

**WATERTOWN TOWN COUNCIL  
SPECIAL TOWN MEETING  
JUNE 27, 2023  
MINUTES**

**WATERTOWN TOWN HALL  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
61 ECHO LAKE ROAD  
WATERTOWN, CT 06795**

A Special Town Meeting was held at Watertown Town Hall, Council Chambers, on Tuesday, June 27, 2023. Mary Ann Rosa called the meeting to order at 5:45 pm and solicited for the election of a Moderator for the meeting.

MOTION: Denise Russ I move to nominate Mary Ann Rosa as Moderator of the Special Town Meeting.  
Robert Retallick seconded.

Are there any other nominations? Are there any other nominations? Are there any other nominations?

Hearing none.  
Nominations are closed.

Mary Ann Rosa is moderator of the meeting

Mary Ann Rosa asked for nomination for Clerk of the meeting.

MOTION: Robert Retallick I move to nominate Susan King as Clerk of the Town Meeting.  
Robert Desena seconded.

Are there any other nominations? Are there any other nominations? Are there any other nominations?

Hearing none.  
Nominations are closed.

Sue King is Clerk of the meeting.

Mary Ann Rosa, Moderator: read the legal notice.



**WARNING AND NOTICE**  
**TOWN OF WATERTOWN, CONNECTICUT**  
**SPECIAL TOWN MEETING**  
June 27, 2023

The legal voters of the Town of Watertown and those entitled to vote in Town Meeting are hereby **WARNED AND NOTIFIED** of a Special Town Meeting to be held on Tuesday, June 27, 2023 at 5:45 p.m. at the Watertown Town Hall in the Town Council Chambers to consider an appropriation from the General Fund in the amount of \$498,900 for the design of the Steele Brook Greenway Project State Project #153-125. Funds will be reimbursed at 80 percent (\$399,120) through a State of Connecticut Department of Transportation grant.

A link to view the special town meeting will be posted on the Town of Watertown website [www.watertownct.org](http://www.watertownct.org) by 4:00 p.m. on the date of the meeting.

Anyone wishing to vote at the Special Town Meeting must attend in person.

Anyone wishing to provide comments for the meeting may do so by emailing [towncouncil@watertownct.org](mailto:towncouncil@watertownct.org) or by mail to Watertown Town Council, 61 Echo Lake Rd., Watertown, CT 06795 and must be received by 2:00 p.m. June 27, 2023.

If you require a translator, or accommodations for a hearing impairment or other accommodation, contact the Town of Watertown at 860-945-5255.

Dated at Watertown, Connecticut this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of June, 2023.

Mark A. Raimo, Town Manager

**MOTION:** Robert Desena seconded by Robert Retallick: I move to authorize an appropriation from the General Fund in the amount of \$498,900 for the design of the Steele Brook Greenway Project State Project #153-125. Funds will be reimbursed at 80 percent (\$399,120) through a State of Connecticut Department of Transportation grant.

Jerry Lukowski, Director of Public Works/Water & Sewer Superintendent stated this is a reimbursable type project from the Department of Transportation for a grant. A & E was selected which is Weston and Samson based on DOT guidelines which is a quality-based selection. This was briefed to the Public Works Sub-committee and the goal of this project is to have a

preliminary design completed by October 1<sup>st</sup> which is 30 percent. The goal for construction is in the summer of 2025 which is also funded from the state around two and half million dollars for the construction of this greenway that goes basically from French Street, past Unico Field.

Mary Ann Rosa asked the public if they had any questions or would like to make any comments?

Day Palmer, 49 Knight Steet, business owner stated as usual we are here to inquire whether this project is going to incorporate any flood control measures while they are working in that area. We have seen that you have gone down in Turkey Brook and have gone through lots of people's yards, cleaned up lots of things, you must have gotten permission from people to do that. We are requesting that the same thing be done with Steele Brook and you had addressed some of the flooding that goes through time and time again, especially when you are working right there in the flood plain. My main question is, is there anything in the plan now and if there isn't can anything be considered before the work begins.

Mary Ann Rosa answered I would have to ask Mr. Lukowski, I don't think so.

Day Palmer added if nothing is going to be addressed on it we will be voting no tonight.

Jerry Lukowski stated with this greenway, there is going to be one bridge that is going across Steele Brook. It is going to be designed to take into consideration of flow both upstream and downstream with the calculations that we have. That will definitely be out of the scope of this project to add in drainage. There is drainage for the project but not for the entire Steele Brook to make the corrections. We will be working underneath Steele Brook, underneath the bridges starting in the next couple of months, further down in Oakville which is to the south of this location.

