Azelea Park

Presentation to the Transportation Advisory Committee
August 27,2009

Presented by
Peter R. Flynn, Town Administrator

Outline of Book

1. Letter of Introduction

2. Letter of Intent (to the NH Department of Transportation)

3. Project Planning Background
   a. Open Space Trail System Plan
   b. Contoocook Valley Paper Mill Restoration Plan
   c. Henniker Community Profile

4. Formal Presentation

Henniker Board of Selectmen

Established November 10, 1768

August 27, 2009

Members of the Transportation Advisory Committee
CNHRPC
28 Commercial Street
Concord, NH 03301

Dear Members of the TAC Committee:

I am pleased to have the opportunity to come before you to present some history and ideas relative to a project that has been discussed and sought after for at least the past ten years.

The attached presentation will focus on my letter to Mr. Thomas Jameson of the NHDOT dated on July 1, 2009 and the various phases of the projects and also the importance. After reviewing and submitting my idea of including four phases in this letter, I have learned through further investigation that only one phase is valid at this point in time.

I have been more educated in the process as a result of a recent mandatory meeting with the DOT that explained many of the details and criteria in order to qualify.

Therefore, it was determined that the Phase 4 section would be more appropriate for discussion. This section would be pertinent to the short and long-term plan for a safe walking area and a redevelopment of Azalea Park, which has deteriorated over the last twenty years. This walkway is in desperate need of refurbishing, beautifying and the creation of exposure to the public view. The proposed walkway to extend from behind the Grange Building to the New England College Covered bridge. It would provide beautiful recreation opportunities for walkers and bicyclers.

I have attached a review of the many aspects of this project request for your review. They include:-

1. **Existing Conditions:** The trail connects to a historic pedestrian covered bridge. The trail is located in the middle of downtown surrounded by town offices, library, NEC and the middle school. Town residents would like to use the trail if it would be safer and more accessible.
2. **Project needs:** Transportation need- College Students-middle school-library and general population; Recreational need: Local residents and neighbors
3. **Project issues:** Lack of security, overgrown vegetation, lack of lighting, deficient surface conditions lack of signage and lack of ADA compliance
4. **Project Improvement Solutions**: Enhance surface conditions; provide adequate lighting to the trail, improve entrance to trail and make it ADA compliant, and introduce adequate signage

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with map included.

The estimated cost of the project would be broken down as follows:

a) Surface Material and labor - $28,000
b) Lighting- (ten Lampposts) -$26,000
c) Entrance improvement with ramps- $60,000
d) Signage with maps-$2,500
e) Engineering-$15,000

Total - $131,500.

On behalf of the Town of Henniker, I would appreciate your consideration in recommending and assisting us in bringing this project to fruition.

Thanking you for your consideration and looking forward to your input and response, I am

Respectfully yours,

Peter R. Flynn
Town Administrator
Peter R. Flynn
Town of Henniker, NH

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Office of Selectmen

Incorporated
November 10, 1768

July 1, 2009

Mr. Thomas Jameson
NH Department of Transportation
7 Hazen Drive
Concord, NH 03301

Dear Mr. Jameson,

In this letter, the Town of Henniker outlines a four-phase pedestrian and bicycle transportation improvement project funded, if chosen, through the Transportation Enhancement program and Safe Routes to School program over the next six years. This TE request for this round meets the eligibility criteria of Activity Number 1, Number 2 and Number 5. A future TE request will focus on Activity Number 8.

What Henniker Believes

After identifying transportation and land-use priorities in its last master plan update, the Town plans to begin implementing an intermodal transportation strategy for the integration of pedestrians, bicycles, busses, carpools and park and ride facilities. To improve commuter habits and traffic patterns within the Town, the master plan identified as a priority the development of a local bicycle network that would connect to regional and state bicycle networks and connect already-developed areas of Town to key community services. The Town has also made it a priority to implement, where possible, traffic calming devices, especially in downtown, including the consideration of installing roundabouts, reducing speed limits, installing speed tables while preserving road aesthetics. Infrastructure improvements would be coupled with aesthetic improvements to make the Town more pleasing to walk and bicycle through. In addition, the Town plans to promote the pedestrian and bicycle route systems and undertake a "Share the Road" campaign to bring awareness to safely using the new healthy recreational and transportation opportunities in and around Town. The entire project has the full support of the Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission and the Town's SRTS committee.

