



## Meeting Notes

Wednesday, September 10, 2014 - 9 to 10:30

Derby City Hall

2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Aldermanic Chambers

1 Elizabeth St, Derby

See last page for attendance and a roster of steering committee members.

**Mayor Anita Dugatto** was on hand to welcome the committee. The Mayor spoke about the benefits of having the Derby Greenway in the City, and explained that it was her intent to create a walkable city to match.

Jack Walsh briefly discussed the history of the **Derby Greenway**, as well as the Valley Chamber's Healthy Valley initiative.

- Bill Purcell and the Valley Chamber are seeking a National Heritage Area (NHA) designation for the entire Naugatuck River Valley from the National Park Service. There are currently 49 heritage areas administered by NPS in which the NPS partners with, provides technical assistance and distributes matching federal funds from congress to NHA entities. NHAs are designated by congress.
  - The CT delegation did introduce testimony before Congress, though with limited funding, congress may be reluctant to add additional areas.
  - Susan Petersen commented that the designation may be attached to a bill to designate the lower Farmington River a Wild and Scenic River designation with NPS, and may increase chances of passage.
  - More information about heritage areas: <http://www.nps.gov/history/heritageareas/INDEX.htm>

Chuck Berger gave an update on **Watertown's** progress.

- Watertown is still working closely with Thomaston on receipt on a DEEP grant that will fund planning of the Watertown section and construction of a short section in Thomaston. DEEP is now requesting that an amphibian and reptile study be conducted before it will OK the grant. The town is looking into options.

Sam Gold announced that **Waterbury** will receive **\$14.4 million** of the \$19 million requested in the 6<sup>th</sup> round of **TIGER** grants.

- The Waterbury Active Transportation and Economic Resurgence (WATER) Project is a multi-faceted mobility enhancement project that will revitalize Waterbury's river/rail corridor neighborhoods and downtown center and drive the economic resurgence of the City and region. The grant includes reconstruction of Freight and Jackson Streets, a new pedestrian/bicycle bridge over Meadow Street, and Meadow Street Station area improvements, but not construction of the Waterbury Naugatuck River Greenway Phase 2 (may be built with local match as part of the WATER project).
- For more information please visit the Waterbury TIGER webpage: <http://www.waterburyct.org/TIGER>

Rista Malanca explained that **Torrington** is still planning a greenway/ trail workshop in November, although details are not final.

- Taking trail system into account when assessing the overall development in Downtown Torrington.
- "Clean up the World" worldwide event will be held on September 20<sup>th</sup>. Torrington will be taking part.

Jack Walsh discussed the **Committee's Priorities** which were developed by Ingrid Manning with information gathered from the municipal comments submitted and presented on in July.

**1. Finish Map**

- An interactive map of the greenway route can be viewed at <http://bit.ly/1CJzqi6> which will be kept updated with the most up to date and accurate information available, and can be made publically available.
- Point data will be added to call out critical features along the trail

**2. Develop a presentation on the economic benefits of greenways** and the possible economic effect in the Naugatuck Valley. Such a presentation was noted by several towns as needed to convince municipalities and others about the greenway benefits.

- It could be possible to apply for a Community Foundation Grant for funding for such a project, but the deadline is 10/1.

**3. Trail Section Priority-Naugatuck to Waterbury City Line funding**

- With Phase I and II in Waterbury in good shape, the connection to Naugatuck's already completed sections of greenway is critical. The committee should focus on locating funding sources.

**4. Develop New Funding Sources**

- There will not be a lot of Federal funding until a new Transportation Bill is passed – MAP 21 ends this month. A new Transportation Bill will probably include funding for trails, and NRG is in a good position to receive a share. Coordination with congressional delegation may help.
- Investigate better coordination of greenway construction with brownfield remediation and redevelopment.
- Invite DEEP Brownfields Coordinator, Mark Lewis, to future meetings.
- Collaboration with non-profits to assist with fund raising/ fiduciary responsibility was discussed
  - Friends of the Waterbury Greenway is a 501-(c)(3) and may be willing to receive grants for the group, and may make public support and donations more feasible.

**5. Assist the City of Torrington** and Torrington Trails Network Group to develop trail network in the city and connections to the Sue Grossman Trail.

- Assist John Monroe and the City to provide information to the city at November workshop.

**6. Routing-Torrington city line to Thomaston Dam**

- Facilitate communication and meetings between the USACE, Thomaston, Litchfield and Harwinton officials to designate preferred routes and add them to the map.

**7. Routing – Beacon Falls to Ansonia**

- Facilitate communication between Seymour, Ansonia Beacon Falls and DOT officials to develop routing.
- Assist VCOG with current effort to assess routing through Seymour.

**8. Review public access** for fishing, kayaking, and general river access and add to map.

- There are currently efforts underway that we should be able to add to our map.
  - Rivers Alliance – Water Trails Maps - <http://www.ctwatertrails.org/main.cfm>
  - CT Fisheries- has mapped public access and is working on permissions from private land owners.

**Mark Nielsen** from VCOG discussed progress that is being made in the **lower valley**, and introduced **Rick Dunne**, Executive Director of VCOG who was instrumental in the construction of the Derby Greenway.

