



TOWN OF HAMDEN

**Hamden Government
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Lauren Garrett, Mayor

This meeting did not record.

Minutes: The Farmington Canal Commission, Town of Hamden, held a Regular Meeting at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 3, 2023 via Zoom. The following topics were discussed.

Commissioners in Attendance: David Schaefer, David D'Agostino, David Radcliffe, Peter Cyr, Mark Anton, Bill Horowitz, Robert Reger

Commissioners Excused: Lisa Maloney, Kathy Larson

Others in Attendance: Gerry Tobin, Commission Clerk

1. Call to Order

Mr. Schaefer called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. He mentioned that he received a call from Town Planner Eugene Livshits regarding a parcel of land off of Dixwell Avenue, at Mather Street behind an auto parts store. The owner wants to develop a mixed use with retail. Part of the application is that a connection be made across his property to the trail. We dealt with the developer on the other side of Mather to allow the Farmington Canal trail users to cross that property. This application will be reviewed at tonight's Legislative Council Meeting.

2. Review Minutes of December 6, 2021

Ms. Tobin pointed out that there are two errors in the minutes that she will correct. The first is the people in attendance at the meeting other than the Commissioners were not listed. Mr. Livshits and Ms. Tobin were in attendance. The second is that Mr. Livshits' name was spelled incorrectly throughout the minutes.

Mr. D'Agostino made a motion to approve the minutes of December 6, 2022 as corrected.

Mr. Horowitz seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

3. Report from Mike Siciliano

Mr. Siciliano notified Ms. Tobin that he has been ill and will not be attending tonight's meeting. He said that if Commissioners had any questions they could call him.

4. Old Business

Mr. Schaefer asked if any Commissioners have seen the new bollard. Mr. D'Agostino and Mr. Reger have seen it. Mr. Reger said he wished Mr. Siciliano had been there to show him how it

disconnected, but it seems fine to him. Mr. Radcliffe said it looks good. Mr. Schaefer said he liked the size and appearance. It seemed not as sturdy as he thought but it is probably sufficient.

Mr. Radcliffe reported that Ms. Hazen was unable to attend tonight because she is not feeling well. She shared with him that there are many funding opportunities through the DEEP that are directly in line with our interests. The application deadline is March 1st. She advised that a letter of support from the Commission should be included in the application. Mr. Radcliffe sent out a list of Federal funds available in the new Infrastructure Bill. There are lots of unassigned dollars. The list was published in the Hartford Courant.

Mr. Schaefer mentioned the bridge from Kentucky to Ohio, which carries 3% of the national commerce in the Country. It was designated dysfunctional 25 years ago. Mr. Schaefer feels we have multiple sources to pursue. Connecticut's Federal delegation secured "earmarks." Rosa DeLauro is the ranking member on the appropriations committee. Earmarks got a "dirty" reputation 20 years ago because of wasteful spending and funding going to relatives and friends. They were eliminated, but have recently been brought back. There are strict regulations. Members have to publish the purpose for which the requested funds are to be used and the information must be made available for public comment. He feels we would be an excellent candidate for these funds.

Commissioners received an email from Town Engineer Stephen White regarding improvements to crossings in southern Hamden. He has worked with the City of New Haven, and will have plans ready to present to the Commission at its next meeting.

Mr. Schaefer thanked Mr. Anton for taking care of the graffiti at Connolly Parkway. He also asked if anyone has looked at the bridge over Putnam Avenue, where there is a new painting.

Mr. Cyr asked about the historic markers and suggested they be part historic, and include areas of interest surrounding the trail, the history of the trail, etc. Mr. Schaefer mentioned that when the first section was done, the engineering firm Fuss and O'Neil hired a landscape historian. Information was put on large posts with plexiglass over the top. The Plexiglass has deteriorated making the information unreadable, and some of the posts came down. Mr. Schaefer asked Mr. Livshits and Ms. Hazen to see if they could find the original plans on which the signs are described. Mr. Schaefer said if they can't locate the plans, he will call Fuss and O'Neil.

Mr. Anton mentioned the signs he was working a couple of years ago. We chose seven areas of the trail and wanted signs to be easier to read. They worked on one for near the railroad station and got hung up on the verbiage. One item mentioned that there were 100 railroads in Connecticut at that time, but how do we confirm that fact. Others were planned for near the Water Authority, the Olin Powder Farm and Sleeping Giant. The cost of the signs was estimated to be about \$2,000 each. Mr. Horowitz suggested we use a QR code to direct trail users to as much information as they would want. Mr. Schaefer mentioned that the New Haven historical society has materials used for a play based on the Farmington Canal Trail. One thought is to use 4' x 8" plywood covered with polyurethane, like the one at the pollinator garden behind the Route 10 Diner. There are also some at Lighthouse Park. We had asked the RWA a few years ago if we could put a sign regarding the filtering of water at their property. Due to staff changes, that project fell through. Another idea is cast aluminum without too much content that could be read driving by. It would be great if we could put in a grant request for signage.

The Rails to Trails organization has some funds that might be available. Cheshire and Massachusetts have some nice signs.

Ms. Cyr mentioned he hiked the Mill River walk a couple of years ago. Mr. Schaefer wondered where we could link our trail to the Mill River walk or other trails. It is valuable to connect with other trails/resources. There is an obvious connection to East Rock. Mr. Schaefer mentioned a former Commissioner's idea to connect to Southern Connecticut State University, but the University and the neighbors were not very enthusiastic. Mr. Cyr said the Mill River Walk is almost complete. Mr. Schaefer said the history at Olin Powder Farm is very interesting.

Mr. Radcliffe mentioned that one board is still above the others on the Todd Street Bridge, and remains a trip hazard. Mr. Schaefer asked him to send an email to Mr. Livshits and he will forward it to Public Works. He remembers Mr. Siciliano mentioned there was something wrong with the fasteners.

Mr. Horowitz mentioned the spur trail behind the middle school that ended at a fence. Public Works has cut a portion of the fence and you can now access the Meadowbrook Coops and AAA, The Commission thanks Public Works for addressing this.

5. New Business

Mr. Horowitz received an email saying that an acquisition of four miles of property has been made for the trail in Northampton, extending to the Westfield River. There is money to design the trail. There is still another three miles to be acquired.

Mr. Schaefer mentioned that a number of years ago a fund was started by a group of citizens to build the trail. There is \$844 currently in the Friends of the Farmington Canal account.

There was discussion on adding a Farmington Canal Trail page to the Town's website, where information about the trail could be posted.

6. Other information on the various trail sections might appear above.

Phase I Update (Mt. Sanford Road to Todd Street) – no comments

Phase IIA Update (Todd Street to Hamden Hills Drive) – no comments

Phase IIB Update (Hamden Hills Drive to Connolly Parkway) - no comments

Phase III Update (Connolly Parkway to New Haven Line) – no comments

7. Adjournment

Mr. Schaefer asked for a motion to adjourn. Me. D'Agostino so moved. Mr. Anton seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Submitted by: _____

Gerry Tobin, Clerk of the Commission