Why These Proposed Projects are Important to Henniker

At their core, the proposed TE- and SRTS-funded projects will drive the Town's pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure improvement plan. Prior to this proposal, the Town made significant infrastructure improvements downtown in 2001 that improved safety like adding new lamp posts and sidewalks along Bridge Street (NH Route 114) from Henniker Pharmacy to the Simon Center. Additional lamp posts were replaced in the Community Park near the Masonic Building. These improvements have made it safer from the Village to New England College.

The Town was motivated to continue safety improvements in the fall of 2001. There was a fatal accident Western Avenue just east of Liberty Hill Avenue in which a New England College student was struck and killed by an oncoming motorist. The student was walking on a narrow shoulder, which remains so, because there was, and still is, no sidewalk on Western Avenue. There is also multi-unit condominium complex by the accident location and there is a significant amount of foot traffic, including joggers, along Western Avenue. Western Avenue, Route 114 and Main Street are atop the Town's list in terms of locations for known automobile

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accidents. The TE and SRTS funded projects will continue work on infrastructure and aesthetics so that fatal accidents like that mentioned above can be avoided.

Phase 1 Overview

Phase 1 of the project will extend .36 miles of sidewalk on Western Avenue from its intersection with The Oaks to the School Administrative Unit. Costs are currently being studied by the Town, but are expected to be approximately $200,000. Funding from this TE round is being requested to cover this work.

Phase 1 will add a sidewalk on Western Avenue around the location of the accident where the sidewalk ends. The project is the Town's top priority because it receives significant foot traffic in the form of walkers and joggers, because it serves significant amounts of traffic in Town and because there is potential for future bicycle lane expansion. The proposed project area also encompasses the Henniker Police Department—a key town service—and the School Administrative Unit, which is a major employer in Town. The project area is also connected to a multi-unit condo complex and several students of the Henniker Community School (school enrollment is approximately 500 students) live in the complex. Heading west, the sidewalk extension will connect with the sidewalk serving the rest of Western Avenue and Main Street (name change occurs at the NH Route 114 split in the center of Town). This portion of the road has key community services including the Tucker Free Library. CNHRPC recently conducted a preliminary intersection level of service analysis to assist the Town with its SRTS and TE grant applications. CNHRPC found the least compatible intersections for pedestrian use were at Western Avenue and Hall Avenue (a key intersection for the White Birch Community Center, Henniker Community School and Tucker Library) and Main Street and Crescent Street (a key intersection for the Henniker Community Center and Christian Fellowship Church). Phase 2, described below, will address sidewalk improvements needed at these locations.

Phase 2 Overview

Phase 2 of the project will complete priority sidewalk work as identified in the Town's master plan along with any additional projects that make sense to include. The Town SRTS committee and the CNHRPC will continue to work together to develop a plan of action for completing the sidewalk work. The SRTS committee will be submitting a SRTS planning grant application in July to determine which existing sidewalks downtown near the Henniker Community School need improvement, what areas would benefit from new sidewalks and where bicycle lanes could be added.

In reviewing potential projects, the CNHRPC and Town officials identified a handful of projects that could be completed in future. One project includes adding crosswalks across Western Avenue from Hall Street. Another project could be installing a traffic calming device to block off a portion of the Main Street/Ramsdell Road/Crescent Street intersection. Another project could include the creation and implementation of a access management plan for Route 114/Main Street intersection, which is the center of Town. Another project could be a .6 mile extension of sidewalk heading east from the Circle Street/Park Street/Weare Road intersection where the sidewalk currently ends. Another project could be an extension of sidewalk heading north from the U.S. Post Office over the NH Route 202/9 bridge to connect to the Harvester Market, which can only be realistically accessed by motorized vehicle.

