



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 – November 17, 2022

Present: Members: George Arthur, Don Bellingham, Ann Letendre;
Staff advisor: Marty Sitler, Director Parks & Rec; Amy Watt, Assistant
Director, Parks & Rec

Call to Order: 9:35 am by Ann Letendre, Acting Chairman

1. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the meeting of September 23rd were approved, motion by George, second by Don.

2. New Business

A. Discussion – Friends of HLRP, Inc and Vernon Greenways Volunteers merger
(Refer to the Vernon Greenway Volunteers (VGV) report, below.)

Don and Ann explained how the Friends of HRLP, Inc would merge with the VGV, under the name of Vernon Greenway Volunteers, Inc. The 501(c)3 status will then be attained by the VGV.

B. Discussion - Role of Town HRLP Committee

Ann described the history of the Committee and why it was originally set up. The original charge in 1988 was to (1) work with the landscape architects that had been hired to create a plan for the river park, (2) identify and obtain rights to the properties needed to create the river park and a trail system; and (3) to assist the Town with future maintenance of the trails, and with developing community interest in the park.

At this point, the HRLP Master Plan is about 95% completed. Ann noted that the VGV is really taking on the work of assisting P&R with trail maintenance, so that that role of the HRLP committee could be taken up by the VGV in the future. Since the Committee is down to three members, and George says he's unsure if he can continue, it seemed like a good time to consider disbanding the Committee. All present felt it was important for Parks & Rec to continue regular contact and/or meetings with the Vernon Greenway Volunteers. Ann will look into next steps. All present concurred with this plan.

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3. DEEP Recreational Trail Grant status

Marty noted that the grant was awarded in early 2022, but a contract with DEEP is still not in place.

4. Railing for Dave Smith bridge access berm

Ann reported that the four stone posts are in place but we need to find a welder to attach a rail. Two had been lined up, but had retired during the Covid timespan, and are no longer available. Marty will contact fence companies for a possible contractor. Ann also noted she had a lead from one of the Greenway volunteers and will look into it.

Meeting dates 2023: Consensus by all present to continue same schedule as in previous years, but to change meeting day from Fridays to Thursdays, and to continue to meet until some action on future of Committee is determined.

Motion to adjourn by Don, second by George, approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann Letendre, Acting Chairman



Vernon Greenways Volunteers Report

September 24, 2022 to November 17, 2022

Census Study

We are normally asked to provide 10 hours of census information for the calendar year in question between mid-Summer and early Fall. Since they had a change-over in management personnel this year we were not notified for that information until October this year. So, John Horan and I provided data between 10/15 and 10/27. Data is used to calculate a factor to be applied to the actual counter info to account for such things as when 2 people pass thru the counter at the same time they are only counted as one.

End of Year Meeting

Our End of Year Meeting and Dinner was on October 20th at Camp Newhoca. I provided info on what transpired in 2022 and Parks and Rec provided a buffet dinner as a thank you for the work we did this year. The Trail Maintenance Team focused on the area from Phoenix Street to the Bolton town line in 13 work parties and a 14th work party on the Rockville Extension for a total of 200 work hours. The Trail Blazing Crew who work on the hiking and "to be" trails was composed of three people who completed 40 work hours. The 12 Trail Managers who each take ownership of a trail segment were recognized as the "backbone" of our group and not only keep their trail segment in good shape but also distributed 2,500 trail maps thru trail map dispensers and 18,000 dog litter bags thru dog litter bag dispensers in their area. Fifty percent of the mural was redone in conjunction with the Mural Committee's decision to redo 1/2 of the mural each year to keep it relevant in the long term. It was recognized that unfortunately we lost one of our own, Larry Morin, this year.

Future of VGV and Friends of HRLP, Inc. (a 501(c)3 non-profit organization)

The group organized to move the Friends of the Hockanum River Linear Park, Inc. a non-profit organization, to the Vernon Greenways Volunteers has been formed. It is composed of Mark Leighton, Walt Smith, Ann Letendre and Don Bellingham. Ann did extensive research prior to our initial meeting of October 26th. We will meet again on November 17th to continue the process.

-----Submitted by Don Bellingham