



City of Shelton Conservation Commission

Meeting Minutes for March 2, 2022

This meeting was held virtually. Video recording is posted on the Conservation Commission's YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OX9-ve8XGb4>

Members Present: Tom Harbinson (Chair), Bill Dyer, Jim Tate, Ed McCreery.

Also Present: Teresa Gallagher, Natural Resource Manager

Absent: Tom Wilson, Sheri Dutkanicz

The meeting was called to order at 7:07 pm by Tom Harbinson.

Meeting Minutes: **Bill Dyer made a motion to approve the minutes for February 2, 2022. Seconded by Jim Tate. All were in favor.**

Natural Resource Manager Report (Teresa Gallagher):

- 1. French's Hill.** Teresa Gallagher did some selective clearing at the entrance, cutting multi-flora rose and other invasives while leaving desirable tree saplings. A very large old sugar maple at the street was recently cut, which will release the previously shaded saplings. In doing so, a view of the small farm pond was cleared out, which turns out to be of concrete construction, about 90 feet long. It's not known why the pond was built. She also finished blazing all parts of the new hiking trail except for one section where the final route has not been determined.
- 2. Nicholdale Farm:** An article about the history of the land purchase and how that relates to the Iroquois Gas Pipeline was published on the Trails Committee blog. Once on the blog, the info stays "in the clouds" so it remains part of available history.
- 3. Capewell Park & Canfield Drive.** A complaint was received about recent ATV activity and trail clearing behind the soccer fields involving both Capewell Park property and the abutting open space property (OS7.01, 7.02). Teresa Gallagher gps'd and mapped an active ATV trail leading to a nearby home, along with a freshly cut walking path and about a dozen sheets of particle board. She sent a letter to the homeowner and spoke with Ron Herrick (Parks & Rec) and copied Inland Wetlands and the Police Chief. Ron Herrick plans to have staff clean up the mess.

4. **Litter Committee.** The Committee recently held its first meeting since early 2020 and is now working on a “Top Ten” list of locations in Shelton with the worst litter problem. Jim Tate suggested Isinglass Road. The 2022 Clean Sweep patches have been received.
5. **Gardens:** Registration at the community gardens is underway. The slope above the new trails barn is in need of plantings for stabilization/beautification, and Allison Menendez has offered to come up with a planting plan and purchase a variety of ferns and ground cover. She asked for a budget for plants and the Trails Committee recommended \$350. **Jim Tate made a motion to approve up to \$350 for plantings at the trails barn. Seconded by Ed McCreery. All were in favor.**

Trails Committee Report: Bill Dyer summarized the Trails Committee meeting held prior to the Conservation Commission meeting. For details of that meeting, read the Trails Committee meeting minutes.

Shelton Canal & Locks: Ed McCreery reported that SEDC had been inspired by a story map about the Kinneytown Dam and had been thinking of hiring the Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments (NVCOG) to prepare something similar for the canal. NVCOG said they would do it for free, and materials were forwarded to them for the project, but there’s been no follow-up. Most of the engineering proposals that had been submitted included impressive promotional materials about the canal, including drone flyovers, and perhaps one of those could be used.

Open Space Purchase - 25 acres on Old Mill Road for \$1.2 million: Tom Harbinson noted that the Board of Alderman have approved this purchase. There was no stated purpose for the purchase, so it could be for open space or for some other municipal purpose. There did not appear to have been an 8-24 referral to the Planning and Zoning Commission, nor was the Conservation Commission apprised of the purchase. This is the Well’s “Bare Planes” Christmas Tree Farm. It has linkage with the Klapik open space to the east via private open space at the end of Controls Drive, and undeveloped private land to the south that leads to the Far Mill River, providing a wildlife corridor. It does not directly abut the Klapik property, however, so there is no opportunity for a public trail that would connect the two, and it’s next to noisy Route 8.

Open Space Trust Account (OSTA): Tom Harbinson said he received a summary printout of the OSTA budget and performed a screen share of the spreadsheet. The account has a negative balance. He said he will be looking for more information about the account.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:59 pm

Meeting minutes were prepared by Teresa Gallagher and should be considered in draft form until adopted at the next meeting.