

**CHENEY BROTHERS NATIONAL HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**  
**MINUTES OF MAY 27, 2021**  
**VIRTUAL MEETING VIA ZOOM**  
**5:30 P.M.**

Members Present: Lynne Ferrigno, Co-Chair; Bettye Kramer, Co-Chair; Mary Dunne, Geoffrey Naab, Susan Barlow, Curtisea Anderson, Amanda DeLaura, William Farley, and Jack Prior, Ex-Officio

Members Absent: Leslie Frey, Secretary; Tom Ferguson, Rita McParland, Mary Ann Handley, and Starr McLean

Also Present: Gary Anderson, Director of Planning and Economic Development; Jeff LaMalva, Town Engineer; Katie Williford, Administrative Secretary

Ms. Ferrigno called the meeting to order at 5:36 p.m.

I. Adoption of the Minutes of April 15, 2021

Ms. Kramer moved to adopt the minutes. Ms. Anderson seconded. Ms. Kramer suggested rewording a sentence on the last page that reads, “a statement about whom the Cheney Commission is and what they are about.” Mr. Naab suggested changing “whom” to “who” and “they” to “we.” Ms. Kramer agreed. All members voted in favor of adopting the minutes as amended.

II. New Business

1. Discussion and recommendation: 91 Elm St. – Proposed Dog Park

Sarah Blood, Regional Manager for the Lofts at the Mills Apartment Homes, presented the application. She explained that the apartments’ demographics have shifted to more families over time. A playground was added recently, she said, and they would like to put in a dog park to add to the area with the playground. The goal is to create a nice space where dogs can run around safely. The park would have a chain link fence and pet-friendly mulch, Ms. Blood said.

Ms. Blood displayed a photo of the current playground and indicated where the dog park would be. She also displayed a photo of a dog park at the company’s Middletown property, explaining that the proposed park would be similar, with several benches and waste stations.

Ms. Anderson asked how high the fence will be, noting potential safety concerns.

Ms. Blood replied that she would provide specifications of the fence dimensions to the Commission. It is a standard black chain link fence. She added that there is quite a bit of space between the proposed dog park and the playground.

Mr. Naab moved to approve the proposal.

Ms. Blood asked who she should send the fence height information to. Mr. Anderson asked her to email it to him and copy Senior Planner Megan Pilla. Ms. Blood noted that the contractor wouldn't be scheduled to do the work until mid-June.

Mr. Prior asked how often the ground will be cleaned of waste. Ms. Blood said the mulch would be refreshed annually and there is a maintenance team that maintains the grounds daily, including removing animal waste.

Ms. Ferrigno asked if there is a limit to the number of dogs at the apartments. Ms. Blood replied that there is a limit of 2 dogs per apartment, with a breed restriction.

Ms. Kramer seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

## 2. Discussion and recommendation: 91 Elm St. – Cheney Rail Trail Extension

Jeff LaMalva, the Town Engineer, presented the application for work within an easement at 91 Elm Street to enhance access to the new Cheney Rail Trail. Mr. LaMalva displayed a plan and a photo of what the area looks like currently, noting that the trail is somewhat hidden and unappealing.

Mr. LaMalva explained that the proposal is to relocate the apartment dumpster pad into the parking lot area and create a new sidewalk with attractive landscaping. The new sidewalk would connect to the existing walk on the east end of the complex and connect it to Forest Street. Some parking spaces will be impacted, but the Town has entered into an agreement with the complex to relocate those spaces. There will be a continuous pathway from Forest Street to that trail.

The reconstructed dumpster pad will be approximately 40 ft. long by 10 ft. deep to house all the dumpsters shown in the picture, Mr. LaMalva said. He showed an example of fencing that is typically used around dumpster pads, which is a solid wood panel fence reinforced with concealed steel posts.

Mr. LaMalva said bike lane markings will also be painted on the existing pavement, in order to guide cyclists to the trail.

