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Mayor

TOWN OF HAMDEN

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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FARMINGTON CANAL COMMISSION

Minutes: The Farmington Canal Commission, Town of Hamden held a Regular Meeting on Tuesday, June 1, 2010 at 7:30 p.m. in the third floor Conference Room, Hamden Government Center. The following issues were discussed:

Commissioners in Attendance: David Schaefer, Johanna Becker, Jennifer Cutrali, Malachi Blandon, Bill Horowitz

Commissioners Absent: Peter Haller (excused), Steve Humes, Michael Johnson, Barbara Gigliotti

Others in Attendance: Bill Davies, FCRTA
Norm Thetford, FCRTA
Dan Kops, Assistant Town Planner
Captain John Lujick, HPD
Gerry Tobin, Commission Clerk

1. Review Minutes of Tuesday, May 4, 2010

Ms. Becker made a motion to approve the minutes of May 4th. Mr. Blandon seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

Tunnel

Mr. Schaefer said the Planning and Zoning Commission has acted upon and approved the modification to its prior approval of the Greenway to address the tunnel. There were many people in attendance at the P & Z meeting commenting and speaking about safety. Tom Balskus, Dan Kops and Mr. Schaefer were at this meeting. The second item discussed was the detour of traffic during construction through Spring Glen. The Traffic Commission will address that at their meeting on June 9th. One P&Z member that lives in Spring Glen wanted speed bumps on Connolly Parkway, Thornton Street and the other streets in the area.

Mr. Schaefer called the president of the Spring Glen Civic Association last night. She was pleased with what the commission had done, but was concerned with the traffic. He told her he hoped they would not try to prevent traffic from going through their neighborhood, which might stop a project that would benefit the whole town.

The Spring Glen Civic Association is holding a meeting tomorrow night at St. Rita's Church. Mr. Schaefer asked if anyone from the commission could attend that meeting. Mr. Horowitz said he would attend if no one else volunteered. Ms. Becker said she would accompany Mr. Horowitz. Mr. Schaefer said if there is ever a development at 100 Skiff Street we will lose our walk light. Mr. Schaefer explained all of the safety issues and the benefits of the tunnel.

Mr. Blandon asked if this project could be done at night. Mr. Schaefer said if one side of the street were closed at a time, doing it at night would make sense, but night doesn't help if the road is closed. Mr. Schaefer said to do it with the road open would cost an extra \$800,000, so that plan was cost prohibitive. Our trail is not open at night, but the tunnel will be an inviting place for homeless and others looking for shelter at night. There will be infrared cameras installed. It is not yet decided whether the lights would be left on at night. When the lights are wired, they will put every other one on a circuit so we can have some on and some off. We have to make sure the four cameras are facing the right directions and the proper recordings are being made. The quality of the resolution must be good. It is hoped that police and the two sub contractors will be able to sit down together for an hour to come up with a plan.

Mr. Schaefer said we have been working on the Stop & Shop easement. He and Mr. Kops met a team from the owner, who has hired an attorney and has gone back and forth on drafts, and as of today they have reached an agreement with the Town. If the Town paves the 1600 square feet involved, they owner is concerned that it would affect the building coverage allowed on the site. The Town agreed to go to the ZBA for a variance to prevent that from happening, and the application will be heard by ZBA on the third week in June. We have Wetlands and P&Z approval. The next step is the Legislative Council for permission to accept the donation of the easement. Mr. Schaefer estimates ground breaking in October.

The bidding climate is good now and we have the money now, and we don't know what the changes might be in the future. They told this to both P&Z and Stop & Shop. Mr. Blandon mentioned the tunnel in Haley, MA. There is another tunnel in Avon under Route 44. Mr. Thetford will find a contact for the Hadley tunnel.

Mr. Schaefer discussed gates at the ends of the tunnel with Mr. Kops today. One question is who would be in charge of opening and closing them. Ms. Cutrali believes gates are a great idea. Yale is responsible for the gates in New Haven. Mr. Schaefer said perhaps we could design, put in the footings and the posts, and then if necessary we could get the gates at a later date.

Captain Lujick had information on vandal proof lighting. Mr. Schaefer said he is looking for a bright and warm light. Mr. Horowitz brought up the idea of a blue phone in the middle of the tunnel to give people psychological reassurance. Mr. Lujick felt that might be a good idea to have some kind of an alerting system.

Mr. Schaefer reminded everyone that at the point of development of 100 Skiff Street, we lose the pedestrian crossing light, and we will have to adjust the trail to where the intersection to the development is located.

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

Mr. Schaefer rode Phase 1 the other day and it looks beautiful.

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

Mr. Blandon asked about having a yellow line down the middle of the trail. They have that in New Haven and they have it in the area of Morse Street. There was discussion on people staying on the right side of the trail.

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

Mr. Thetford reported between Breugers and Skiff Street there is a lot of gravel washed across the trail. Mr. Schaefer referred to the update from Frank Cooper of Parks & Recreation. Mr. Horowitz brought up the telephone pole placed in the middle of the sidewalk in front of People's Bank. There was discussion on the trail eventually going through the shopping center parking lot. There may be a way to work with the property owner in the future. Mr. Kops mentioned the telephone pole in the middle of the sidewalk to the Engineering Department, and he will follow up. He also sent an email to Tom Balskus regarding the police and subcontractors meeting. Mr. Kops said the plans before DOT now show a detour going through Spring Glen, but in the future we might be able to take that out. The recommended detour will be Dixwell to Whitney. During construction, all of the businesses on Skiff Street will be accessible, although Skiff Street will be closed to through traffic.

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

6. Old Business

The Parks & Recreation update is attached. The Keatley Bench is before the Legislative Council for approval.

7. New Business

Mr. Kops had no news regarding the state review. Mr. Horowitz felt we should come up with a long term approach for mile markings and which direction they should go. Mr. Thetford said Long Wharf will become the starting point once that portion of the trail is built. The pavement markings do not wear well. We had signs at one point, but many of them disappeared.

Mr. Davies talked about a surprise birthday party he attended where the woman's son arrived after arriving at Bradley airport and riding his bicycle the 56 miles to North Haven, with his luggage on wheels in tow.

Mr. Horowitz said there was a report in today's paper about some kids throwing rocks from the Sanford Street bridge over the trail.

8. Adjournment

Mr. Horowitz made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Becker 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