



City of Shelton Trails Committee

Meeting Minutes for March 8, 2023

Held at the Trails Barn, 316 Nells Rock Road (Dog Park)

Present: Bill Dyer, Terry Gallagher, Mark Vollaro, Val Gosset

Absent: Bob Wood, Ellen Cramp, Mike Flament.

Also present: Teresa Gallagher, Natural Resource Manager; Luis Isaza

The meeting was called to order by Bill Dyer at 5:19 pm.

Meeting Minutes: Terry Gallagher made a motion to approve the February 1, 2023 meeting minutes. Seconded by Val Gosset. All were in favor.



Kids helped collect firewood during the annual Marshmallow March.

Recent Trail Activities: Winter weather remained exceptionally warm, allowing trail work to continue.

- The annual Marshmallow March was held at Nicholdale Farm after being rescheduled due to wet weather, with a few dozen participants, including 12 children and four dogs. Marshmallows were toasted at the fire pit (17.5 hrs).
- Two work parties were held to clear brush along the Rec Path from Pine Lake to the school campus area (46.5 hrs).

- Mark Vollaro, with help from Ellen Cramp and Val Gosset, improved a stone wall crossing to allow access for the Gator and DR to the Paugussett Trail north of Constitution Blvd (22 hrs - Paugussett South)
- Mark Vollaro cleared blowdowns from the Rec Path (3 hrs)
- Terry Gallagher worked on bridge footings for the Oak Valley Trail “Sheep Pen Crossing” (6 hrs)
- Mark Vollaro worked on Gator maintenance and researched tire replacement options (18.5 hrs)
- Val Gosset and Ellen Cramp reviewed new trail routes flagged at Housatonic Woods. (3 hrs)
- Mark Vollaro, with help from Luis Isaza, cleared blowdowns from Housatonic Woods, including the new Woodsend Trail and the Paugussett Trail (16.5 hrs, including 3 hrs Paugussett South)
- Terry Gallagher worked on blog posts and ordered hardware (4 hrs)
- Val Gosset handled communications (1.5 hrs)
- Mark Vollaro cut a blowdown at Indian Well (3 hrs Paugussett North)
- Mark Vollaro cut brush and logs from the sides of the Rec Path in the school campus area and dropped off chains to be sharpened (5 hrs)
- Teresa Gallagher scouted the Paugussett Trail and Tahmore Trail at Indian Well, cleared tree debris, and checked the trail cam for photos of dirt bikes that damaged the trail (2 hrs Paugussett North).
- Staff flagged and began clearing the new Woodsend Trail at Housatonic Woods, created a trail map for the park (attached) and a blog post to be used as a basis for a future Shelton Life article.
- **TOTAL VOLUNTEER HOURS: 148.5 hrs (including 25 hrs Paugussett Trail South and 5 hrs Paugussett Trail North).**

Gator Maintenance: The Trails Gator is about 20 years old. Mark Vollaro reported on his recent maintenance efforts; he is waiting for a carburetor part on order. The six tires are the original tires. The front tires might still be OK, but the rear four tires need to be replaced. Mark Vollaro has spent much time researching options. Committee members discussed the pros and cons of tire types and how the wrong type can disturb the Rec Path surface.

Eversource Pootatuck Rebuild Project: Work on this project has begun. There are crews in various locations throughout the City working on access roads and pads. Teresa Gallagher placed laminated signs throughout the Shelton Lakes Greenway alerting trail users of the pending construction. She voiced concern that Eversource might be too liberal with “trail closed” signage. If people find that “closed” sections of trail are safe and passable, they will ignore all the signs and potentially wander into hazardous sites. Mark Vollaro noted that he may not be able to drive the Gator & DR to the Rec Path off of Lane Street during construction at Great Ledge.

Housatonic Woods: Teresa Gallagher worked on flagging and clearing the new mile-long trail through a difficult area near Sinsabaugh Heights, where the scrappy terrain is covered in thorny Japanese Barberry. See attached map. She also raked and blew leaves off of most of the flagged trail route, except for the section near Woodsend Avenue,

improved water crossings, and began digging in some sections where there is a cross slope. Mark Vollaro cut a few dozen logs that were across the new route. The short new Connector Trail was completed and blazed. Teresa Gallagher said she left clearing of the north end of the trail for the Trails Committee work parties since it was more straightforward for the volunteers. The Committee asked her to finish flagging the route to the Woodsend parking area before the next work party and remove leaves from the treadway to better define where the trails should be.

Potential Work Parties:

March 18, 9:00 am: Woodsend Trail. Meet at Woodsend Ave. trailhead

March 25, 9:00 am: Woodsend Trail.

