



TOWN OF HAMDEN

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Hamden Government
Center
2750 Dixwell Ave

Curt Balzano Leng
Mayor

Hamden, CT 06518
Tel: (203) 287-7100
Fax: (203) 287-7101

ZOOM MEETING ID: 954 8418 0794
PASSWORD: trail
CALL IN : 1 646-558-8656

Minutes: The Farmington Canal Commission, Town of Hamden, held a Regular Meeting at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 6, 2021 via Zoom. The following topics were discussed.

Commissioners in Attendance: Mr. Schaefer, Ms. Maloney, Mr. Horowitz, Ms. Sharma, Mr. Anton, Mr. Reger, Mr. Mallory

Others in Attendance: Board Member and Past President of the Hamden Land Conservation Trust Mr. Sirch, Assistant Town Planner Mr. Davis, Commission Clerk Ms. Tobin

1. Call to Order

Mr. Schaefer called the meeting to order at 7:45 p.m.

2. Review Minutes of March 2, 2021

Minutes were corrected to fix several typos. **Mr. Reger made a motion to approve the minutes of March 2, 2021 as corrected. Ms. Sharma seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.**

Request of the Hamden Land Conservation Trust to install a memorial bench for Attorney Joe Lee at the Existing Pollinator Garden

2.

Mr. Sirch, Board Member and Past President of the Hamden Land Conservation Trust addressed the Commission, and said the HLCT owns four acres behind the Route 10 Restaurant on Whitney Avenue, abutting the trail. They installed a pollinator garden in honor of Attorney Joe Lee, father of Assistant Town Attorney Tim Lee. Mr. Davis feels this is a great idea and assumes that the usual design standards will be followed. Mr. Sirch agreed and said they will place a plaque in Attorney's Lee's memory on or below the bench. Mr. Davis explained that if the Commission approves the installation of the bench, the proposal will go to the Legislative Council for approval of the donation. Mr. Sirch can keep in touch with Mr. Davis for updates. Mr. Sirch mentioned that they haven't cleaned up the garden yet, but will do that and some additional planting.

Mr. Horowitz asked about a large parcel of land south of the pollinator garden with a house on it set way back, whose owner was talking about donating the land to the Town/Land Trust. Mr. Sirch said that property is now being willed to a private person. Ms. Maloney asked if Land Trust properties ever have trails on them Mr. Sirch said yes and no. The land Trust raised funds to purchase land donated to the Town and Brooksvale Park with trails on it, and on State Street they own the parcel where the eagles are located. Rock Top was the first blue trail in Connecticut on which an apartment complex was proposed. The HLCT purchased 18 acres and put up a sign board with historical information

Mr. Schaefer asked for a motion to support the request of the Hamden Land Conservation Trust to install a bench in memory of Attorney Joe Lee at the pollinator garden. Ms. Maloney so moved. Ms. Maloney seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor.

3. Report from Matt Davis

Mr. Davis reported that the proposed Mayor's 2021-2022 budget is on the Town's website. Legislative Council meetings regarding the budget are also listed on the website. In the current operating budget Mr. Davis was able to find \$2,500 for trail maintenance. He was told that a few years ago the Town took proceeds from a bond and have been drawing it down for trail maintenance. He spoke to Acting Planner Mark Austen, and they know of no other funds budgeted for trail repair. Mr. Schaefer explained that maintenance includes canopy trimming, pothole repair and other minor repairs done by the Public Works Department. Ms. Maloney mentioned that the high bridge on the trail near Todd Street has seen better days. That bridge needs to be on a schedule to be replaced or repaired. She has had multiple complaints about the bridge since people found out she is on the Commission. There have been some repairs on the bridge but other boards are rotting.

Mr. Schaefer mentioned that Capital funds are borrowed money and have to be repaid by the Town. We have to reach out to Council representatives, and others including the Finance Director and try to impress on everyone that if major repairs are not done on a continuing basis, the trail will become unsafe and more costly to maintain in the future.

3.

Mr. Davis mentioned that the Government Center will be opening to the public some time in mid to late April.