Ms. Kramer asked if the parking spaces are all for the residents or if some are available to trail users. Mr. LaMalva responded that they are for the residents.

There was discussion about possible locations where trail users could park, including Cheney Hall and the Town parking lot on Broad Street.

Mr. Farley suggested adding signage informing people where they could park to use the trail. Mr. Prior agreed with that idea.

Ms. Ferrigno asked if there is currently signage indicating that the Lofts at the Mills lot is for residents only. Mr. LaMalva said he believed there is such a sign.

Regarding the signage on the road itself, Ms. Barlow suggested using the silhouette of the Cheney locomotive that is used on the sidewalks that go over the East Coast Greenway.

Ms. Anderson said she liked the proposal, as it aesthetically enhances the town.

Ms. Barlow moved to accept the proposal. Ms. Anderson seconded the motion.

Mr. Prior reiterated that he would like signage indicating where people should park for the rail trail.

Ms. Ferrigno asked for Mr. LaMalva's recommendation regarding signage about parking. Mr. LaMalva said he could discuss it with the Town Traffic Engineer, but he anticipated his suggestion will be to put signs where parking is prohibited.

Mr. Naab said that the question about parking is not a big concern because there won't be a large numbers of cars needing to park to use the trail. Mr. LaMalva added that the intention was more for pedestrian traffic from neighborhood residents to access the trail in that location.

All members voted in favor of the motion.

### 3. Request regarding sponsorship of Great Lawn Walking Tour – June 19, 2021 – Susan Barlow, Town Historian

Ms. Barlow explained that the walking tour would help the Commission with publicity and visibility within the community. She and Mr. Ferguson have traditionally done the tour on New Year's Day. There would be no fees charged and no insurance would be needed, Ms. Barlow said. Fuss & O'Neill gave permission to park in their lot on Hartford Road, so the tour would start there – at 148 Hartford Road. Ms. Barlow described the proposed route, noting that most of the walk is on Town-owned property. If the tour leaves public property, it would be with permission from homeowners.

Ms. Barlow explained that, in the publicity for the event, she would like to list the Commission as a sponsor.

Ms. DeLaura suggested that the Historical Society could make a Facebook event, which her husband, one of the owners of Labyrinth Brewery, could share. Ms. Barlow explained that she didn't ask the Historical Society to be a sponsor because their insurance charges \$500 to insure walks. Ms. DeLaura said she would be willing to make a Facebook event, although it is easier to share if an official page makes it first. Ms. Barlow said she would look into having it posted on the Town's Facebook page.

Ms. Barlow said the event could also be shared in the Town's e-newsletter that reaches 880 people. She also offered to share a poster with Commission members so they could print and share it.

Ms. Barlow suggested people could go to Labyrinth Brewing after the walking tour. Ms. DeLaura said she would ask for the brewery to create a promotion for those who attended the tour.

The Commission unanimously endorsed sponsorship of the walking tour.

### III. Old Business

Ms. Barlow asked if any members had looked at properties with demolition permits on Oakland Street and Lillian Drive. Mr. Prior said the Historical Society found nothing historically significant about either structure, so they have not contested the demolition.

### IV. Communications

### V. Committee Reports

Ms. Ferrigno asked Mr. Anderson to report on the Historic Preservation Awards. Mr. Anderson said the event went very well, with better turnout than expected. He said that Mr. McLean had never organized the event before and did a great job, and Ms. Boyle put in a lot of work as well. Ms. Ferrigno said Ms. Boyle was extremely helpful and the Commission greatly appreciated her work.

Ms. Barlow said that this year is the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the DAR fountain in Center Memorial Park, which was designed by Charles Adams Platt. She suggested holding a walking tour, possibly in July.

### VI. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

### VII. Adjournment

Ms. Kramer moved to adjourn, Ms. Barlow seconded and all members voted in favor. The meeting adjourned at 6:23 pm.