



Scott D. Jackson
Mayor

TOWN OF HAMDEN

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Hamden Government Center
2750 Dixwell Ave
Hamden, CT 06518
Tel: (203) 287-7100
Fax: (203) 287-7101

FARMINGTON CANAL COMMISSION

MINUTES: The Farmington Canal Commission, Town of Hamden held a Regular Meeting on Tuesday, April 3, 2012 in the third floor conference room, Hamden Government Center. The following issues were discussed:

Commissioners in Attendance: David Schaefer, Richard Weiner, Kathy Larson, Bill Horowitz, Michael Dunlap

Commissioners Absent/Excused: Johanna Becker, Barbara, Gigliotti, Malachi Blandon, Mike Johnson

Guest: Clifford Pollack

1. Introduction & Welcome New Members

Mr. Schaefer welcomed new Commissioners and guest. Michael Dunlap rides daily from Treadwell Street to his job at Science Park. Mr. Weiner and his wife ride often from Temple Street in New Haven to Cheshire. Mr. Pollack is the caretaker for the "area for rest and prayer," which is in his back yard, and has always wanted to get involved with the Commission.

2. Review Minutes of February 2, 2012

Ms. Larson made a motion to approve the minutes of February 2nd. Mr. Horowitz seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

The date for the next meeting was changed to Wednesday, May 9th.

Mr. Schaefer gave a history of the trail and the different phases and how the extra funds from the construction were used to build the underpass on Skiff Street. Long range planning and maintenance of the trail, and getting the support and resources to be able to do it, will be the focus of the Commission going forward. The first section is going on 20 years old. What has to be done with the bridges and signs, etc. and are there any additions that are worthy of pursuit. One is Mather to Treadwell – the water company said we can run an unpaved trail through their property, which is on a hill overlooking the lakes, etc. Some people would like to see a connection to SCSU. Another is a possible connection to East Rock Park. Mr. Horowitz said

there are some accessibility issues in getting to the trail, one of which is at Mather Street. Mr. Schaefer also mentioned the Olin Seven Lakes Park, a former munitions storage area. Bill Horowitz mentioned the Winchester testing facility on Leeder Hill Drive.

Mr. Kops reported that the Town has not been paid for work completed on the trail for several months nor has it received approvals on some of the changes that have been submitted. Water leakage into the underpass is still an issue and Milone & MacBroom is still working on it. Water is getting in between at the cement joints on the portions that are not under the road. This is a design issue, not a construction issue. Milone & MacBroom will continue to work on this problem.

There was discussion on the bill before the state legislature that would reduce the immunity of municipalities granted by state statute if someone is injured on town property. There are laws as to when the town is liable if you are on a sidewalk or a road.

Mr. Schaefer asked Mr. Kops if he knew anything about efforts to replace the stone dust along the trail. Mr. Schaefer presented background on the stone dust which is missing in a lot of places, and which sometimes causes the edges of the paved areas to break down. The estimate to restore the stone dust is \$10,000- \$20,000. There has been some discussion of raising private money and Rails to Trails has agreed to be the conduit. Council would have to accept the contribution. Mr. Schaefer is willing to work with Rails to Trails to accommodate this.

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

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

Mr. Schaefer said this portion of the trail includes the West Woods Road intersection. The signs and striping are done. The DOT is responsible for the signs. Once the project is done, the Town will be responsible, and the project will probably be finished within the next nine months. The Town will own the area where the road used to be. Mr. Kops said this is very complicated. Part of that property was deeded to the Town with an easement to the Town and will revert back to Mr. Hoyt once the state is finished. Another part will belong to the Town. There were discussions about creating parking spaces, etc. Mr. Schaefer said former Town Engineer Lee Davies had a dream that Mr. Hoyt would let the trail go through the shopping center and not down West Woods and along Whitney Avenue. Mr. Hoyt would get some additional parking spaces. People's bank is in favor. Mr. Weiner wondered about a connection to Sleeping Giant. Mr. Dunlap said Sleeping Giant does not allow bicycles in the park. Mr. Schaefer explained previous discussions on a pedestrian bridge across Whitney Avenue, prior to the hill being cut down to relocate the stores from the corner of the original West Woods Road. Mr. Kops said regarding the drainage issue at Sherman Avenue, LoCIP funds have not been approved to date.

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

Mr. Dunlap reported that behind Stop & Shop, tree roots are a problem. They have buckled the trail, and those parts seem to be crumbling. Mr. Schaefer said this is a normal part of the maintenance. Barbara Gigliotti has met with Parks & Recreation regarding trail maintenance. Mr. Weiner mentioned that the cleanup has been good.

There was discussion on development and abandoned buildings along the trail. Mr. Horowitz mentioned the problem of access to the trail at Mather Street. Mr. Schaefer said this would require a right of way over private property. That property hasn't been developed to date.

Mr. Schaefer reported that the cameras and push buttons in the underpass are recording but the brains are in a building in the Government Center parking lot until the Police Department moves in to its new quarters. Mr. Kops will report on the status next month.

There was discussion on trash accumulating on the trail. There was discussion on an adopt a mile program, which would require some research.

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

Safety along the trail was discussed. The police keep their eye on it. There have been a couple of incidents on the New Haven side.

The New Haven section is open from the skating rink to Hillhouse Avenue.

7. Old Business

8. New Business

Commissioners were asked to email information regarding the areas of fencing and other items that need repair and Mr. Kops will pass the information along to Public Works. Mr. Horowitz checked the crossing at the artist housing and found that the sight line is bad. The fence has not been removed on the left, and on the right the dumpster blocks the view. Mr. Dunlap said he has seen school buses picking kids up there. Mr. Schaefer reminded everyone that trail users have the right to use the parking lot across the street from the housing parking lot.

A question was asked about the building that is partly in Hamden and partly in New Haven that has tax liens on it. Mr. Kops believes they have an application to turn it into an office building. Mr. Weiner asked about the lock keeper's house. Mr. Schaefer said the State Historical Society owns it and has spent a lot of money on it. So far, nothing has worked out. Al Gorman has the key. There are historical pictures on the walls and a water fountain outside.

There was discussion on informational signage possibilities.

Mr. Dunlap made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Weiner seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Submitted by: _____
Gerry Tobin, Clerk of the Commission