The SRTS committee plans to submit a SRTS travel plan grant once work from the planning grant is completed to help implement the infrastructure improvements. All SRTS activities will be accompanied by the "Share the Road" campaign and other encouragement and enforcement activities.

Phase 3 Overview

The Town identified the creation of a local bicycle route that would connect downtown to the Colleague Pond via Rush Road. This project was identified as a priority in the master plan as part of the development of a local bicycle network that would connect to regional and state bicycle networks and connect already-developed areas of Town to key community services. The CNHRPC will assist the Town in conducting an initial feasibility study, and project implementation, through future TE and SRTS requests.

Aside from connecting downtown to Colleague Pond, the Rush Road project would allow residents Rush Square Apartments, a new 30-unit senior housing project, to get around the Town without having to rely on their cars. In connection with the bicycle route, the Town and CNHRPC will look to improve and expand local bicycle infrastructure that safely connects key locations within Town, such as community centers, churches, the library, police station, schools, college buildings, etc. Infrastructure improvements would include widening, striping and paving the shoulders of Town roads to accommodate bike lanes. The Town will also work with New England College to place bicycle racks at academic and residential buildings. The Town will also encourage, through site plan regulations, the placement of bicycle racks at businesses and multi-family developments, where appropriate. It will also work with CNHRPC to help promote public awareness, acceptance and the possibility of bicycling as a viable mode of transportation.

Phase 4 Overview

The Town has an extensive inventory of abandoned railroad rights of way. The Town plans to develop a local advisory committee to explore the Rush Road project and this committee will also explore the acquisition of abandoned rights of way. If the project is determined to be feasible, the Town will submit a future TE application to acquire the rights of way. The Contoocook River runs along Western Avenue to the north and south of the river is Town Hall and New England College (approximately 1,300 students and 200 employees), where many students and staff walk and bicycle into Town.

The abandoned rights of way run near the Contoocook River. The Town sees the project as serving dual purposes. First, it would serve as an alternative route for people going to and from the college to Town. Second, it would provide beautiful recreational opportunities for walkers and bicyclers. The total project would go from Bennett Road to Newton Road and be approximately 2.5 miles. In its first phase, the project would go from the Ramsdell Road bridge and head west onto Western Avenue along the river to Liberty Hill Avenue where the Phase 1 sidewalk project has been proposed. This segment would be approximately 1 mile.

Thank you for considering our request. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Peter Flynn, Town Administrator

CC: Rodrigo Marion, CNHRPC

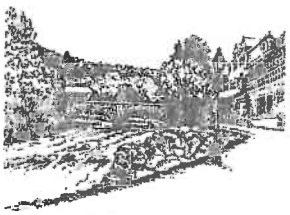
OPEN SPACE TRAIL SYSTEM PLAN

view of the Contoocook River from the old railroad bed

FOR THE

TOWN OF HENNIKER, NEW HAMPSHIRE

July 1999



The Only Henniker On Earth

Produced by:
Henniker Trails Steering Committee
2 Depot Hill Road
Henniker, NH 03242

