



*Scott D. Jackson*  
Mayor

# TOWN OF HAMDEN

## OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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## FARMINGTON CANAL COMMISSION

**Minutes: The Farmington Canal Commission, Town of Hamden held an informal Meeting at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 5, 2013 in the third floor conference room, Hamden Government Center. A quorum was not available.**

Commissioners in Attendance: David Schaefer, Robert Weiner, Michael Dunlap

Commissioners Excused: Kathy Larson, Bill Horowitz, Johanna Becker, Malachi Blandon, Barbara Gigliotti Mike Johnson

Others in Attendance: Assistant Town Planner Dan Kops, Commission Clerk Gerry Tobin

Guest: Aaron Goode -Friends of the New Haven Farmington Canal Greenway

An informal session was held due to the lack of a quorum.

Mr. Schaefer invited Mr. Goode to speak. Mr. Goode said he founded Friends of the New Haven Farmington Canal Greenway (FNHF CG) within the past year because he felt a volunteer group was needed to deal specifically with problems on the New Haven section of the trail. They have been working closely with the Farmington Canal Rails to Trails Association. The FNHF CG wants to focus on issues facing the trail, such as meetings with local police to discuss issues on the trail. They met with the New Haven and Hamden police. Yale Police did not participate. They do a nice job of patrolling the trail up to Division Street. From there to the Hamden town line, it is a no mans land. Recently a bike cop has been riding the trail in that area, mostly in the afternoon, from spring to fall. Mr. Dunlap said he works at Science Park and rides the trail every day to and from work and has only seen the bike patrol once, maybe last year.

The New Haven section has been plowed, at least to Division Street. The group used See Click Fix and urged the City to plow the trail. Mr. Schaefer said in Hamden we plow part and leave part unplowed. Mr. Dunlap said Treadwell to Putnam just got plowed, but the trail did not get plowed below that. Mr. Dunlap said it is now wet and icy. Businesses seem to dump the snow over onto the trail. The meeting with Hamden was good. A number of the crimes occurred right at the Hamden/New Haven town line. He recommends that the three police departments meet on a regular basis. A New Haven group Urban Relations Initiative (URI) did a program with the FNHFCCG last summer to do plantings along the trail. This year they are working on getting Youth At Work kids to come out to maintain the trail. They expended resources last summer and will probably do it again this summer on the stone dust path.

Mr. Schaefer said our trail has stone dust along the whole length, and we have had to replace the stone dust, which is a significant task. If you don't maintain it, the paved path starts to break away. Mr. Schaefer started a foundation last year to raise funds to purchase the stone dust. Mr. Goode said URI gave their group the stone dust. Mr. Schaefer said Public Works has been very cooperative. They do canopy and grass cutting, stone dust, fencing, etc. They are responsive when we bring issues to them. We email issues to Mr. Kops and he forwards them to Public Works. Phase I of Hamden's trail was started in 1994, so it is almost 19 years in existence.

Mr. Schaefer said we looked at the incidents report for New Haven and there were maybe five items. It is a concern, but given the volume of use, it was not as pervasive as we thought it would be based on the news reports. Mr. Goode said if you go on line and look at these bike trails, they would say don't go into New Haven, it is like the wild west, Mr. Schaefer said also said there have been racist comments. We need to nip it in the bud. Users drive away the abusers.

Mr. Goode said some of the people in the neighborhoods seem to have a negative attitude about the trail. Mr. Schaefer said the political and activist people in southern Hamden were very receptive to the trail. Mr. Schaefer was surprised to learn when he spoke at Hamden High School, that many students were not aware of the trail.

Mr. Dunlap said that a woman at a business near Treadwell Street said that the gangs have easy access because of the trail. Mr. Goode mentioned that his group has contacted the dozen churches near the trail asking for eyes along the trail.

There was mention of a program for at risk youth after school at the Center for Arts and Technology. Mr. Good mentioned that he is on the board of Elm City Cycling.

Mr. Kops said he attended a meeting with Habitat for Humanity and they will be holding an event on the trail in July or August where people will be going from the Hamden Middle School to Connolly Parkway and back. There was discussion regarding an application and rules for events on the trail. Mr. Kops is working with Ms. Coleman of Arts Recreation and Culture on developing this. The State has finally agreed to pay for the painting of the tunnel, but still objecting to some smaller items. There have been no reimbursements to the Town recently.

1. Adjournment

**The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.**

Submitted by: Gerry Tobin, Clerk of the Commission