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TOWN OF VERNON

Hockanum River Linear Park Committee
c/o Parks & Recreation Dept.
120 South Street
Vernon, CT 06066

APPROVED
Town of Vernon
Hockanum River Linear Park Committee

Meeting Minutes – May 28, 2021

Present: Members: George Arthur, Don Bellingham, Ann Letendre
Staff Advisor: P&R Director, Marty Sittler

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The meeting was held at Henry Park Pavilion, following Covid protocols.

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 9:45 am by Don Bellingham; Chairman Letendre arrived at 10:00 am and continued the meeting.

1. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the regular meeting of March 26, 2021 were approved, motion by George, second by Don. The trail report from Vernon Greenway Volunteers is attached to the minutes.

2. Old Business

A. Hockanum River Trail Reports

Refer to the Vernon Greenway Volunteers report (attached) for details. A second project under the grant project, installation of the handrail on the stone steps at the David Smith Suspended Bridge, will be completed in the next 6 months. The project is funded by a SustainableCT grant, and matching community funds.

B. Review of trail needs at HRLP sites

- Saxony Park: The trail along the river heading west to Rt 83 has been blocked by fallen tree and is overgrown from lack of use. Ann noted that creating a short trail loop for dogwalkers could be an amenity for dogwalkers. The committee discussed re-doing the trail along the river, and then connecting back to the sycamore tree might be feasible. Ann noted that she has old landscape plans for the area and will look them up. Further discussion will take place at the July meeting, which may be at the site.
- WPCA and D. Smith bridge: Don reported he noted that cars tend to pull off Windsorville Rd and park by the berm. A "No Parking" sign is needed. Also he received complaints that hikers lose the trail in Ellington behind the "Y", and clear signs are needed. Don will be talking to Ellington trail team and will discuss with them.

C. Current Grant Projects - Status

Rail on berm to D. Smith Bridge – Ann reported that H&D Ironworks can do the rail but not until late summer; they also prefer a shorter span between posts, i.e. 4 stone posts rather than existing 3; Ann priced a stone post, delivered - \$300 from Skyline Quarry. Ann will try to get another welder quote.

D. New HRLP Trail Development / New Grant Applications

- a. Dart Hill Loop Trail – River crossings at Hocknum Blvd bridge and Lyman Farm Bridge provide the opportunity to create a north-south loop trail along both sides of the river between the two bridges, per the HRLP Master Plan. The stone dust trail on the west side is completed. To complete the trail on the east side, a new trail needs to be installed on three parcels: Trail Run, Hamid properties, and the Town-owned transfer station parcel.

Since the area along the river heading north on the Trail Run property is very overgrown, inaccessible, and in marsh areas, access is impossible. An estimation of how much boardwalk length is needed to get through marsh areas. Ann reported that she obtained permission to use the police drone to take a video of the area. A grant will be submitted to the Recreational Trails Program for this section. An application for development of the abutting Hamid parcel has been filed, and a trail is noted on the plans.

Ann also reported that the Town Planner reviewed the zoning stipulations, visited the site, and determined that the trail from the apartments to connect to Dart Hill Trail still needs to be constructed. He will check on the filing of the conservation easement.

- b. Pleasantview to Manchester Line Trail Section - Don reported that he hasn't heard from Dave Turkington regarding progress on that trail section. Ann will contact the French Society on Kelly Road to see if we can get parking permission.
- c. Papermill Pond to Snipsic Lake – George has reviewed this area and has reported that we need to get permission to go through Grove Cemetery. Ann will contact the Cemetery Department.
- d. Trail Census – Don reported that because of Covid they have eliminated the hand survey, and just do the observation count for now.

E. River Protection: Action, Public Education - No Action

F. Other HRLP items: none

3. New Business – none

4. Adjournment - Meeting adjourned at 10:55 am, motion by George, second by Don, approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Letendre, Chairman

Vernon Greenways Volunteers Report March 26 to May 28, 2021

Sustainable Ct Grant

I was contacted by Sustainable Ct matching grant. \$3,000 to repair the Tankerhoosen Bridge on the Rockville Extension between Maple Avenue and Route 30 has been completed. Adding a railing on the steep incline from ground level to the bridge at the Dave Smith Suspended Bridge is still pending. Expect completion sometime this summer. We are in receipt of the matching funds, as well as, the donations.

Work Parties in 2021

We have had six work parties since our March 26th meeting. They included replacing missing stone at the memorial bench at the Suspended Bridge. We, also, did Spring Cleaning of the Plantings at Warren Avenue, Phoenix Street, Elm Hill Road, The Suspended Bridge, West Street, Route 30, Center Road and Washington Street. Graffiti Removal at the Mural.

Mural Project

A committee was formed to redo the Mural which has shown wear and tear. Tom and Lisa Oulette joined Ann Letendre and myself. The goal is to redo the mural in total every other year (1/2 per year). We are getting expected annual cost to the artists of \$2,000. We are currently awaiting a quote for sand blasting to take off the silicone that was initially applied and was not removed when sandblasting was done last year. We hope to get a \$500 recurring donation from the Vernon Arts Council to add to the \$1,900 we already have in house.

Extension of Pleasantview Boardwalk Trail to Hockanum Blvd

The Pleasantview Boardwalk Trail only runs to Lyman Bridge where it joins the trail made by Trail Run to join our trail system. The goal is to continue The Pleasantview Boardwalk Trail to Hockanum Blvd. Because vegetation is so dense in this area it was decided to have the Vernon Police Dept fly one of their drones fly over the area and take pictures to decide if there would be a need for more boardwalk because of the terrain. A grant would then have to be obtained to fund the project.