

## **BLOOMFIELD TOWN COUNCIL**

### **Trails Committee**

There was a meeting for the above referenced ad-hoc committee held on Thursday, January 9, 2025 at 6:30 p.m. in a hybrid meeting style. The in-person meeting location was Bloomfield Town Hall – Wintonbury Room/Conference Room 5, 800 Bloomfield Avenue, Bloomfield, CT, and the virtual location was via Zoom.

Committee Members present were: *In-person:* Councilor Joseph Merritt, Chair; Robert Dickinson; and Kevin Gough

Committee Members absent were: Mayor Danielle Wong; Councilor Elizabeth Waterhouse; and Cory Bowie

Also present were:

*In-person:* Paula Jones; Lynn Weisel, Recording Secretary; and *via Zoom:* Dave Melesko, Director of Parks, Recreation & Leisure Services; and Rob Trottier, Town Engineer

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.

There was not a quorum, so no official business took place.

### **Approval of 11/14/24 Meeting Minutes**

There was not a quorum, so this item was tabled.

### **Town Engineer's Report**

Mr. Trottier provided an update of key items related to trails from the department. Highlights included:

- *Tariffville Section of East Coast Greenway:* This item will be removed from the report list as it has been completed.
- *LOTSIP—Trail from Town Center to Bloomfield High School:* A new Town vendor selection panel has been put into place, with a request that a new RFP be sent out to determine the on-call engineers. The RFPs are due 1/31, and it is anticipated that a project designer will be chosen in February.
- *Trail from Tyler Street to Rockwell Park:* The project design RFP for this project will be going out next week.
- *Transportation Alternatives Project—Trail from Hartford Town line to Bloomfield High School:* Mr. Trottier walked the proposed route with DOT in December. He submitted an RFQ, and is waiting for DOT compliance unit approval before it can be sent out.

The proposed route will connect to Hartford at Tobey Road, go behind Copaco Plaza, follow the Griffin line to Goodman Road, cross Cottage Grove Road at Tyler, and head west on Park Ave.

Councilor Merritt suggested including a connector with the University of Hartford.

There was a discussion for the route along Park Ave., and whether along Park Ave. or behind the

buildings would be preferred. It was noted that the CRCOG study rated the route along Park Ave. slightly higher than that of the route behind the buildings. The pros and cons of each route were discussed. It was highlighted that there are wetlands and floodplains behind the buildings, and the visibility of the trail along Park Ave. was a plus.

Mr. Trottier reported that DOT will be making pedestrian upgrades at the crossing of Cottage Grove Road to Tyler Street.

Mr. Melesko recommended that the Bloomfield Public Schools be included in the discussion about the trail, and Mr. Trottier noted that he spoke with the superintendent.

- *Town Center to Day Hill Road:* There were no new updates for this trail. Councilor Merritt wanted to ensure that the East Coast Greenway is included in the upcoming Town Center plans as some roads may be changing as part of the plan. Mr. Trottier will request, via Jon Colman, that the Town Center Economic Development Commission considers the East Coast Greenway path in their plans.
- *Blue Hills Complete Streets Project:* The Blue Hills project will include a bike lane. They are waiting for DECD approval to issue the award to the contractor for the project, with a projected contractor start date of April 1.
- *School Street / Wintonbury Ave Intersection:* VHB has started design on the intersection to realign the intersection and add traffic calming efforts. There was a discussion about the size of the sidewalks. The sidewalks will be the Town standard of five feet and made of concrete.

There was discussion about the need for additional sidewalks in Town, including along Blue Hills Ave. Mr. Trottier reported that the sidewalk from Filley Park to Geissler's has been designed, with an anticipated spring start date. Mr. Gough expressed his concern that the sidewalk will not extend to the apartments at Alexandria Manor, as well as about general missing sidewalk connections in Town, and suggested the need for sidewalk planning. Mr. Dickinson expressed his concern that five foot sidewalks do not allow room for both pedestrians and bikes.

Councilor Merritt requested an increase budget for sidewalks, and Mr. Trottier requested that he follow-up with Dan Carter.

- *Maple Avenue Project:* A vendor has been selected and design has begun.

There was a brief discussion of rails with trails versus rails with trails.

### **Old Business**

#### *East Coast Greenway Study Advisory Committee Update*

There was no discussion on this item.

### *Bicycle-Friendly Community Status Update*

Mr. Melesko met with Mr. Mitchell about the bike-friendly community application. The committee discussed the pros and cons of applying now versus waiting until more items from the application had been completed. It was noted that the application process was similar to that of the application for All-American City status, which is also underway in the Town.

Councilor Merritt requested that Mr. Melesko continue to work on the application without a deadline, in conjunction with the All-American City application.

Mr. Melesko requested that Councilor Merritt set up a meeting with the Bloomfield Public School superintendent via the Town Manager's office, to include discussion of all items that will benefit school-age children. This would include both the trails going by the schools as well as the bicycle-friendly community items.

### *Adams/Hoskins to Simsbury Connector Update*

Mr. Trottier, Mr. Carter, and Mr. Gough will schedule a time to walk the connector to determine next steps.

### **New Business**

#### *Filley Park: Trail Maintenance & Connection to LaSalette Trail*

Mr. Trottier reported that DPW has been doing maintenance on the Filley Park trails. He reported that there is a fence at the back entrance of the park, and the easement from Ocean State Job Lot is for Town employee use only.

Mr. Gough inquired about a trail from Filley Park to the library. It was noted that the park and library property do not touch, and that there are no easements to allow for connection. Mr. Melesko noted that there is a sidewalk along Tunxis Avenue from the library to the park.

#### *East Coast Greenway Path Inclusion in Town Center Plan*

This was brought up during the Town Engineer's report, and there was no further discussion.

#### *Ride the State: Boathouse to Statehouse Bike Ride*

Councilor Merritt reported that the Ride the State bike ride will come through Bloomfield for the first time.

### **Public Comment**

Ms. Jones noted her appreciation in getting caught up on all the various initiatives.

It was determined that future committee meetings would begin at 6:00 p.m. All in attendance were in agreement with the updated start time.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 7:39 p.m.