



December 12, 2014

Honorable Selectboard;

Please accept this as an abridged accounting of recent activities of the Town Administrator on your behalf and related to various projects and initiatives.



**Winter;** Two things can be gleaned from this photo, first I stole it from someone else's collection and more importantly we have settled in for a long winter it seems.

On a related subject, I recently met with Beth Greenblatt from Beacon Associates, Jim Weglinski and an associate from Siemens, Chief Labrie, Bruce Mailhott (Schools) and ATA/Facilities Manager Jennifer

Wolowicz to discuss the energy reduction project and related ESCO and QECB. The project has still not "closed out" due to Siemens inaction, but they are working on it now. We have held up a significant amount of their contract until such time all the parts are in place, all the training has been completed and the system is working as touted.

The good news was that the schools are seeing a reduction in energy usage beyond the required 20% for the QECB and the municipal areas, especially the Police Station, where energy saving devices were installed are also seeing an estimated 25% plus reduction. Because the commissioning is not complete it is not a complete picture and of course the price of utilities will also have an effect the bottom line, but having lower usage is certainly a good foundation no matter the "price" of energy.

This should not make us complacent, especially with predicted increases in energy pricing from electricity to natural gas and beyond. We continue to remind, cajole and demand people be more aware of the need to shut things down, turn things off (including computers ...TA), reduce where possible and generally conserve all resources.

**Bachelor Brook/Scenic By-way Route 47 Project:** Janice Stone Conservation Director, Chairman Jack Fleming (Conservation), Richard Harris Planning Director, myself and Anna Capra Maddocks and her team from Conservation Works, as well as Chris Curtis from the PVPC, met to discuss the progress of the

project. It is one of those projects the SB Has heard about so many times, it must seem like nothing is happening, I promise we are making progress.

There is a great deal of permitting and other requirements and this was an opportunity to strategize the best approach making this happen from an environmental or economic perspective. One of the key partners in any plan going forward will be to have HG&E understand and support this project. I have connect Anna with Rich Murray at HG&E so they may work through those issues.

Of course the Conservation Commission will have a critical role in the planning and permitting, Jack and Janice seemed very much up to the task of bringing people into nature without nature running away like its hair is on fire. Having a respectful co-existence is something I believe everyone desires and will work to achieve.

The type of bridge over the brook is yet to be determined. When asked if the "town" wanted to hold the conservation restrictions, I explained if there was another third party from the environmental community (Kestrel, Trustees of the Reservation) who would consider being the land stewards I suggested that path should be explored. This project has a long way to go, but it is getting closer through expert guidance.

It should be stated however, while this project would hopefully complement and have a nexus with the "South Hadley" Bike Walk/Study, yet they are not tied to one another. This trail systems and the Canal Park system will however be two nice pieces of the puzzle to build on for the much anticipated Bike/Walk strategy.

I have added the map and narrative description of this project to the end of this document. I am not the author or cartographer for either attachments.

**Mohawk's on Gaylord!:** By now it is not much news, but Mohawk Fine Paper has chosen to file only one application with the Economic Assistance Coordinating Council. I will be attending meeting where the application will be discussed on December 17<sup>th</sup> in Boston and do not expect any significant issues surrounding the approval.

While there is yet another leg of the race to run on the 17<sup>th</sup>, I am feeling more and more confident about the success of this project. I cannot thank the SB enough for your support from the beginning. I sincerely believe the reception (and turnaround) Mohawk recived from Town Meeting on November 12th had a weighty influence on the decision. It also should be mentioned that when late in the race we needed a boost from SHELd in matching the incentives from our neighbors they quickly rose to the task.

The most impressive item to consider may be the fact this was all accomplished in less than sixty days. It also is yet another signal to the business community South Hadley is truly business friendly.

**Budget FY 16:** As of this writing I have had a dozen department level meetings with about another eight to go. Things are progressing well there is no bad (or let's say terrible) news to report, but this is only the first meetings and only represents the expense side of the equation.

The cooperation from the departments and the work the departments are performing is admirable. The managers are all understanding the need for hard decisions to be made and we must rely on innovation to deliver services. It is also necessary for the public to understand our service delivery model is and will be different from what it was in the past.

I am hoping I will have a general feel for the FY 16 budget by early January. As is always the case there is not enough to do everything we would like, but we will do the best with what we have.

**Bonding \$9.5 million:** I would like to thank everyone for their cooperation on the recent bond issuance, I apologize we had to have the twenty five plus documents signed by the Selectboard in less than 6 hours, but appreciate their cooperation. I would especially like to thank Treasurer Baldini who has been impressive in coordinating and delivering the final product. There are copies of the bond issuance in the Selectboard Office and Town Clerk's Office and as soon as I have the final electronic copy we will place it on the web.

