



Town of Portland, Connecticut  
Equal Opportunity Employer  
**Office of the First Selectwoman**  
33 East Main Street / P.O. Box 71  
Portland, CT 06480-0071  
Phone: 860/342-6715  
Fax: 860/342-6714  
[www.portlandct.org](http://www.portlandct.org)

March 7, 2014

**H.B. No. 5415 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING THE AIR LINE STATE PARK TRAIL**

The Town of Portland would like to express its strong support for H.B. No. 5415 (raised)  
**An Act Concerning the Air Line State Park Trail.**

While we support this bill, please note that we find objection to the use of the term "**eminent domain**" in the bill language and urge you strike these words. We would also like to have the words "**bike and horse trail**" added into section 1 (d) after the word "**...footpath**".

The Board of Selectmen urges passage of H.B. Bill No. 5415, as thus amended.

There is strong support in Portland for the Airline Trail. In fact, the Portland Board of Selectmen recently passed the following resolution, appointing a seven (7) member Steering Committee to assist the Town in its efforts to restore the Air Line Trail:

**RESOLUTION  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
Town of Portland, Connecticut**

**March 5, 2014**

**RESOLUTION CREATING A STEERING COMMITTEE FOR THE CAMPAIGN TO DEVELOP  
THE AIR LINE TRAIL IN PORTLAND**

WHEREAS, many individuals, groups and organizations, including but not limited to, the Portland Open Space Group, The Lower CT River Valley Council of Governments and the Jonah Center for Earth and Art, have re-ignited public enthusiasm and support for redevelopment of the Air Line Trail in Portland; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Portland is in the process of concluding a license agreement with Northeast Utilities granting permission for the public to use specific sections of the historic rail bed in Portland for recreation; and

WHEREAS, the Portland Board of Selectmen recognizes the need to appoint a committee to organize, guide, and support a larger group of citizen volunteers in activities to build public support for the trail, develop specific plans for trail access, identify funding sources, and cooperate with regional entities - activities that, together, will improve the effectiveness of Portland's effort to restore the Air Line Trail in Portland; and

WHEREAS, the areas of activity envisioned as part of this effort include, but are not limited to:

- Investigating preferred bike and walking routes within Portland that will eventually connect to the Air Line Trail, as well as to Middletown and Glastonbury, since these regional connections will be vital to users of the trail and to securing funding for the required reconstruction;
- Installing signage and constructing small parking areas at points where roads intersect the trail to facilitate greater use of the trail before major funding for reconstruction is available;
- Organizing and conducting outdoor events such as hikes, bird watching outings, and clean-up efforts along the Air Line;
- Gathering information and developing relationships on regional and national transportation initiatives such as the section of the trail from East Hampton to the Portland Town line, the East Coast Greenway, and the movement to preserve railway beds for transportation and recreation; and
- Communicating with the Connecticut Department of Transportation and Department of Energy and Environmental Protection on matters such as pedestrian and cycling accommodations, traffic calming, mass transit, highway design, recreational trails grants, and State Park improvements

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Selectmen, pursuant to Sec. 405 (5) of the Portland Charter, hereby creates an Air Line Trail Steering Committee (hereinafter the Committee) consisting of seven (7) regular members; and be it further

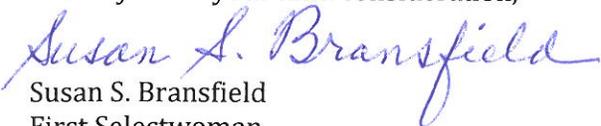
RESOLVED that the First Selectwoman, the Planning and Land Use Administrator, the Director of Parks and Recreation, and the Director of Public Works shall be *ex-officio non voting* members of the Committee with all the rights, duties and responsibilities accorded *ex-officio* members; and be it further

RESOLVED that the Board of Selectmen retains the right to decide whether to replace any members who may resign or be removed for failure to participate in the work of the Committee, and if such members are not replaced, the actual number of members shall be those members serving at any given time; and be it further

RESOLVED the Committee shall adhere to all aspects of the Freedom of Information Law dealing with public agencies; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Committee shall continue to function until such time as the work called for in this resolution is completed, at which time the Committee shall notify the Board of Selectmen, and the Board of Selectmen shall disband the Committee.

Thank you for your kind consideration,

  
Susan S. Bransfield  
First Selectwoman

Portland Board of Selectmen:

Carl A. Chudzik  
Mark J. Finkelstein  
Frederick R. Knous

Ryan J. Curley  
Brian M. Flood  
Kathleen G. Richards