and

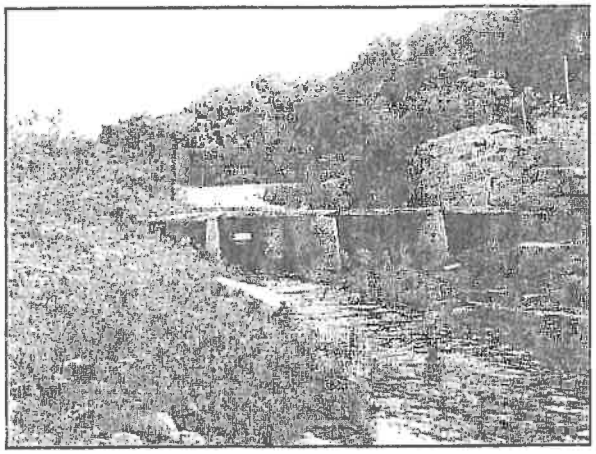
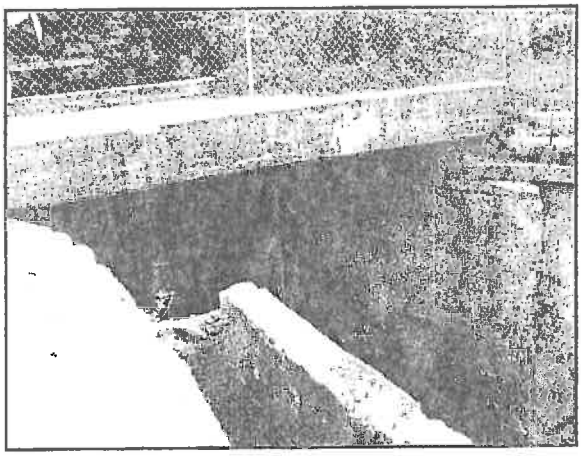
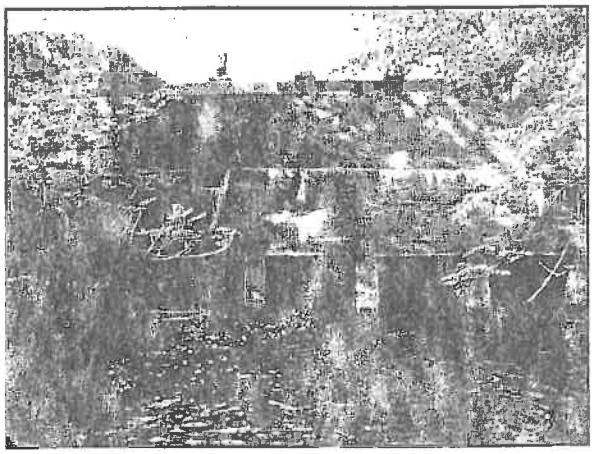
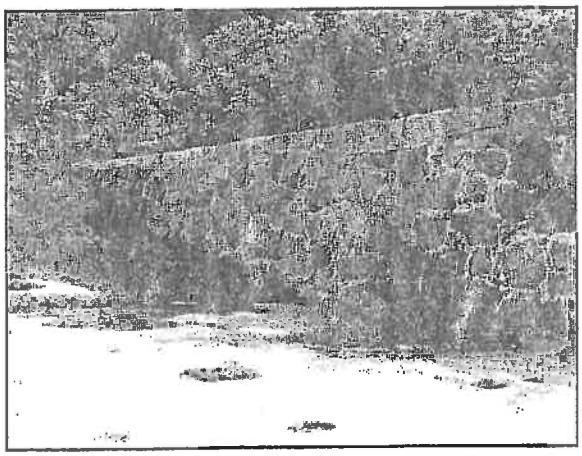
Central NH Regional Planning Commission
12 Cross Street
Penacook, NH 03303

Through the Year-Two Regional Environmental Planning Program with funding from:

NH Department of Environmental Services
6 Hazen Drive
Concord, NH 03301

DRAFT 2

Town of Henniker, New Hampshire
Contoocook Valley Paper Mill Restoration Project

August 2004

Prepared by:

GOMEZ AND SULLIVAN ENGINEERS, P.C.

Engineers and Environmental Scientists

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Utica, NY 13502

55 North Stark Highway
Weare, NH 03281

UNIVERSITY of NEW HAMPSHIRE
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

Henniker
Community Profile
Report

Henniker, New Hampshire
April 17 & 18, 2009

    - Promoting NEC events
    - Partnership programs
- Improve low-tech communication (2 votes)
    - Bulletin board available to everyone at all times
    - Welcome wagon
    - Frequent newsletter
- Communication/Recreation (4 votes)
    - Coordinator (cultural, events, recreational, community center)

5 Volunteerism, Citizen Participation, & Leadership

- Recognition for volunteers; event such as dinner; tax credit (3 votes)
- Improve communication about volunteer opportunities and what is required of volunteer by: personal contact; outlook more frequently; e-newsletter (36 votes)
- Make better use of high school and NEC community service volunteers (17 votes)

ACTION GROUPS

After the voting, the groups were to focus in on the top project from each group. These are listed below with information each group pulled together to prepare for the May 4th follow-up meeting.