Many communities are envious of both our bond rating and the rate we received when we went out, I am sure you have been hearing rumbling of a change in interest rates. This is something we and our advisors will be watching closely

**CivicPlus:** Speaking of the web, the design continues. I appreciate the participation of Selectboard members Etelman and Hine at the last webmeeting with Civic Plus. I appreciate your comments as well as those of the department heads in attendance and I am hopeful you recognized how we are trying to build a much more functional site. This project has been an inside out project and by that I mean I felt it is important to have the internal capabilities and needs satisfied to put a product out which works for the public in an expeditious manner.

Jamie Doolittle our IT Coordinator has taken on the bulk of the work, but has had help and input now from several departments. It will be vital to the success of this endeavor to get good training and have everyone engaged in the end product. Thanks Jamie!

**40R Smart Growth:** Larry Smith (PVPC) and Richard Harris South Hadley's Planning Director gave a interesting and insightful presentation on the subject of the 40R district recently. It was clear to everyone in attendance how this will become another tool in the drawer. There is no "one" solution. One act, one process or one mechanism which will breath life in to an underutilized area, it is always many shoulders pressing forward.

There were several inquiries as to how this would fit in with the Redevelopment Plan and as suggested by the experts (Larry and Richard) there was little downside and significant upside. The simple fact that the 40R district comes with an automatic grant upon acceptance and approval from DHCD may suggest a reasonable funding source for the work of RA. This was an idea presented at the meeting which was not mine, but seems reasonable to consider.

I appreciate what I learned from the presentation and am anxious to see how this continues as a community conversation. Thank you Larry and Richard.

**General Code:** Town Counsel Edward Ryan, Richard Harris (Planner), Carlene Hamlin (Clerk) and I met recently to review some of the formatting issues and numbering issues which must be addressed at the Annual Town Meeting in May. These adjustments to the by-law will not effect the tenor or meaning of the by-laws, will require a simple majority and will not be allowed to be amended in this form, as the subject and or intent is not being changed.

The system will provide the town with templates and by-laws from other communities to consider for either implementation of replacing an existing by-law. I hope we will see a demo in March or early April

of how this system works. There will be further discussion on the matter and ample opportunity to ask the contractor related questions. This is a huge step and one which will be of great benefit to the community.

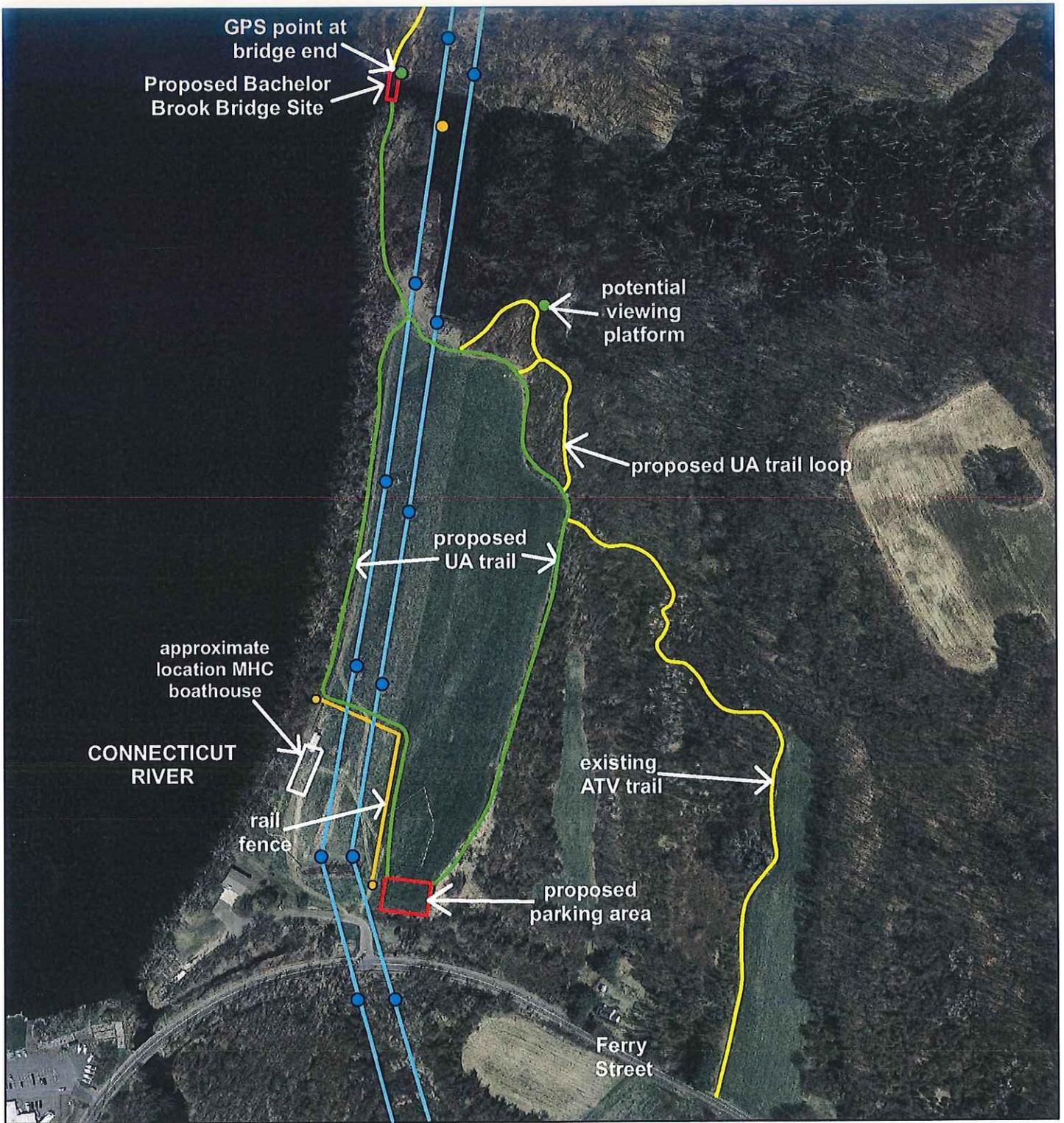
**Town Hall December Schedule:** Town hall will be open normal business hours on December 26 and January 2<sup>nd</sup>, however I encourage customers to call ahead to departments, due to the number of individuals who are taking time off some departments may be closed. Town Hall will be closed at noon on December 23<sup>rd</sup> and all day the 25<sup>th</sup> and all day January 1<sup>st</sup>.