Guided Hikes:

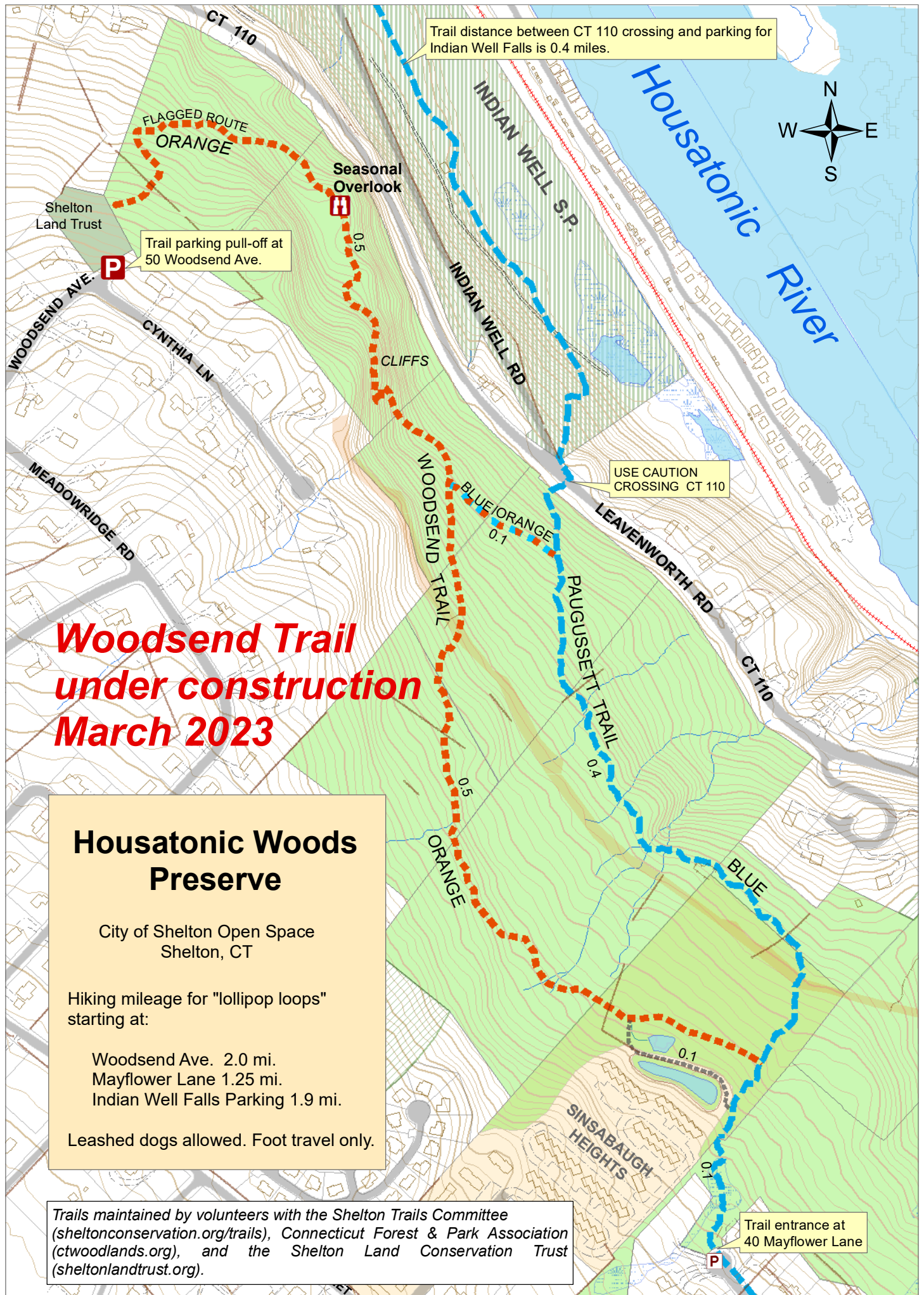
Trails Day Hike: Saturday June 3, 10:30 am: Housatonic Woods Hike. Meet at Woodsend Ave. Raindate Sunday, June 4, 1:00 pm.

Equipment and Expenses:

- Mark Vollaro submitted expenses of \$288.19 for Gator maintenance supplies and snacks for the Marshmallow March.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:32 pm.

Minutes were prepared by Teresa Gallagher and should be considered a draft until approved by the Trails Committee.



Trail distance between CT 110 crossing and parking for Indian Well Falls is 0.4 miles.

Trail parking pull-off at 50 Woodsend Ave.

USE CAUTION CROSSING CT 110

Trail entrance at 40 Mayflower Lane

**Woodsend Trail
under construction
March 2023**

Housatonic Woods Preserve

City of Shelton Open Space
Shelton, CT

Hiking mileage for "lollipop loops" starting at:

- Woodsend Ave. 2.0 mi.
- Mayflower Lane 1.25 mi.
- Indian Well Falls Parking 1.9 mi.

Leashed dogs allowed. Foot travel only.

Trails maintained by volunteers with the Shelton Trails Committee (sheltonconservation.org/trails), Connecticut Forest & Park Association (ctwoodlands.org), and the Shelton Land Conservation Trust (sheltonlandtrust.org).