There was discussion on the letter that Mr. Schaefer sent to the Mayor and Town staff on the importance of funding repairs to the trail. Ms Maloney edited the letter. At Ms. Maloney's suggestion, Mr. Schaefer asked Commissioners to choose a section of the trail to check for any work that might need to be done.

Ms. Maloney checked Phase I and commented that behind MIKRO roots need to be taken care of. There are several rotting boards on the high bridge. Further north, although, the Town has done a good job removing fallen branches from the trail, they are just pushed to the side and left

there. She asked if we could bring in volunteers to clean that up. Mr. Schaefer said that the work might require equipment, contractors, etc. Ms Maloney said that she is the chairman of a mountain bike group and maintain trails with the permission of DEEP. She said the rest of Phase 1 was good.

Phase IIA. Mr. Schaefer said that section of the trail is generally in excellent condition, He started at Todd Street and agrees about the roots. There is a yellow bollard missing. At Sherman Avenue on the north side of the bridge, pavement is breaking off on one side and on the south side, roots are coming up. North of the Shepard Avenue Parking lot, at mile 4.75 there are some roots coming through. When he was crossing West Woods Road he met a woman that was cleaning up trash from Cheshire to the mile 5 marker.

Mr. Reger checked Phase IIB. He walked north from Hop Knot/Breuger's and on the left on one of our signs, water got under the lamination and the sign is no longer readable. About 200 yards south of Hamden Hills Drive on the east side, some work is needed on the bench Mr. Schaefer said his son did that as an Eagle Scout project 30 years ago and he has made repairs to it in the past. Mr. Reger said the soil has eroded away from the cement. Mr. Reger noticed from Hop/Knot/Breuger's south to Connolly Parkway after the hill near mile marker 6.5 there are some good sized cracks. There is fencing down near the Parkway. At the 7 mile marker on the west side, there is some erosion. Some small cones have been placed in the area. There is debris along the side including a mattress and a tent. Behind Stop and Shop there is some erosion. Mr. Horowitz asked Mr. Davis to let Public Works know especially regarding the lack of fence near the drop off. Photos would have more impact.. Mr. Schaefer suggested Commissioners send their reports and photos to Mr. Davis for forwarding to Public Works.

While examining Phase II, Mr. Horowitz noticed that it is in generally good shape. He mentioned there is some fencing down and that the pavement below Treadwell Street is terrible and there is lots of trash to the east of the trail and down the hill. He is not sure who owns that property.

Mr. Schaefer said in the past volunteer cleanups were really helpful. He noted that we were focusing on the problems but the trail is generally in good shape. Mr. Davis will contact Mr. Cesare. There was discussion on a tour of the trail on a golf cart like was done several years ago. He will contact Ms. Smith about setting that up. Ms. Maloney mentioned that she sent an email to the Town Gardner but has not had a response to date. Mr. Schaefer asked if anyone had any further comments on the four phases of the trail, and there were none.

3. Phase I Update (Mt. Sanford Road to Todd Street)
4. Phase IIA Update (Todd Street to Hamden Hills Drive)
5. Phase IIB Update (Hamden Hills Drive to Connolly Parkway)
6. Phase III Update (Connolly Parkway to New Haven Line)

7. Old Business

Mr. Anton mentioned that Xander is still working on the kiosk. He has marked an area 6' off of the trail with chalk. Mr. Horowitz gave him a \$300 check from the Farmington Canal Rails to

Trails Association and will give him another check when he finishes his project. It will be located on Hamden Park Drive where the trail crosses.

Mr. Anton mentioned that he had sent Commissioners an email with the photo of the proposed sign with history of the train station. He had members of the Historical Society review the information and add what they thought appropriate. The cost of the cast aluminum sign, 2' by 3' would be around \$4,500. A 16" by 24" would probably be more around our price. Mr. Schaefer has a couple of editorial suggestions he will send to Mr. Anton. Mr. Anton mentioned that there are very few interesting facts available on the lock keeper's house. In response to a question from Ms. Maloney regarding funding for the sign, Mr. Horowitz suggested a formal proposal be presented to the Farmington Canal Rails to Trails Association.

8. New Business

9. Adjournment

There being no further business to discuss, Mr. Schaefer asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Reger so moved. Ms. Maloney seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Submitted by: _____
Gerry Tobin, Clerk of the Commission