

Parker Comments on the Proposed Multi-Use Pathway



Jeff Parker, Republican candidate for the first selectman's seat and a member of the Easton Board of Education, commented on the proposed multi-use pathway on Sport Hill Road. Read incumbent First Selectman David Bindelglass's comments [here](#). Bindelglass, a Democrat, is completing his first term in office and running for re-election.

The pathway is one of the items on the agenda for the **Special Town Meeting** on Monday, Sept. 13 at 7 p.m. at Samuel Staples Elementary School.

Following is Parker's opinion on the Pathway:

"The health and safety of our children has always been my first priority. It goes without saying that any project that would better serve our children and our community is worthy of our full consideration.

By way of background, the application for the pathway project was signed in October 2019, just one month before Dave Bindelglass became first selectman.

Two years have now passed and the following issues and questions remain:

1. Proponents of the pathway believe it will provide safe travel for students walking

back and forth from Helen Keller Middle School to the Easton Village Store.

However, a non-negotiable codicil in the grant mandates that both skateboarders and bicyclists will be able to use the pathway. Years ago, skateboards were banned from the sidewalks of HKMS because they were deemed a safety hazard to pedestrians. That same hazard would exist on the pathway as the town would be bound by the terms of the state grant.

2. The projected costs of the pathway has changed from its original quote of \$888,000 to \$1.5 million and now to the current figure of \$1.25 million without a clear explanation. We need to fully understand the financial implications of this project in order to move forward.
3. Easton waited nearly a decade for final reimbursement from the state after the building of the new Samuel Staples School. With taxes on the rise, we need be cautious about another project that could put taxpayers in a similar position ... especially since taxes are already creating an undue burden on our senior citizens.
4. The fact that we are still debating the merits of this project makes clear we need to use common sense and carefully evaluate its advantages and disadvantages. Simply because the state is willing to fund a portion of the project does not necessarily mean it makes sense for Easton.

I encourage everyone to attend the meeting on Monday, Sept. 13 and participate in the conversation. Let's work together and come to a decision that is in the best interest of our town. See you there."