



Approved

TOWN OF VERNON

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

Town of Vernon Hockanum River Linear Park Committee

Meeting Minutes – September 24, 2021

Present: Members: George Arthur, Don Bellingham, Ann Letendre;
Staff advisor: Marty Sittler, Director, Parks & Rec

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 9:45 am by Ann Letendre, Chairman

1. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the regular meeting of July 23, 2021 were approved, as amended, motion by George, second by Don.

2. Old Business

A. Hockanum River Trail Reports

Refer to the Vernon Greenway Volunteers report (attached) for details.
Don reported that Parks & Rec is planning the annual end-of-year dinner given for the Vernon Greenways Volunteers in thanks for their trail work. The event is planned for Thursday, October 21st, at Camp Newhoca.

B. Review of trail needs at HRLP sites (Note, major trail washouts occurred during the recent major rainfall event, as noted below.)

- West Main St: Marty reported that a facelift had been given to the area
- Saxony Mill Park: Regarding restoration of the short trail along river and to the sycamore tree, Ann will contact Dave Turkington to see if he can do the work.
- WPCA and D. Smith bridge: Don reported that Ellington has fixed the trail signs on the Windermere trail that has been causing confusion for hikers going from Vernon to Ellington. He also reported that the stone surface around bench area at the D. Smith Bridge is being replaced with another type of surface.
- Dart Hill South Park and Trail: There was a major trail washout at Hockanum Mansions due to overflow of the retention basin during the recent heavy rainfall event. See below discussion. Ann noted that the connector trail from Trail Run to Lyman Bridge has also experienced a major washout. Responsibility for maintenance of that trail section has to be determined.
- Pleasantview Marsh Boardwalk Trail: The boardwalk was damaged by a fallen tree, a section was lifted out of its pier footing; also flood waters moved two at-grade sections. The boardwalk contractor who installed the

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structure, ORC, LLC (Phil Oswald), provided P&R with a repair quote: work is expected to be done by end of October.

C. Current Grant Projects - Status

SustainableCT grant: Rail on berm to D. Smith Bridge – Ann reported that she obtained a stone post from Skyline Quarry, and Public Works installed the four stone posts alongside the steps for the rail. The West Hartford welder could not do the rail installation due to loss of assistant. ORC, LLC has offered to contract with a welder to do the work.

D. New HRLP Trail Development / New Grant Applications

- a. Dart Hill Loop Trail – No further action.
- b. Pleasantview to Manchester Line Trail Section – No further action.
- c. Papermill Pond to Snipsic Lake – The Committee met with Travis Clark Sept 10th to walk the area. It was determined that feasibility of going up the hill and through the cemetery would not work due to steep terrain. The only possible means to continue the trail to the "Snip" would be (1) along the river, but that would require significant construction costs to cut a trail into the hillside, and rights to Minterburn property; (2) follow Rt 74 to the "Snip" – but sidewalks would be needed.
- d. Trail Census – Don reported that the laser "eye" device was recording incorrect data. The prior reliable data shows Vernon trails to be the 3rd highest of 21 state trails; the 21 trails are presumed to be the most frequented in the state.

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

F. Other HRLP items: none

3. New Business

A. Trail Repair Discussion – Discussion ensued regarding repair of washouts during the storm. Don and two civil engineers examined the Rail Trail sites that experience frequent washouts; they determined that the best repair would be to asphalt sections of the surface where that occurs; measurements of those areas determined that roughly 25,000 square feet of asphalt surface would be needed, for 9 to 10-foot trail widths. Marty and Amy Watt will meet with administration to discuss feasibility of a major grant application to the Recreational Trails program, due Nov 1st, for trail maintenance. Marty reported that Public Works has begun some of the larger repairs needed on the Hockanum River trails; Parks & Rec Department is doing some other smaller areas on the Rail Trail.

4. Adjournment - Meeting adjourned at 10:50 am, motion by Don, second by George, approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann Letendre, Chairman



Vernon Greenways Volunteers Report July 23 to September 24, 2021

Sustainable Ct Grant

All funds from Sustainable Ct have been received. The only remaining piece is providing a railing on the steep incline from ground level to the bridge at the Dave Smith Suspended Bridge.

Work Parties in 2021

We have had fifteen work parties for 158 volunteer hours since our last meeting on July 23rd. Monitor the counters at Church Street for three sessions 12 hours. Trail Maintenance Team nine sessions for 122 hours. Weed Whacking Team three sessions for 24 hours.

Mural

The Vernon Arts Commission has reimbursed us for the \$500 they had previously agreed to, to help offset the \$2,000 in funds we have already outlaid to the artists. We hope the reimbursement will be an annual event. The side panels that were not completed when the rest of the mural was completed have been done.

Memorial Bench at the Dave Smith Suspended Bridge

Due to weeds and grass growing around the memorial bench at the Dave Smith Suspended Bridge a rectangular construction of bricks for a perimeter and large stones on a plastic base inside the bricks was done. Most of the large stones have been thrown in the river and we are in the process of revising the structure. This time the process is being lead by a civil engineer.

Census Study

The final three of the five four hour sessions were completed by John Horan and me in this time period. The completed documents were emailed upon completion and all of the originals mailed via priority mail on September 23, 2021.

Multiuse Trail Damage

The big story this year is the amount of severe trail damage done by the severe weather. The goal is to have areas damaged past what we can handle paved. Dart Hill South's 1.2 miles of trail has been evaluated and sent to Public Works for action. Based on their work load, it may not happen until next year. We are walking and measuring the Hop River and Rockville Extension Trails and will meet with town officials on how to proceed, hopefully, in conjunction with them. We have completed the Bolton Town Line to Church Street section. Based on what we have seen, so far, we are projecting at this time the expected paving to be about 25,000 square feet.