



**TOWN OF HAMDEN**  
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

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Minutes: The Farmington Canal Commission, Town of Hamden, held a Regular Meeting at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, May 4, 2021 via Zoom. The following topics were discussed.

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

Others in Attendance: Assistant Town Planner Mr. Davis, Commission Clerk Ms. Tobin

**1. Call to Order**

Mr. Schaefer called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m. Mr. Radcliffe, a new Commissioner, introduced himself and said he moved to Hamden about three years ago across from Brooksvale Park and has direct access to the Trail. Commissioners in turn told a little about themselves.

There was discussion about the Economic Development opportunities along the trail. Mr. Davis said that economic development along the trail is starting to get some traction. New Town Planner Eric Johnson is also an advocate of the trail.

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**2. Review Minutes of April 6, 2021**

Page 1, Section 2, change Rock to Rocky; Page 2, motion regarding bench, seconded by Mr. Anton.

**Mr. Reger made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 6, 2021 meeting as corrected. Ms. Maloney seconded the motion. The vote was seven in favor, Mr. Radcliffe abstained.**

Mr. Schaefer asked Mr. Anton for a report on the Eagle Scout Project. Mr. Anton said he sent some photographs of the project with Xander's letter today via email. The Kiosk looks great. Mr. Horowitz mentioned it looks very solidly built. He will get some maps posted once he gets the keys to the two locks from Xander. There was discussion as to whether or not there should be a finish applied to protect the wood. There was discussion on getting a graffiti resistant coating applied to the kiosk. Mr. Schaefer will contact Public Works Director Cesare. Mr. Horowitz will refill the maps seasonally and will hold the key and get a copy for Mr. Davis.

**3. Report from Matt Davis**

Mr. Davis reported that the Capital Budget is not available yet. The Planning & Zoning Office budget is up for vote at the Legislative Council on March 5<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Schaefer sent a letter to the Mayor regarding funding. Mr. Davis has nothing further to report.

Mr. Schaefer reached out to Council Representative Kathleen Schomaker regarding funding. She is very supportive and interested in the Trail. Finance Director former Mayor Scott Jackson is putting the capital plan together along with Rick Galarza, Assistant Finance Director. The Operating Budget for the trail is \$2,500. Ms. Schomaker suggested Mr. Schaefer contact Mr. Galarza, but he has had trouble reaching anyone by phone. He will attempt to stop at the Government Center. The Engineering Department budget is before the Legislative Council tomorrow evening. Town Engineer Mark Austen is also a supporter of the Trail and it might be a good idea to reach out to him according to Mr. Davis. The budget should be approved before the end of June.

Ms. Maloney will invite Mr. Jackson or Mr. Galarza and Mr. Austen to attend one of our meetings. There was additional discussion.

Ms. Maloney and Mr. Radcliffe have been discussing the Trail and they have four agenda items to discuss tonight. She asked if the Commission had a Mission Statement. Neither Ms. Tobin nor Mr. Schaefer had a copy but Ms. Tobin will reach out to the Town Clerk. Ms. Maloney wondered if we are within the scope of the Mission Statement, which is the guiding principle of the Commission. Mr. Schaefer noted that we are an advisory Commission. He believes anything relating to the trail is within our purview. Mr. Reger wondered how the Commission was established. The Commission was established by Ordinance and Ms. Tobin will reach out to the Town Clerk for a copy.

Mr. Schaefer said we were the first town to build a trail because we had a Commission devoted to the planning. Other towns relied on town staff, which had other duties to work on. Mr.

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Radcliffe, Ms. Maloney and Mr. Mallory will work on a Mission Statement and present their draft at the June meeting.

The second item Ms. Maloney and Mr. Radcliffe have been discussing is the Commission's goal for the coming year. What does this Commission want to do. We should make a list and pick the top two ideas. Mr. Reger said our first goal is to make sure the repairs are done. Mr. Mallory mentioned that the stone dust along the side of the trail helps keep the asphalt from crumbling, and that needs to be maintained/replaced.

Mr. Radcliffe has spoken to other Commissioners and made a graphic of the ideas that came up. He said there is the potential for infrastructure funds. If those came to us, what would we want to do. Mr. Schaefer said the graphic is fantastic. The graphic is added to these minutes.

