BLOOMFIELD TOWN COUNCIL

Trails Committee

There was a regular meeting for the above referenced ad-hoc committee held on Thursday, February 12, 2026 at 6:00 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

Committee Members absent were: None

Ad Hoc Members present were: *In-person:* Kevin Gough; *and via Zoom:* Robert Dickinson

Ad Hoc Members absent were: Cory Bowie

Also present were:
In-person: Bill Adamson; Nancy Bowden; Paula Jones; Lynn Weisel, Recording Secretary; *and via Zoom*: Ted Goerner; Ruthanne Marchetti; Steven Mitchell (left at 6:41 p.m.); Rob Trottier, Town Engineer; Councilor Elizabeth Waterhouse

The meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m.

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

Approval of 11/14/24, 1/9/25, 3/13/25, 6/17/25, 12/11/25 Meeting Minutes

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

Town Engineer's Report/Update

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

- *Woodland Ave*: The Town has applied for funding via LOTSIP for a 605-foot gap in the sidewalk along Woodland Ave, and then to extend the sidewalk 7200 feet to Blue Hills Ave. Applications will be reviewed in April with announcements made in May.

- *School Street / Wintonbury Ave Intersection*: Mr. Trottier will talk to CRCOG to see if sidewalks to connect to Seabury can be included in the current project. He requested the petition letter and signatures from the residents of Seabury, and noted that if approved, the Town may have to pay for the design. There was an inquiry about asking for sidewalks going past Seabury down the remainder of Wintonbury Ave. Mr. Trottier noted this request would be outside the current project limits.

- *East Coast Greenway*:

    1. *Town Center to Bloomfield High School*: A new rail operator is expected to be signed sometime in March, and the Town is currently working with the consultant who reviewed the new rail operator.

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2. *High School to Tobey Road*: DOT approved the scope of the project, and design should start in the spring.

3. *Tyler Street to Blue Hills Ave*: A public meeting for this section is likely in March.

4. *Tobey Road to Tyler Street*: This route will follow the railroad tracks to Cottage Grove and then over to Tyler Street. The Town is finalizing the scope with the selected consultant. DOT is funding this project.

5. *Town Center to Day Hill Road*: There were no new updates for this trail. DOT is motivated to complete the East Coast Greenway, and approaching them from a political perspective may help.

- *East Coast Greenway Plan*: There has been no update on the finalization of the East Coast Greenway Plan.

- *Terry Plains Road Trail*: Connecticut Forests and Parks Association submitted the grant application to fund the Terry Plains Road trail.

- *Maple Ave Traffic Calming*: The on-call designer for the project is now a one-person operation which has slowed the process down. The final design is being finished and project will go out to bid in March.

- *Tyler Street to Rockwell Park*: This trail is the most likely to get be completed this year.

New Business

There was a brief discussion on when the East Coast Greenway gaps in Simsbury would be completed. Mr. Mitchell reported that the work would likely be done in two phases: 1) to Route 10 and Tariffville Park and 2) the bridge. The project is currently with DOT.

Mr. Gough requested that Mr. Trottier add sidewalks between Bloomfield Congregational Church and Geissler's Plaza to his list of projects.

Mr. Gough inquired about the Bloomfield Land Use Department public hearing signs at Reservoir 3, and Mr. Trottier reported they were likely for an IWWC hearing on an MDC sewer lining project.

Public Comment

Ruthanne Marchetti, 669 Bloomfield Ave, read the attached statement on behalf of Sharon Mann, requesting that the Bloomfield portion of the East Coast Greenway be named in honor of Councilor Joseph Merritt. Councilor Waterhouse echoed her support. Ms. Jones noted that Ms. Mann brought the renaming idea to the Parks & Recreation Committee and they agreed it was a wonderful idea. She thought both the Parks & Recreation Committee and CEEC would be likely to add their support.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

DRAFT

My name is Ruthanne Marchetti. I live at 669 Bloomfield Ave, Bloomfield. I am reading this for Sharon Mann, who is unable to be here tonight because she is in Hawaii with her siblings.

Dear Members of the Trails Committee,

I am writing to respectfully recommend that the Town of Bloomfield formally recognize Councilor Joseph Merritt for his extraordinary contributions to our community and, in particular, for his visionary advocacy on behalf of trails and greenways. I further propose that the Bloomfield portion of the East Coast Greenway be named The Merritt Bikeway in his honor.

Councilor Merritt's service to Bloomfield is unparalleled. With more than 37 years on the Town Council—the longest tenure in the town's history—he has demonstrated unwavering dedication to good governance, public safety, and community well-being. Over the decades, he has served on and chaired numerous critical bodies, including the Police Building Committee, the Library Renovation Building Committee, and the West Hartford–Bloomfield Health District, where he served as Chairman from 2004 to 2008 after years of prior service.

Of relevance to this committee is Councilor Merritt's leadership in trail development and greenway planning. As early as 2005, he personally surveyed and documented the potential route of the East Coast Greenway through Bloomfield, laying important groundwork for what has become a vital regional and local asset. His appointment as Chair of the Trails Committee reflected both his commitment and his foresight. In 2015, his efforts were recognized statewide when he received the Connecticut Greenways Council Special Achievement Award.

Beyond town government, Councilor Merritt's background reflects a lifetime of service and leadership. He is a veteran of the United States Navy, serving as a Lieutenant in Special Operations. He is a graduate of Dartmouth College with a degree in Government and earned a master's degree from the MIT Sloan School of Management. His professional career includes founding and managing a small manufacturing company in Bloomfield, senior leadership roles in industry, and nearly two decades as an Enrolled Agent tax preparer serving local residents.

The East Coast Greenway represents connectivity, stewardship of the land, and a commitment to future generations—values that Councilor Merritt has embodied throughout his public life. Naming the Bloomfield section the Merritt Bikeway would be a fitting and lasting tribute to his vision, persistence, and service to our town.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of this recommendation and for your continued work on behalf of Bloomfield's trails and open spaces.

Respectfully submitted,

Sharon Mann

Bloomfield, Connecticut

I wish to add that I am in full support of this recommendation, and I ask that you let us know how best to move it forward.

Ruthanne Marchetti