & Zoning to adopt the document. The final chapter of the document will contain a series of line items that are either tasks or policies; task which must be undertaken.

**NEXT MEETING DATE**

Monday, December 5, 2005

**ADJOURNMENT**

Tom Harbinson MOVED to adjourn. SECONDED by Paul Gabor. All were in favor, MEETING ADJOURNED at 9:25 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori Angelica Gibson  
Clerk, Open Space Committee  
2 tapes are on file in the City/Town Clerk's office