- VCOG is working on a State funded transit oriented development (TOD) pilot program in Derby and Shelton. The project includes several improvements to improve access to the Derby Train station from housing in Derby and Shelton. A Shelton to Derby study is finishing up, with a public information meeting to be scheduled sometime this fall. The goal is to connect existing and planned housing development to transit and commercial areas. Includes:
  - A “bike boulevard” along Main Street with a pedestrian plaza.
  - Renovation of Derby-Shelton Bridge to create a “public access bridge” with safe bike and pedestrian access that is attractive and inviting to non-motorized users.
  - Connections to the Derby Greenway and access to the train station.
- The Route 34 corridor reconstruction project is entering final design soon, and will also improve bike/ped access.
- VCOG is advocating for rail service improvements and the state has committed to improve service on the Waterbury branch. Along with easier access to the rail station, these improvements should attract commuters and young professionals to Shelton and Derby.
- VCOG is also studying potential routing of the NRG through Seymour, and Mark passed out maps of the potential routes developed by a GIS intern over the summer. VCOG will be holding public information meetings soon to get public feedback. Once the preferred route is determined, it will be added to the NRG map.
- Mark and Rick explained that Shelton opted to fund most of their greenway locally, sidestepping the requirements that are tied to state and federal funding, and resulting in a much lower total cost. This should be considered where possible.

**Sam Dziekan** from HVA, (NR website manager) presented on progress with the **website redesign**, which is being undertaken by HVA and a website designer thanks to a grant from the Connecticut Community Foundation.

- Sam showed examples of pages on the new website, and explained that the design is nearing completion, and content will be migrated once finalized. Site management will be undertaken with the same content management system as the current website. The new site was designed to adapt to different screen sizes and will be phone and tablet friendly.
- Check out the designs at the links below, but please note that content has not yet been added.
  - New landing page: <http://dev.naugatuckriver.net/prototype/index.html>
  - Sample Content Page: <http://dev.naugatuckriver.net/prototype/fishing.html>
  - Sample Content Page with a Sample Map: <http://dev.naugatuckriver.net/prototype/fishing-maps.html>

**Kevin Zak** discussed an effort he is undertaking to encourage towns to adopt practices to reduce the amount of plastic and trash entering the river.

- He suggested that the state should adopt Total Daily Maximum Loads (TMDL) for trash just like other pollutants.
- Kevin also talked about **trash excluders**, devices which are designed to strain trash from stormwater either at storm drains or from drainage outfalls. These devices range in cost from hundreds to thousands of dollars, but would only need to be installed at problem areas that have probably already been identified. Maintenance and emptying could be included along with routine maintenance. Waterbury has agreed to try them and Derby and Torrington have expressed interest.

Next Meeting: **DATE CHANGED to November 19<sup>th</sup>**, Torrington.

- Details will follow.

## **Naugatuck River Greenway Steering Committee**

Present in **bold**.

**Aaron Budris - Council of Governments of the Central Naugatuck Valley**

Bill Purcell - Valley Chamber of Commerce

**Bob Gregorski - Naugatuck River Watershed Association & Trout Unlimited**

**Christopher Way - US Army Corps of Engineers**

**Chuck Berger - Watertown Town Engineer**

Clifford Cooper - Litchfield Community Greenway

Dave Faber - CT Outdoors (outfitter in Watertown)

Elaine LaBella - Housatonic Valley Association Land Protection Director

**Fred Messore - Town of Seymour**

Ingrid Manning – formerly of CT Community Foundation

**Jack Walsh - Valley United Way**

Jim MacBroom – Milone and MacBroom

Jim O'Rourke - Waterbury Y

Jim Stewart - Naugatuck Borough Engineer

Jim Whitney - Western CT Convention & Visitors Bureau

Joan Kirchner - Harwinton Conservation Commission

**Jolene Podgorski - Watertown DPW**

John Monroe – National Park Service: Rivers & Trails Program

**Josh Carey – Connecticut Community Foundation**

Kate Rattan - CT DOT Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator

Kathy McNamara - City of Waterbury

**Kevin Zak – Naugatuck River Revival Group & Housatonic Valley Association**

Laura Wildman – Princeton Hydro

Laurie Giannotti - CT DEEP Greenways

Liz Falzone - Beacon Falls – Citizens for Tomorrow's Downtown

Mark Jewell – VHB, Inc (CT DOT)

Maura Martin - Thomaston Trails Committee

**Mark Nielsen – Valley COG**

Mike Jastremski – Housatonic Valley Association

Peter Kisselburgh – Thomaston Trails Committee

Ray Leite - Digital Arts Program at Naugatuck Valley Community College

Rich Minnick – Beacon Falls

Richard Knoll – TEAM Inc. (Community Action agency in Ansonia)

**Rista Malanca - Torrington**

**Sam Dziekan - Housatonic Valley Association**

**Sam Gold - Council of Governments of the Central Naugatuck Valley**

Sheila O'Malley – City of Ansonia

**Susan Peterson - CT DEEP Watershed Management Program**

**Vicki Barnes - Watertown - Steele Brook Rangers**

**Vincent Gualtieri - US Army Corps of Engineers**

Vinnie Scarlata – Ansonia Economic Development Commission

**Will Cummings – Thomaston Trail Committee**

Also Present:

**Rick Dunne, Valley COG**