

Town of Vernon
Hockanum River Linear Park Committee

Draft Copy
Minutes – May 25, 2012

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Present: Members: Joe King, Ann Letendre, George Arthur, Ginny Gingras
Staff Advisor: Bruce Dinnie
Guests: Shaun Gately, Economic Development Co-ordinator
Tom Ouellette, Conservation Commission

The meeting was held at the Lottie Fisk Building, South St. and was called to order at 9:35 am by Ann Letendre, chairperson. Chairman Letendre called for a motion to add an item to the agenda: presentation by Shaun Gately on the conceptual development plan he and Town Planner Len Tundermann had prepared, at the request of Mayor Apel. Motion by King, second by Arthur, motion carried. The item was added first on the agenda.

HRLP Committee chairman Letendre had asked Mr. Gately to discuss the plans with the HRLP Committee because the conceptual plans incorporated existing walking trails into the planning, which would be relevant to the HRLP Committee. Mr. Gately mentioned at the outset that the Vernon walking trails are spoken of very highly by other towns. He noted that the conceptual plans have tried to make use of this resource and have incorporated the idea of a "Walking Community". The HRLP Committee was positive about the "walking community" thinking, and use of the trails as connectors of the various sections of town. Chairman Letendre noted that the first report that the HRLP Committee had prepared in 1988 was titled: HRLP – Connecting our Community. The report identified the railbeds as a key connector for the community, and basis for the trail system. Mr. Gately also touched on two other elements of the plan, a pre-approval process that he would like to institute, and the sewerage of the exit 66 area. No comment from the Committee on these points. The Committee thanked Mr. Gately for his time, and asked to be kept apprised of any new thinking in the conceptual plan.

1. Approval of Minutes

Minutes of March 23, 2012 meeting were approved. Motion by Arthur, second by Gingras.

2. Old Business

A. Hockanum River Trail Reports

- a. Refer to Arthur and Bellingham reports (attached) for details. George noted that the Greenway Volunteers need a weedwacker. George and Bruce reported that the West Main St benches that George and Joe constructed had been torn out in a vandalism act.

B. Review of needs – Hockanum River Parks and Parking Areas

- a. Refer to Arthur and Bellingham reports (attached).

C. Current Projects - Status

- a. Vernon Marsh Grant – (Ref. Task List prepared by G. Arthur, 5-16-11).
 - Task 1 – Postings need to be put in the kiosk. Maps will be obtained from Don Bellingham; Ann will also prepare some HRLP Committee info for the kiosk.
 - Task 2 – Trail sign 40 ft south of kiosk (completed)
 - Task 3 – Task 4: Kayak, canoe launch and small bridge – George will plan a work party to do the work in July.
 - Task 5 – Two vistas and benches, completed. George will submit labor bill; Ann will get material bill from Diane.
 - Task 6 – Replace stairway to river floodplain – completed.

Ann reported that there is a larger than anticipated grant balance (\$5,000) since the material costs and the kiosk costs came in less than budget. Ann suggested that remaining funds be used for interpretive signs, and asked Tom Ouellette, who has a small business producing interpretive materials, to attend the meeting to discuss possibilities. The Committee decided that three signs might be considered: marsh life; Indian history; and something about the water pollution control plant. Tom will look into

costs and content and report back to the Committee. The Committee also thought a wooden guard rail might be added to the parking area. Ann will check into prices for fencing from CT Valley Fence. George will talk to Dave Ignatowicz about fencing and signs to be sure he's OK with them.

- b. Collaboration with RDA – Hockanum Falls Lighting Project
 - i. Project is completed; Ann noted that the RDA Design Committee is trying to get a ribbon cutting ceremony set up.
- D. Potential Projects and New Grant Applications – *no time, discussion deferred to next meeting***
 - a. Rec. Trails Grant – Pleasantview Marsh Boardwalk, Vernon Marsh Bridge
 - b. Dart Hill Park – playscape replacement:
 - c. Consider extending Rockville Heritage Trail to Talcott Park area;
- E. River Protection: Actions, Public Education – *no time, discussion deferred to next meeting***
 - a. Conservation Commission - Aquatic Invasives Management

3. New Business – *no time, discussion deferred to next meeting.*

A. Werner Rd Bridge – Skinner Rd School Grant

The meeting adjourned at 12:10 pm, motion by George, second by Joe.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Letendre, Chairperson

VERNON GREENWAYS VOLUNTEERS REPORT

March 23, 2012 to May 25, 2012

Installed Posts for Mileage Markers at DHS – March 25 & 28

Don Bellingham & Eric Fisher.

Began Spring Cleaning of Adopted Plantings on Rail Trail - April 4

Tracy Gorecki and Planting Adopters

Prep Braille Trail for Dedication – April 16

Work Group of 7

Attended NEMBA Trail School – April 21

Don Bellingham and Rob Grasis

Remove Brush from Side of Rail Trail – April 28

Work Group of 13 in conjunction with Parks and Truck staff

2012 Spring Kick-off Meeting – April 30

Forty-three attended at Teen Center. Featured speaker was Nick Ballentoni

Garlic Mustard Pull at Church St – May 7

13 fifty-five gallon bags removed by work party of seven

Outing for High School Special Education Students from Ellington – May 18

Twenty-one students and fourteen teachers attended at Valley Falls Park. Assistance from Rockville Fish and Game Club and Ct Fly Fisherman's Association. Thirteen VGVs were on-site and six others supplied baked goods.

ARTHUR REPORT (P&R)
MAR 23 – MAY 25 2012

Joe and I have worked 75 hours picking up litter since the Mar 23 report. It is very helpful to get it picked up before the mowing season starts.

P&R maintainers, VGV volunteers, Joe and I, and Pedal Power volunteers have continued some clearing on the Rockville spur of the rail trail.

Bruce, Don and I met with Asst Fire Chief Steve Eppler and the EMT/Rescue people to discuss the emergency access routes for Vernon trails. The existence of unmarked trails in properties such as the new Tankerhoosen WMA was also included in the discussion. The use of cell phones, smart phones and internet web sites, will increase the future need for quick emergency response. Aaron Nash will be creating GIS layers to help the responders.

Joe and I helped Jane Seymour teach Vernon 3rd graders about the environment. The classes covered forest, stream and field habitats. Jane will also help P&R include similar coverage for the Valley Falls Kids Camp programs in July.

The work party to build the bridge and boat launch at the WTP in May was postponed and will be rescheduled during July.