

Daniel C Ramirez, Wilder, VT.

I live in Wilder, VT with my family. We live next to the park and have noticed several areas for improvement. We love the park but it can be better. Great River Hydro has a legal obligation to provide recreational improvements and maintenance for the residents who live in the Town. I have not observed any efforts of this while living here.

The park has so much potential but has limited access to the river. It should be able to be enjoyed by the residents of the town. There used to be a wooden dock on the North end that gave opportunity to launch kayaks and made it a nice destination for families. It was well cared for. It was then replaced by a cheap plastic dock that ended up never getting put back in after COVID. There are large concrete blocks and debris everywhere from old structures that need to be cleaned up. There have been no real improvements in the park in regards to small water craft launching. People can get hurt without safe ways to enter the river.

There is a ton of invasive plants that are damaging to the environment and need removal or mitigation. The trails are very overgrown in some areas and minimally maintained. There are also a ton of invasive species crowding out native plants which support the local ecosystem. The park is in serious need of reforestation in some areas. It was completely unacceptable when the power company sprayed dangerous chemicals on the trails that connect the two parts of the park last year. This should never be allowed again.

Open access across the dam! Being able to cross the river and making a greenway up and down the Connecticut River valley would be an invaluable improvement to community members. There is no excuse why the damn cannot be crossed. If there is a railing that needs to be fixed, fix it. Invest in the community that the dam is on. There are several dams that cross the Connecticut River that allow pedestrian foot traffic across. This would provide people in the park access to Boston Lot and continue the beautiful Greenway up and down the river. This would be supported by both sides of the river and allow more recreation. For those without vehicles it is near impossible to get to Boston Lot. This would help those with limited means have access.

Safety is also a concern as there have been overdoses in the park and it should be consistently closed and opened at the operating times. This needs to be enforced.

There is also a trail just north of the park called the Hazen Trail. This trail is on private land but accessible by the public. Connecting the park to this trail would also permit safe footpath for running and hiking all the way to Norwich and the Montshire museum and Hanover. This is a real opportunity to create a family and community centered gathering space where the beautiful scenery and wildlife in the park can be enjoyed by all. If our park could connect these two existing trail systems, it would create tens of miles of trails and really improve and encourage outdoor exercise and activity.

Educational placards identifying the flora and fauna would also be a project for the future that could involve community members, schools, and teach the public about the wildlife.

Thanks for your consideration

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