



N OF HAMDEN

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Minutes: The Farmington Canal Commission, Town of Hamden held a Regular Meeting on Thursday, November 5, 2009 at 7:30 p.m. in the third floor Conference Room, Hamden Government Center.

Commissioners in Attendance: Barbara Gigliotti, Bill Horowitz, Steve Humes, Malachi Blandon, Mike Johnson, David Schaefer

Others in Attendance: Bill Davies, FCRTTA
Elissa Luppi, HMS Teacher
Nicole Serutin, HMS Student
Dan Kops, Assistant Town Planner
Gerry Tobin, Commission Clerk

1. Review Minutes of September 9, 2009

**Page 2, 6th line, 1st full paragraph, change Hayden's to Hamden's
Ms. Gigliotti made a motion to approve the minutes of September 9th as corrected. Mr. Horowitz seconded the motion. The vote was five in favor, Mr. Humes abstained.**

Ms. Luppi contacted Mr. Schaefer a year ago, and again a couple of weeks ago, and they met on a recent Sunday morning. Ms. Luppi has been talking to the students about Hamden and local government, and found that few students know about Brooksvale park and the trail. Since the Middle School back yard connects to the trail, she would like to see a path from the school to the trail. She would like to have a mini-commission after school hours to become a steering committee to get other kids interested in the path. Mr. Schaefer said when we were doing Phase II B there was a lot of planning and discussion of the flood plain and the brook on the property that goes into a large pipe and dumps out near Breugers. Mr. Kops said it is complicated. There is a group that is trying to come up with a design, and they have been working with Elliot Fuller in the Engineering Department. This group will have to work with the new Town Center Park Commission, the Inland Wetlands Commission and the Legislative Council. Mr. Schaefer said an area to the right of the tennis courts is contiguous with Breugers. They could do a switchback up the hill, creating a trail without crossing the brook, and coming out a little to the north of

Breugers. There is a split rail fence along that area. There is also a path that cuts down to Dixwell Avenue. The sidewalk is narrow and there is no fence between the sidewalk and Dixwell Avenue. This is a project with no cost involved. The students would make their drawing and come to us for approval. Casey Anton, a Boy Scout, did a nature trail at no cost to the Town.

Mr. Humes said there is a trail on the left side of the soccer courts. Mr. Schaefer said that area would require a brook crossing. We are not approving anything now, but if the students really want to do the project, they should probably stake it so Commissioners could look at the area. Ms. Luppi mentioned that she has an email from Scott Howland of the Clean & Green Commission about a cleanup on the trail on the November 14th.

Mr. Schaefer said he, Bill Davies and Dan Kops attended the dedication of the northern section of New Haven's trail, which was designed by Milone & MacBroom and joining the Hamden and New Haven sections of the trail. Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro, Rails to Trails people and many people who have had to do with the project along the way were in attendance. They all praised Hamden for what it has done. New Haven is proceeding with the design to continue the trail from Prospect Street, under Temple Street, coming out through the Grove Street Garage, and from there on the surface probably to Long Wharf. New Haven has quite a different situation than Hamden in that they do not have a Commission. The planning for the trail is done by staff.

Mr. Blandon remarked that New Haven has a yellow line down the center of their trail, and he thinks that is a good idea.

Mr. Humes said he goes through the construction area at Westwoods Road every day. The demolition is done and they are using Tonino's lot as a staging/parking area. They are removing parts of the hillside. Dan Kops said this is a two year project.

Mr. Schaefer mentioned that there is land that used to be Westwoods Road, that is no longer the road, and wondered what is being done with that extra land. Mr. Kops said Lee Davis had had discussions with Woody Hoyt about the trail going through Talbot's parking lot perhaps as a raised trail. There was a question about sewer lines running under that land. Mr. Blandon asked if there was ever any mention of a commuter parking lot on Tonino's property. Neither Mr. Kops nor Mr. Schaefer has heard that.

2. Phase I Update (Mt. Sanford Road to Todd Street)

3. Phase IIA Update (Todd Street to Hamden Hills Drive)

Mr. Humes asked about the crossing of Sherman Avenue on the surface mentioned at the last meeting. The Kenwood people would like a safe way to cross Sherman at the location of the cul de sac. Mr. Schaefer mentioned the time when the railroad went out of business and the properties were sold to various parties. A developer purchased the property on the historic trail route and built homes there (Kenwood Avenue). Ms. Luppi remembers when Woody Hoyt took down the bridge on Westwoods Road.

