

## FARMINGTON CANAL COMMISSION

**Informal Notes:** The Farmington Canal Commission, Town of Hamden did not have a quorum for its Special Meeting on Monday, December 14, 2009 at 7:30 p.m. in the third floor Conference Room, Hamden Government Center. An informal session was held.

Commissioners in Attendance: David Schaefer, Bill Horowitz, Barbara Gigliotti, Peter Haller

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

1. Review Minutes of Thursday, November 5, 2009  
**Tabled to the January meeting.**
2. Phase I Update (Mt. Sanford Road to Todd Street)

Mr. Haller said he was glad to hear about the archaeological grant for the lock near the gatekeeper's house. They are planning to look at the condition and the archaeological value. Mr. Schaefer said he got unanimous support from commissioners and presented a letter stating the commission's support to Ken Minkema of the Historical Society.

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

Monitoring wells are proposed on Town property near the Mobil Station on Whitney Avenue just south of Mt. Carmel Avenue. Mr. Schaefer said he worked with the company making application to Planning & Zoning, so he will not participate in the vote. The request is for approval of the license agreement to install monitoring wells 10' off the trail. They have removed 1900 tons of contaminated soil from the site. The monitoring wells will be there for 10 years. Mr. Schaefer said we should ask that the wells be flush mounted so no one will run into them and get hurt. Mr. Kops will convey the commission's desire regarding the flush mount of the wells to the Planning and Zoning Commission. Ms. Gigliotti said there is nothing emitted from these wells. All wells are supposed to be formally abandoned at some point, but she has never seen any follow up.

Mr. Haller asked about the timetable is for the Westwoods Road project. Mr. Kops said it is a two year project. Mr. Schaefer asked Mr. Kops if the sewer line is being removed. Mr. Kops said part of it has been replaced already, and he is pretty sure there will be a new sewer line in the road. Mr. Kops will check. Mr. Schaefer asked Mr. Kops if he has ever had any conversation with Lee Davies about his conversations with Mr. Hoyt. Mr. Kops had not.

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

Mr. Schaefer said Frank Cooper told him that volunteers painted over graffiti under the Town Walk Bridge.

Mr. Schaefer mentioned that he, Ms. Gigliotti and Ms. Tobin attended the award breakfast of the Connecticut Recreation and Parks Association where the Commission was presented with an award. CRPA is a professional organization of parks and recreation employees throughout the state of Connecticut. Frank Cooper submitted the Farmington Canal Commission for this award.

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

Mr. Haller reported that snow plows are plowing snow up onto fence at Home Depot. The fence was broken last year, and perhaps they should have some alternatives for where the snow gets piled. Mr. Kops will have someone talk to Home Depot.

### 6. Old Business

#### Status of Tunnel Project

Mr. Schaefer said it took a few months to get Council approval, doing surveys and mapping of this new section, but the easement with the owners of the Stop & Shop parcel is stalled. The easement said here is a line and you are going to put your trail near this line, and when you are done we want an as built drawing on the land records so everyone will know what has been done. Mr. Kops talked to Milone & MacBroom and discovered that it would take another \$3,000 to do a survey. Mr. Kops had just been to Council with an amendment to a contract with Milone & MacBroom and didn't want to ask for another one. Mr. Kops asked the Town's Engineering Department to help, and they did the job today, so we should have the survey soon.

Mr. Kops reported that Tom Balskus said we should ask for the land between where the trail goes to the street and where it goes to the tunnel, but Mr. Schaefer feels we should take the minimum amount of land. The easement is 14' from the boundary of the paved surface. Any maintenance we would do on the grass would be trespassing. Mr. Schaefer said we are going to ask for more width in this section. We should have the map by the end of the month. There was discussion on the method of building the tunnel. Skiff Street could be closed for a week and the job could be completed in that time, or one lane of Skiff Street could be closed at a time, and the project would take about a month. It would cost about ¼ million less to close the road for a week.

Steps remaining per Mr. Kops:

We are waiting for a decision from the Mayor's Office as to whether Skiff Street should be closed for a week, or if one lane at a time should be closed for a month. Milone & MacBroom would prefer a one-week closing, which would be less costly. If they revise the plan to have one lane open there would be more work to be done and it would have to go back to the state for additional review. That would be followed by a public hearing, then Planning & Zoning, and then it would go to the DOT for review. Mr. Kops thinks if we close Skiff Street it should be in August, which is the slowest as far as traffic is concerned. Mr. Schaefer said we would have to go out to bid in May in order to be ready for August construction. This month we need the Mayor's decision and to press Tom Balskus to get his work done.

#### 7. New Business

##### New Memorial Bench Request – Greenberg

Mr. Cooper is working with Mr. Greenberg on a location for a bench in memory of his son, probably south of Todd Street. Mr. Greenberg is discussing the cost of the metal bench with the supplier.

##### Approval of 2010 Meeting Schedule

Tabled to January meeting.

Mr. Schaefer will not be around for February 2 and March 2 meetings. It was decided that the February and March meetings would be held on the Wednesdays, the 10<sup>th</sup>.

##### Monitoring Wells MHA Project

The Mutual Housing Application is finally going forward. They have requested a temporary and permanent easement to cross the trail, and in return, we will have access to a parking lot being built on Columbus Avenue, which will be for overflow parking for MHA and for trail users. MHA does not have enough parking on site, This was discussed at a number of meetings, and the commission accepted a trade off allowing permanent egress out of the property, not into it, and there would be some bollards and warnings that there will be traffic crossing the trail. Cars will have to yield the right of way.

##### Plowing

There was discussion on whether or not the trail will be plowed this winter. Parks and Recreation will not be plowing the trail.

Mr. Gigliotti is going to meet with Frank Rizzuti to see if we can do something collectively about trail maintenance. We have to advocate for Parks & Recreation to help them get the funds they need to keep up the trail. The Town has spent over \$10m on this valuable recreational asset. There was discussion on a root problem north of the Sanford Street crossing.

Mr. Haller said the stone dust is a major problem. We need to find out how much it would cost to replace  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the trail's stone dust every year. He asked if Public Works purchased the equipment that drops a particular width of stone dust to be dropped. Stone dust is trail specific. Mowing, cutting back canopies, etc., is also required. Ms. Gigliotti will put together a maintenance plan that will include repainting the mile markers, replacing the stone dust, root repair, and bollard painting. There will also be repaving down the road. This commission will advocate to the mayor for proper funding for upkeep of the trail.

8. Adjournment

**The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.**

Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Gerry Tobin, Clerk of the Commission