Mr. Reger asked if the Commissioners can do fund raising. Mr. Radcliffe mentioned the possibility of business cards. Mr. Schaefer said we had sweatshirts for members several years ago. We also had yellow vests identifying Commissioners when they were on the trail. Business cards would be great. These are all important issues. Ms. Maloney said the trail looks neglected. Mr. Mallory asked if we can send a letter out under the Commissioners' names and signatures, which would show the agreement of the Commissioners regarding these issues.

Mr. Schaefer said it is important and great to do this planning, but life events take over what we are doing. We meet eleven times each year and as things come up we have to be open to deal with them. Mr. Horowitz said money for the Trail for any purpose is elastic, but the key is to get engagement of the powers that be. We have to identify each of the key players. Perhaps we could take them for a golf cart ride or a walk on the trail to get them physically engaged. He wondered how many have been on all ten miles of the trail.

Mr. Schaefer said fund raising is complex. We can't raise money directly. The Legislative Council has to approve any gifts to the Town over a certain dollar amount. There is a Farmington Canal Greenway fund to which donations can be deposited. Mr. Reger suggested a post by the Mayor on the Commission's Facebook page might be helpful regarding donations.

Mr. Schaefer suggested that Ms. Maloney, Mr. Radcliffe and Mr. Mallory work on the mission statement and flesh out the chart and we can discuss these at next month's meeting. Mr. Mallory said the power is with the people. The people elect our leaders. Mr. Radcliffe mentioned that the University of Connecticut measures trail use. Usage in April shows 50,000 trail users, up from 25,000 last year.

Mr. Schaefer said he looks forward to working on the Mission Statement. He also said don't underestimate the support we have had from the Town. We have always received support from all of the Mayors. Our State and local politicians use the Trail on their campaign literature.

The list of players include the Mayor, Public Works Director, Town Planner and Assistant Town Planner, Legislative Council Representatives, Traffic Department, Police Chief, Town Gardener,

etc. Also our State and local representatives such as Rosa DeLauro, Mr. Blumenthal, Senator Looney and our local representatives who all use the Farmington Canal Trail as part of their campaign fliers.

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Mr. Schaefer said brainstorming is the best way to move forward. Maintenance is a short term goal that we do every year.

Mr. Reger said at our next meeting, perhaps we can discuss the regulations for electric bicycles, motorized bikes and skateboards. Mr. Schaefer said the State Legislature has provisions. This is an important and evolving issue. Some electric assist devices make the trail more accessible. Mr. Horowitz said a new bill passed by the State Legislature talks about three classes of electric bicycles. Classes one and two are approved, but class three, fully electric are not authorized.

Mr. Anton mentioned that progress is being made on the signs. He and Ms. Sharma are waiting for a higher resolution sign for the train station. They received input from the Hamden Historical Society. They received three proposals and have chosen one. The price is approximately \$1,700. There was discussion on using a steel post.

Mr. Mallory reported that the bridge on the portion of the trail north of Todd Street where rotting boards were found and then covered with plywood, are now covered by what appears to be three traffic signs which have been nailed in place. There are more rotting boards, but they are at least fixing some things.

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

There were no comments on Phase I.

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

There were no comments on Phase IIA.

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

Mr. Mallory attended the Earth Day cleanup and took some photos, which Ms. Tobin forwarded to Commissioners. He missed the Hamden High School girls soccer team, as they had finished by the time he got there. He was able to help out at the Middle School with the distribution of the composters and rain barrels. Mr. Mallory also mentioned that the Hamden Police Department is going to start their bicycle policing along the trail and will do random patrols.

Mr. Horowitz was on the trail last Sunday and found trash behind the car wash and Home Depot, and what looked like employee trash behind First Student. Ms. Tobin mentioned that those areas were part of the April 24<sup>th</sup> cleanup. Mr. Horowitz mentioned that the litter appeared to be on private property.

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

There were no comments on Phase III.

**8. Adjournment**

**There being no additional business to discuss, Mr. Schaefer asked for a motion to adjourn. Ms. Maloney so moved. Mr. Anton seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous in favor. The meeting ended at 9:22 p.m.**

### Farmington Canal Trail / Hamden Infrastructure Planning

What is goal of the trail, and how do each of the following support that goal?