Robert Retallick asked has there been any plans or do you know have we cleaned out that portion of Steele Brook in the past?

Jerry Lukowski answered I am not sure of the limited history that I do have. I do know there is a lot of gravel that was deposited where the dry cleaners is coming off the state highway. There is a couple of locations that we are cleaning down in that location. Just on drainage in the bigger picture, we have to go after our 60 detention basins that we started cleaning that is going to help elevate the flow into Turkey Brook as well as Steele Brook. We do have longer term plans which we are going to need additional funding for. I am also diving into evaluating the four damns that the town owns, to see if we can flow water before the storm and help elevate the flow that we have at Turkey Brook and Steele Brook.

Robert Retallick asked can you look into this matter to see if the town has in the past pulled debris out of Steele Brook in the area that this greenway is going in. What is the maintenance schedule because I know that is an issue with all of the business owners down there during large rain storms.

Jerry Lukowski answered correct and I also know we are chasing a FEMA grant for Knight Street for culvert replacement that feeds into the Steele Brook area.

Robert Desena stated I am a firm supporter of this greenway project. I have been a frequent flyer utilizing the perspective path beginning down around 900 Main Street in the area of Steele Beech Commons, going north it goes by the new Dog Park its very level, it's very true, it is considered to be the old railroad right of way, very flat. I can say that many times traversing there while trying to run through. I am glad it's going to be opened up in the end to cross French Street to connect to the area of the greenway behind the Siemen building. I have never seen any flooding issues, is my take on it.

Bill Donston, 105 Dunrobin Lane stated flooding has always been an issue down through Watertown and Oakville, we are all aware of it. At one point it was horrendous especially for Gowans and Knights, Leo J. Hamill was down there and the bus depot. The biggest thing is, we did in Watertown, we created it. When we opened up how many sites at Mount Fair, we opened up the sites, a couple off of Northfield Road, we opened up building sites up here off of Route 63 and we also opened up at the time we John Trumbull School, all at the same time. Where did that water run off going right into Steele Brook and flooded out all the people down there. All those sites are now overgrown with landscaping and we haven't had a good large major flood down there in a while. The last did we did have was a result of broken drainage by Dr. Capozzi's office which send flood waters down by Gowans and Knight, piping between Shakers and Dr. Capozzi's office the town repaired that. We have had several large rain storms since then and the drain is now handling the water. We shouldn't let our guard down; it could come back but the town created the problem by opening up so many building sites at one time. Allowing that much water to drain off, if we had the foresight at that time, maybe opening up only 20 building sites when they are complete open up another 20 not open up 140 buildings sites.

Mark Raimo, Town Manager added just to reiterated what Mr. Lukowski said is we did apply for a FEMA grant to replace the culvert down on Knight Street. We are exercising the valves at our lakes so that we can drop those lakes if needed of an impending storm. We are doing culvert cleaning so that those detention basins will hold the water. Not that I would promise anything for the Knight Street area but certainly we could clean similarly as we did down in Oakville. It's not a promise but we will certainly look at it as we move forward with the projects.

Al Mickel, 95 Woodvine Avenue stated it surprised me that it cost a half million dollars for design work. Once the design work is done the construction starts, how much is it going to cost you to construct the greenway. This would be premature because this is going to start 2025 but I am wondering how much it is going to cost the town to maintain it.

Lisa Carew, Park & Recreation, 389 Northfield Road stated one of the important things to remember also Steele Brook is the dam that has blown out a couple years ago. Where the pedestrian bridge is right down on the road on the corner and if anybody remembers that the whole dam was wiped out so that should elevate some of that backing up in that area that was getting congested. Nobody mentioned it and I wanted to mention that.

Joe Masi, 33 Pleasant View Street stated you have to understand and remember the things that have happened in this town. In 75 I was on the council; do you remember that storm it had that fatality and all the businesses down off of Knight Street were washed out. There was water very deep, that was never been resolved. We had a core of Army Engineers at that particular time they were here a couple of days and didn't do a lot. That thing was never really touched, never been given a specific grade that would access the water from the high area to the low area including eliminating that dam behind Steel Brook Gym. A lot of work has got to be done down there. I am all for greenways but flooding is very important, it effects people lives, it effects businesses, our enjoyment. It has to be looked at, thank you.

BY VOICE VOTE THE MODERATOR DECLARED THE MOTION PASSES

Meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Mary Ann Rosa, Moderator

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Susan King, Clerk