



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, September 6, 2011 at 7:30 p.m. in the third floor Conference Room, Hamden Government Center. The following issues were discussed:

Commissioners in Attendance: Barbara Gigliotti, Johanna Becker, Bill Horowitz, Kathy Larson, David Schaefer

Commissioners Absent: Peter Haller, Steve Humes, Mike Johnson, Malachi Blandon

Others in Attendance: Dan Kops, Gerry Tobin

Guests: John Nutter, Mark Anton

1. Review minutes of July 20, 2011

Last page, change fork life to fork lift

Ms. Becker made a motion to approve the minutes of the July 20th meeting. Mr. Horowitz seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

Mr. Schaefer asked our guests to speak about their interest in the meeting. Marc Anton said he is a big fan of the trail since day one. John Nutter is another big fan and has been since it was a railroad track. He lives on the trail up past Sleeping Giant Golf Course and is a member of the Trails to Track. Mr. Schaefer explained that this Commission was set up by the Council, and is totally volunteer, has no authority. The Commission makes recommendations and has been very successful for 19 years.

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

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

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

Mr. Schaefer said he was out of town for the month of August until today. This project was going on seven days a week, and Dan Kops has worked very hard on the project. He expressed thanks also to Milone & MacBroom. Mr. Kops said work is on schedule and we are working on completion by the first week of October. This week the RWA, weather permitting, will be installing its new pipe within the right of way. Construction company Guerra anticipates doing the paving next week. The south side is graded and you can see where it will hook up at the tunnel. They were back filling last Friday, landscaping is next, then the surveillance equipment and call boxes. Lighting also has to be installed.

Mr. Kops said the key issues in July and August were working with RWA and ATT, the coordination of road closings with the Police Department and businesses. Mr. Kops' report is attached. We had very few complaints. The construction requiring road closings got done three days early.

Remaining Issues

Mr. Kops met today with the consultants on the Police Department work. The Police are supposed to move in to their new headquarters in October. A temporary link might be necessary. We don't want to open the tunnel until security is assured. We will be able to open the original path and the walk light will be available. We are hoping for 10/3 or thereabouts. Paving should be in place next week.

Mr. Schaefer mentioned that the cross light was an issue because it was removed one evening, which was a surprise to the Police. The pole came down again because they are going to be doing reinforcement work to replace a crushed pipe underneath (storm water drain pipe) that caused the sidewalk to sink. The light is now being used as a caution light, but will again become a crossing light for pedestrians.

Question of sidewalk – Mr. Kops explained that the state had demanded the sidewalk, but then backed out, saying it would take too long, and cost too much. We have plans that are 80-90 percent done. We hope to do a sidewalk someday. Mayor Jackson is strongly in favor of the sidewalk, and Hamden Hall would get good use out of it. There are lines painted as part of the project, not for an area for people to walk, but for cars not to go.

High resolution cameras broadcasting remotely to the Police Department will be installed. Lighting 24/7 was requested by the Legislative Council, and two call boxes and graffiti resistant paint will be installed. Lights will be on two zones so they can be only half on at night. We will try things to see how they work. In New Haven for security purposes, they will gate all their tunnels at sundown and open them again in the morning. Yale Security will be taking care of the gates.

Mr. Schaefer mentioned a future ribbon cutting, and noted that we should remember to thank the Congress people who helped get this project through.

Mr. Kops said he got called into the Westwoods Road/Whitney Avenue Project about 6 weeks ago. The State opened the new road without giving anyone warning, and no arrangements for people to cross Westwoods Road. Mr. Kops asked for a cross walk and temporary signs, and a temporary path which they have now done, and a cone “yield to pedestrians” will be installed. Westwoods Road as a whole is a mess because the left hand turn lanes have not be painted in yet. Mr. Anton said there is great visibility there now. Mr. Schaefer said we are looking into ways to use the new land, maybe some parking and/or landscaping. Mr. Schaefer mentioned the parking lot north of People’s bank.

Mr. Kops said there are no new developments on the spur trail from the Farmington Canal Trail into Town Center Park. The decision was to build the trail without crossing the brook. Mr. Schaefer is not sure where the funding is coming from. The spur would connect the Middle School to the trail and continue on out to Dixwell Avenue.

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

Mutual Housing needed a lot on the other side of our trail in order to have enough parking, and the Town agreed to allow them to cross the trail to get to the lot, if they would allow the trail users to use a few parking spaces in the lot. After the project was done, final plans for Phase III were approved with a solid wooden fence that goes up to the north side of the driveway, which blocked the view to the north. Mr. Kops said we have asked that a section of the fence be removed.

Mr. Kops said the Public Works Department would like to remove the fence along the eastern side of the trail next to Hamden Park Drive so they can get their equipment on there. Mr. Kops is not in favor, since parks has been maintaining it without problems. Several commissioners thought it would be a mistake because it separates the trail from the road. Commissioners will look at this prior to the next meeting.

6. Old Business

7. New Business

Public Works has taken on most of the Parks Department maintenance. There has been an issue regarding parks employees that were laid off, but most of them are being rehired, which will help. Mr. Schaefer said someone suggested this Commission work on a maintenance plan. Barbara Gigliotti volunteered to work on that plan.

Mr. Nutter said he has been using the trail from day one, and has never seen it in such poor shape. The grass is high and the canopy is low. Gravel on the pavement for bikers and rollerbladers is an accident waiting to happen. Mr. Schaefer mentioned the reduction in staff and shift of responsibility. Ms. Gigliotti said the canopy is usually cut in the winter. Mr. Nutter said Cheshire and New Haven are better than us regarding maintenance. The stone dust needs to be replaced soon. These issues have been brought to the attention of Public Works. We are also seeking LoCIP funding to correct some drainage issues.

There was discussion on advocating for funding for the trail. There was also discussion about posting the regulations for trail use on signs or painting on the pavement regarding rules such as keep to the right.

Graffiti on the Sherman Avenue underpass was mentioned.

8. Adjournment

Ms. Gigliotti made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Horowitz seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Submitted by: _____
Gerry Tobin, Clerk of the Commission