Mr. Schaefer rode the trail and saw graffiti, and also got calls about graffiti on the west side of the trail near Putnam near where the Arts community is being built. Parks & Recreation has taken care of that. Frank Cooper called him and told him that a volunteer group has painted over graffiti near Hamden Hills Drive. The Commission appreciates the efforts of Parks & Recreation and the volunteers.

4. Phase IIB Update (Hamden Hills Drive to Connolly Parkway)

Mr. Kops said Milone & MacBroom is currently working to make the design changes requested by DOT, which will probably take until the end of November. They are working on the survey work and easement map to negotiate with the property owners to make sure that everything is covered. Mr. Kops went to the Council a couple of times to get an increase of \$2,000 to do the survey work. The Council wants cameras at both ends of the tunnel, so at some point it will have to be explained to the Council. The shopping center developer of the LFE property is out of business so they never paid the \$100,000 for design work they had agreed upon. The negotiations are now with the Stop & Shop property owners. They wanted the Town to pay for their legal fees. Mr. Schaefer offered to draft the easement pro bono and give it to Town Attorney Sue Gruen to review. We have security issues to deal with, and Tom Balskus is working with someone who is working on the new police station to match up the technology. New Haven is doing its tunnels and Mr. Schaefer was told the biggest problem with tunnels is not lights or cameras, but odors. They will be locking their tunnels at night.

Mr. Schaefer said someone asked if there is any type of coating to put on the inside of the tunnel to enable graffiti to be washed off, and there is something available. Mr. Horowitz asked about doors that would close automatically.

Mr. Schaefer mentioned that regarding the Stop & Shop, the deal was that if a stop light is put at the Stop & Shop entrance on Skiff Street, the trail crossing light would have to be removed, but since there is no development, the trail crossing light stays. Mr. Horowitz asked about the existing trail going up to Skiff Street, and Mr. Schaefer said at this point, we are removing the stairs, but not the trail.

Mr. Schaefer said we did get funds from the owners of the former Lencrete Property. Their project had not gone forward when we started our project. They paid the town \$150,000 to build the trail. This money went into the project. Mr. Cuomo also paid us for the diversion, the cost of which was less than we estimated, so some of his money was returned to him. Mr. Cuomo would like to be recognized for the money he contributed and the easement, by naming the section of the trail around his property after him. Mr. Kops said Mr. D'Atri agreed that it would be okay with him.

5. Phase III Update (Connolly Parkway to New Haven Line)

No remaining issues with respect to Phase III.

6. Old Business

New Memorial Bench Request

Mr. Kops will write a letter to Mr. Novak, who requested a granite bench in memory of his wife.

Mr. Blandon brought up a possible bench in memory of Campbell Stubbs, to be placed between Westwoods Road and Todd Street. Mr. Schaefer said we made a resolution at the last meeting to recommend the use of metal benches instead of granite, and that benches must be spaced a minimum of 500' apart.

Ms. Gigliotti, Ms. Becker and Mr. Johnson walked the trail, made note of existing benches and potential locations for five or six new benches. Mr. Horowitz will work with the bench committee to come up with a map with links.

Mr. Schaefer asked for a motion to forward the bench committee's suggestions to Parks and Recreation and the Mayor for implementation. There are 18 locations that the Commission feels would be desirable for benches, and we encourage the Mayor, and the Legislative Council if they approve the benches they refer to the locations and the preferred metal bench that the Commission recommends. Mr. Humes so moved, Ms. Gigliotti seconded, and the vote was unanimous in favor.

There was discussion on the maintenance account. Parks & Recreation is of the opinion that they have will not need maintenance funds for the metal benches. Mr. Horowitz asked if there is something besides a bench that people can donate. Mr. Schaefer said that trees of appropriate variety, size and shape could be allowed. There was discussion on a drinking fountain that was offered in the past being built near the Lock Keeper's House.

Ms. Gigliotti said at the Sherman Avenue parking lot there was a small sign directing people to the area for rest and prayer that someone built alongside the trail. She and Ms. Becker removed the sign.

Ms. Gigliotti said mileage markers need to be repainted in the spring (or earlier if the weather allows).

7. New Business

Frank Cooper, Assistant Director of Parks & Recreation submitted the Farmington Canal Commission to the Connecticut Recreation and Parks Association for its Selected Organization Award. The Commission won, and the award will be presented on November 24th at the Mohegan Sun.

Mr. Kops mentioned that Frank Cooper came to see him about placing no littering signs along the trail on metal posts. Mr. Humes asked why the signs can't be placed on the existing fences and/or overhead signs. There was discussion, and some members would prefer signs only in the parking lots.

8. Adjournment

Mr. Humes made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Johnson seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Submitted by: _____
Gerry Tobin, Clerk of the Commission