

**Rails to Trails
Special Meeting
Monday, April 16, 2018**

MINUTES

Present: First Selectman Dan Jerram, Jim Brett, Mark Russo, Member of the Public Laura Garay, Administrative Assistant Christine Hayward.

First Selectman Jerram called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

The First Selectman stated that this meeting was called to continue discussion of a potential “rails to trails” and determine a possible route and the best way to proceed.

Member Brett presented information he had compiled regarding ownership of properties abutting two possible routes for consideration.

Option one began in the center of town near Wickett Street and used the “old canal/aqueduct” that has been gifted to the Town. It runs along Route 44 and would become very narrow if using the roadside in the vicinity of “UpCountry” and “Michelangelos”. Mr. Brett suggested an alternate of having the trail run behind the “River Run Complex,” noting that a board walk would be required and then proceeding down along the river’s edge to Satan’s Kingdom.

Option two would use the existing sewer right of way/old railroad bed located behind businesses on Main Street. A couple of options regarding the trail location would need to be looked into in the area of Pine Meadow Farms. One option would be to have the trail come out in front of the complex and go into the front of property located at 238 Main Street (aka “Waring Building”) and continue down toward Satan’s Kingdom, using a cross walk to cross Main Street at some point to get access to the other side. A second option is to go behind 238 Main Street. It was noted that these routes are suggested only at this point; there is no formal plan. This is still in the planning stages.

Discussion ensued regarding the pros and cons of each proposed route. The narrowness of Route 44 and the proximity of a trail to traffic was a concern to all. It was also noted that there needs to be “buy in” from those who abut the trail in order for it to be successful. There needs to be consensus that a trail system is good for New Hartford. There was agreement that the old railroad bed seems to be the better option. However, there are challenges associated with that route that will need to be overcome. It was decided that initial contact with property owners abutting the route needs to be the first step. They need to be contacted directly so that they can be educated regarding the proposal. The group

agreed that professional expertise would be needed to assist in determining a feasible route. However, it would not make sense to have a consultant/study performed until there was some kind of comfort level with a proposed route. There was agreement that “we don’t need to pay for a study that says it is not a good option if we already know it is not a good option.”

Jim offered to prepare some materials that could be used when meeting with residents and meetings will be set up soon.

MOTION: by Jerram to adjourn at 8:07 PM; seconded by Russo.

Unanimous.

*Respectfully Submitted,
Christine Hayward, Administrative Assistant*