#1 – Meeting Needs of All People in Town

- Comprehensive Facility (CF) – researching and look at other towns re: CF. A centralized facility that coordinates many programs now in separate locations, e.g., after-school, health, education, recreation, athletics for all members/ages of community (24 votes)

#2 – Improve Village Vitality

- Create a Chamber of Commerce (23 votes)

Riverwalk – Who Needs to be involved:

- Army Corps
- Selectmen
- Conservation Commission/DES
- Planning and Zoning Board
- Professional planner – to decipher restraints on riverside land
- Landscape architect/contractor
- Forest Society to work with private landowners
- Community volunteers
- Grant writer
- Youth to gain ownership
- A project manager

- Representative from college as well as other landowners
- Trout Unlimited/kayakers, etc.
- Whoever will be in charge of maintaining the park
- Trail Rights Club
- People involved previously in park efforts

What Resources are Needed:

- Floodplain map
- Grant $
- Volunteers
- Community input – survey or other
- Donations of materials
- Photographer

Prior to May 4th

- Talk with Army Corps of Engineers – Jim McElroy
- Lot map and list of owners – Martha Sunderland
- Research on grant possibilities – Bob Stamps

#3 Natural Resources/Rural Character

- Conduct a study that shows the socio-economic potential of the natural resources and maintaining the rural character that will define the town's natural resources; and how to promote/market for town benefit. **(27 votes)**

Who will be Involved?

- Planning Board
- Peter Flynn
- Conservation Committee
- Selectman
- Grant Writer
- Historical Society
- Business Owners – Restaurants, Pats Peak
- Rotary/Lions/Civic organizations
- College – research; student involvement; stakeholder
- Cooperative Extension
- Fish & Game
- Corps of Engineers
- OEP
- Division of Tourism
- Citizen Involvement
- Henniker Paddlers
- ATV/snowmobiles – Henniker Trail Travelers

Azelea Park Presentation

Presentation to the Transportation Advisory Committee

August 27,2009

Town of Henniker, NH

Project Location

Azelea Park Subject Photo

Tax Map

164
0.69 Ac
165
0.4 Ac(S)
407
0.21 Ac
406
1.74 Ac
409
1 Ac
410
1.13 Ac
206
0.51 Ac
208
0.5 Ac
205
0.44 Ac
211
0.23 Ac
210
0.35 Ac
222
2 Ac
413-A
4.03 Ac
413-C
0.36 Ac
209
0.25 Ac
414
0.50 Ac
415
0.3 Ac
416
0.28 Ac
417
0.1 Ac
472
471-A
71-B
408-A
1 Ac
413
3.62 Ac
408-B
1.1 Ac
418
5.1 Ac
465-I
4.5 Ac
464
0.39 Ac
BRIDGE
STREET
ROUTE
UNION

Project Issues

Unauthorized entrance from private property

Proposed entrance from Town parking lot behind Grange building.

Proposed handicap access point at proposed entrance.

Trail connection to New England College Covered Bridge

Project Issues

Frequent vandalism.

Deficient surface conditions

Lack of Signage

Project Improvement Solutions

Continue trail beyond park to loop around to covered bridge.

Project Cost

Estimated Costs

• Surface Material and Labor	$ 28,000
• Lighting (10 Lampposts)	$ 26,000
• Entrance Improvements with ramps	$ 60,000
• Signage with maps	$ 2,500
• Engineering	$ 15,000
• Grand Total	$131,500