

**DRAFT**  
**Town of Vernon**  
**Hockanum River Linear Park Committee**

Meeting Minutes – March 26, 2021

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VERNON TOWN CLERK  
21 MAR 29 AM 8:59

**Present:** Members: George Arthur, Ann Letendre  
Guest: Don Bellingham, Vernon Greenway Volunteers;  
Staff Advisor: P&R Director, Marty Sitler

The meeting was held at Saxony Park, following Covid masking and social distancing protocols

Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 9:35 am by Chairman Ann Letendre.

### **1. Approval of Minutes**

Minutes of the special meeting of February 26, 2021 were approved, motion by George, second by Ann.  
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. Don discussed the highlights, including the successful installation of new decking on the Rail Trail pedestrian bridge over the Tankerhoosen River. 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 six months. Both projects are funded by a Sustainable CT grant, and matching community funds.

#### **B. Review of trail needs**

- Gene Pitney Memorial Park – no further action on trail manager for site
- Paul's Pizza parking area – Still need to install a "Do not block entrance" sign at trail access
- Pleasantview Boardwalk – trail is getting a lot of use, tree roots are being exposed due to erosion.
- Saxony Park – (see new business below)

#### **C. Current Grant Projects – Status**

1. Friends HRLP Bridge and Boardwalk – final report presented at 2/16/21 HRLP meeting.
2. Trail Run stipulations – see D.1 below.
3. Railing at Suspended Bridge: Don was able to accommodate the cost of the rail in the Sustainable CT grant. Ann reported that she was not successful in finding a contractor that would use the stone posts as supports for the rail, which would be visually more appealing than the proposed design from Gateway Fence. Consensus was then to go with Gateway.
4. Trail Census – no new action activity

#### **D. New HRLP Trail Development / New Grant Applications**

1. HR Loop Trail at Trail Run – Ann reported that she met with the Town Planner, George McGovern, to discuss the approval stipulations set by the P&Z Commission for HRLP. He will determine if the conservation easement is in place, and when the trail work required by the developer will be done. Also, the HRLP Committee has to file for a wetlands permit before Trail Run developers can install a trail, and the location of that trail needs to be determined. The area is mostly wetlands and is difficult to access, boardwalks may be needed in some places. Town staff will provide assistance with the application. Ann also reported that an application for development of the parcel abutting Trail Run, owned by Mr. Hamid, has been filed, and a trail is noted on the plans. That parcel then abuts the Town property and the Hockanum Boulevard bridge, completing the parcels needed to create the Loop Trail.

2. Pleasantview to Manchester Line Trail Section - Don reported that the Trail Manager for this trail section, Dave Turkington, is ready to do some clearing, also that he wants to bring the trail under the Kelly Road overpass. Ann will speak with Dave about the permissions still needed from owners.

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

F. Other Hockanum River Trail Projects: none

### **3. New Business –**

#### **A. Saxony Mill Park – Dog Park**

1. The Committee walked the site and discussed improvements that could be made. Suggestions were made to create a defined entrance with bluestone blocks, do some cleanup and add mulch around the sign and entrance area. Trash is an issue. The garden area along the top of the old foundation needs a gardener's attention to the established plants. Marty said he doesn't have enough staff to attend to garden maintenance or trail maintenance here.
2. The Committee discussed restoring the trail to the sycamore. Consensus was reached that it should be done, but actually clearing away the area at the base of the tree might not be feasible. The trail along the river needs to be cleared. Don will look into the possibility of including the area under the trail maintenance "umbrella" of the Greenway Volunteers.

**4. Adjournment** Meeting adjourned at 10:30 am, motion by George, second by Ann.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Letendre, Chairman

## **Vernon Greenways Volunteers Report January 24, 2021 to March 26, 2021**

### **Trail Manager Continuation**

Sent out emails to our 15 Trail Managers concerning their continuation for 2021. Fourteen agreed to return. Need to replace the one who declined. Added a Trail Manager for the Pleasant View to Kelly Road section.

### **Submitted VGV Web Page Updates**

VGV Web Page (<https://vernongreenways.org>) updates to Jon Roe on January 15 were completed. He recently updated the Sycamore Tree rating that changed.

### **Sustainable Ct Grant**

I was contacted by Sustainable Ct about a possible grant where they would match monies we collected for a trail project. Selected was the repair of the Tankerhoosen Bridge on the Rockville Extension between Maple Avenue and Route 30. Project was projected at \$2,600; so, we had to raise \$1,300. We actually raised \$3,045. Adding a railing on the steep incline from ground level to the bridge at the Dave Smith Suspended Bridge was added and fully funded with what we had collected. The bridge has been repaired and we are deciding between two options for the railing. We are in receipt of the matching funds as well as the donations.

### **Work Parties in 2021**

We have had three work parties so far. The first two were assisting Parks and Rec in repairing the Tankerhoosen Bridge. The third was the collection of 6 tall kitchen bags of trash that had accumulated during the winter months by 3 VGVs on and around the Dart Hill South trail areas. Trail Managers were encouraged to pick up theirs before the spring growth starts and it becomes more difficult.