

Connecticut Greenways Council
Minutes of Meeting
October 15, 2019

VHB, Inc. offices, 100 Great Meadow Road, Wethersfield CT 9:30

A regular meeting of the CT Greenways Council was held Monday, October 15 at the offices of VHB, Inc. Present were chairman Bruce Donald, Laurie Gianotti, Jim Culpa, Joe Hickey, Paula Burton, Anna Bergeron, Bill O'Neill, Rich Lutz, Lance Hansen, Jamie Lintner and Gwen Marrion. Delia Fey, Stacey Stearns and Gene Nichols participated by phone. Bruce called the meeting to order at 9:37.

1. Call to Order and Welcome: Bruce.
2. Designation of Secretary for this meeting: Gwen.
3. Acceptance of revisions to agenda. None.
4. Adoption of minutes of September meeting: Joe moved, seconded by Bill, to approve and they were unanimously approved with Gwen and Bill abstaining.
5. Chairman's Report
 - Stamford voted not to accept the funding offered to them (\$160,000). Laurie asked for a letter from them. City Council asked if the offer could stay open until the end of the year because there might be a public vote in favor. The mayor indicated he is prepared to hold a public meeting and requested that the offer stay open. Bill spoke to someone from Stamford who also asked that the funding be held open in order to explore the possibility of engaging other groups to use the funding. Bruce noted that it is late in the year to rescind funds and there are no alternative projects that stand out. CGC could put the funds back into the pool of funding to be used in the next grant round. The State Bond Commission is probably meeting once more this year and although \$3 million is still in the budget for greenways projects, Bond Commission must approve. DEEP does not want to open a grant round without legislative authorization for the funding. No opposition was expressed to giving Stamford until the end of the year to commit to using the funding.
 - RFQ for Phase 6, Killingly (Quinnebaug River Trail south toward Moosup River Trail)
 - New Haven going to bid for Phase 4 (has been funded for six years)
 - Southington – almost fully designed. Permits will take 6-9 months
 - Pomfret – bid opening today
 - Moosup Valley Trail – RI DOT will build ½ mile to gain access to another project
 - Empire Trail – being built to Brewster. Not sure where it will connect to the ECG.
 - Riverfront Recapture – asked if CGC would like to walk it north of boathouse.

6. Legislative Report: License plate bill possibly fell through cracks. Possibly bundle it with next season's request. There are only about 3,000 greenways plates. Save the Sound program is only one that gets funds from the plate program.

7. CT DOT Bike/Ped Advisory Comm.: Anna reported that bridge "user fees" are now part of toll conversation. She was contacted about Route 7 bridge signage. Bruce would like to attend the meeting about that.

8. Old Business

- Trails Symposium Planning Committee: Laurie reported that planning is going well and response is good.

9. New Business

- Laurie reported that Charlie Tracy, CT Trail Census Coordinator, will report in November. She also reported that Ken Shooshan-Stoller from the Fed. Highways Administration is retiring soon and Susan Whelan is leaving the DEEP.
- Bill reported that 10,000 copies of the trail map from Hartford to Willimantic have been distributed and he is working on an updated version, possibly with new colored arrows showing access points from roads to trails.
- Bill asked permission to draft a letter to DOT to consider replacing fencing along trails with natural hedges, and to increase signage along highways showing where trails are. Bill has talked at national level to trail designers about using hedges. There was some discussion about positive and negatives of this idea. Laurie suggested doing a pilot program and a field trip to a place where hedges are being used effectively. There is support for the CGC putting out a position paper on this issue. DOT has been more flexible over the past decade about design issues. Jim noted that towns have to be involved in the conversation because they will have responsibility for maintaining the hedges.
- Jamie reported that neighbors of the Bloomfield Trail are happy with it but he was contacted by two people asking Eversource to change their policy on hunting (to prohibit it). Discussion followed about there being many trails on state-owned property and CT Forest & Park trails where hunting is permitted. People have to take precautions such as wearing orange. It was suggested that Eversource put up signs letting people know that hunting is permitted.

10. Public comment: None.

11. Next meeting: Monday, November 12. Last meeting of the year.

12. Adjournment: 10:48.

Submitted by

Gwen Marrion