Thank you for the opportunity to work in this wonderful community, I enjoy the success and accept the challenges ...just not with the same level of enthusiasm. Happy New Year.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael J Sullivan

Town Administrator, South Hadley



GPS point at bridge end  
 Proposed Bachelor Brook Bridge Site

potential viewing platform

proposed UA trail loop

proposed UA trail

approximate location MHC boathouse

CONNECTICUT RIVER

rail fence

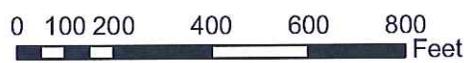
existing ATV trail

proposed parking area

Ferry Street

- Northeast Utilities Power Line
- Approximate Perimeter of Proposed Parking Area
- Proposed universally accessible trail
- Other trails
- Power-Line Towers

### Proposed Bachelor Brook-Ferry Street UA Trail & Parking Area - CT River Byway Project



Ortho Photos from Mass GIS 2009

This map is for planning purposes only, with specific points subject to verification on the ground. It is not to be used by itself for legal boundary definition.



Conservation Works - Sept 27, 2014

**Bachelor Brook Trail Concept**  
**Ferry Street, South Hadley, Massachusetts**

The Town of South Hadley in cooperation with the Pioneer Valley Planning Commission and Mount Holyoke College is seeking to develop a universally accessible non-motorized loop trail from Ferry Street to Bachelor Brook, and a bridge crossing at Bachelor Brook. This trail network would connect to existing trails on the abutting conservation land owned by the Town of South Hadley in Bachelor Brook Conservation Area on the north and south sides of the brook. Please refer to the attached map titled "Proposed Bachelor Brook – Ferry Street UA & Parking Area – CT River Byway Project" for a conceptual design layout for the trail.

Preliminary design plans for the trail are construction of a graded aggregate surface, approximately 5 feet wide. The surface would be excavated to mineral soil, filled with compacted graded base, and 3/8" minus graded aggregate for the surface. A small parking lot for 10 cars (50' x 60') is proposed to be located to the east of the driveway entrance for the Mount Holyoke College Boathouse on the College's property. The driveway surface will also be of a compacted aggregate.

The trail head would be at the parking lot on the College's property, then extend along the existing split rail fence, cross under the powerlines to the west, and continue north to Bachelor Brook just outside the existing hayfield in what is currently a sumac and invasive multiflora rose edge. The trail would intersect with a proposed bridge at Bachelor Brook. Design of the bridge has not begun, however, either a truss or suspension bridge for pedestrian access only is envisioned. The bridge would connect users to an existing trail on the north side of the brook. On the south side, the trail would loop to the east, cross under the powerlines, and stay on the edge of the existing hayfield back to the parking lot. Western Mass Electric Company has granted permission for the trail to cross their right-of-way.