



Naugatuck River Greenway Steering Committee

Torrington • Harwinton • Litchfield • Thomaston • Watertown • Waterbury • Naugatuck • Beacon Falls • Seymour • Ansonia • Derby

Meeting Notes

Wednesday May 10th, 2023, 9am Via Zoom

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

Rista Malanca started the meeting, and introductions were made.

CT DEEP Recreational Trails Program NRG Recap

Kim Bradley, DEEP Recreational Trails Coordinator, announced that awardees had been notified of 2023 Rec Trails Awards, and a press release should come out from the Governor's office shortly. Overall NRG related submissions were very successful. Ms. Bradley requested that local public award announcements wait until the official state press release, and announced that there will be a webinar on May 17th for awardees. There were 97 submissions, 66 of which were highly ranked, many of which were funded. There will likely be more funding in future rounds.

Ms. Malanca sits on the Connecticut Greenways Council, which reviewed the submissions, and explained that there were a lot of submissions, and it was a very difficult process to make selections for awards.

Slides were presented for each of the NRG -related submissions:

- **Ansonia – Awarded** - Design of connection between Pershing Drive and Nolan Field
 - The City is completing a routing study to connect downtown Ansonia and the NRG to Nolan Field and applied for design funds for that section.

- **Derby – Not Awarded** - Derby NRG Pedestrian Bridge Repair
 - The pedestrian bridge that carries the NRG Trail over the Maybrook rail line has design flaws and has begun corroding at the abutments. Repairs may cost up to \$500,000. The closure of the bridge would close a significant portion of the Greenway. Derby has invested significantly in the bridge and is an important part of the City's downtown redevelopment.
 - Jack Walsh explained that the City had applied recently for a Connecticut Communities Challenge grant for the bridge repair along with other NRG improvements like lighting and fencing.

- **Naugatuck – Awarded** - Maple St to Breen Field Design
 - The Borough has issued an RFP for the development of Breen Field and submitted for the design of a trail between Maple Street and Breen Field. LOTCIP funding will be used for trail construction.

- **Seymour – Not Awarded** - Greenway Trail & Linear Park
 - The Town applied for design funds to complete a 3-mile loop in downtown following a 2013 downtown trail master plan developed by Milone and MacBroom.

- **Thomaston – Awarded** - Watertown Road to Old Waterbury Road Design

"The Naugatuck River from Torrington to Derby is rich with history, stunning scenery and wildlife. Just as the river built and shaped our towns and cities, the Naugatuck River Greenway will be a driving force for the next century and beyond.

Our mission is to harness the vitality and protect the health of the river for economic development and quality of life for all."

- Thomaston is applying for the trails grant to complete a portion of the Greenway from their water treatment plant to Watertown Road. The Watertown connection will be completed using LOTCIP funding.
- **Torrington – Awarded - Sue Grossman Trail**
 - The 3-mile Sue Grossman Greenway straddles the Torrington-Winsted line. The goal is to develop a 10-mile trail connecting downtown Torrington and downtown Winsted. Winsted completed a 1-mile extension. Torrington will begin construction of a 0.75-mile extension this year and is applying for a grant to secure funding for an additional 1-mile extension. This will connect to the Naugatuck River Greenway, with the goal to connect the NRG to also connect the Farmington River Canal Trail.
 - Ms. Malanca estimates the cost at \$500,000 with the city contributing more than the required 20% match.
- **Waterbury – Awarded - Mad River Trail Spur Design**
 - Phase I of the Greenway was completed in January. The City received \$21 million in federal funding through RAISE that will be used in part to complete phase II between Eagle Street and West Main Street. Now the City is seeking funds to design a trail spur through the Mad River Corridor connecting to a new park that is currently under construction. This portion will connect environmental justice communities to the trail and will be a catalyst to additional investment.
 - The redevelopment of this area is a priority for the City.
- **Watertown – Awarded - Frost Bridge Road to Branch Brook Design**
 - 2.4-mile section beginning at Frost Bridge Road adjacent to the Connecticut bus maintenance facility where a 0.75-mile portion of the Greenway is already constructed. The new portion would follow the Naugatuck River and Route 8. The trail also parallels an existing Waterbury Water Department ROW. The design will address how the trail will be constructed without impacting the City of Waterbury water supply main.
 - The design of this section will unlock LOTCIP construction funding for this section and the adjacent section in Thomaston.
 - The NRGSC has previously identified this project as a top priority.
- **UConn Connecticut Trail Finder/Trail Census - Awarded**
 - UConn requested two-years of funding in the last round, receiving half, and submitted this round to expand the Trail Census and investigate novel data to supplement IR counter data being collected by the Trail Census across the state.
 - NVCOG is a sub awardee, providing technical assistance with the count program, and serving as a member of the project leadership.

Project/ Funding Updates

Ansonia Routing Study: The City completed the routing study to continue the NRG Trail to Nolan Field and the Seymour town line. A draft report will be shared shortly.

Derby/Shelton Bridge: Northern side (Shelton bound) work completed, now working on the center portion of the bridge. Construction will then move to the Southern side which will feature a larger pedestrian space and a bi-directional cycle track. Completion is planned for Spring 2024.

Derby Route 34: Crews have completed building up the slope on the south side of the roadway, and are currently working on the base course of the roadbed. Paving of the south side will be completed this summer,

with work shifting to the northern side. Relocation of the City's Sewer Main has been completed. Project completion expected Fall 2024.

O'Sullivan's Island: Work is progressing rapidly on the new fishing pier. All piers were set earlier this year, and crews are now constructing the deck. The City is looking at ways to provide water to the site for cleanup since fishing can be messy. Completion and a ribbon cutting are expected this summer.

Kinneytown Dam: NOAA grant funding is in place, and NVCOG is working on a subaward agreement to Save The Sound which will be overseeing the dam deconstruction design. RFQs for various design pieces of the project will be released soon. The removal of the dam and impoundment will open up opportunities for river access and a route for the NRG Trail.

Funding Submissions and Opportunities

Community Investment Fund 2030: A new round of CIF 2030 is open, with applications due June 30, 2023 by 12:00 PM. Multiuse trail projects are eligible, and trails and projects involving trail components have been funded in previous rounds. This is a large pot of funding - up to \$875m total with \$125m per year in 2 annual rounds. Eligible communities along the NRG are:

- Ansonia
- Beacon Falls
- Derby
- Naugatuck
- Thomaston
- Torrington
- Waterbury

DEEP Recreational Trails: Kim Bradley reported that there are two budget proposals for the Rec Trails program in play at the state legislature. The Governor's Budget proposed \$5m per year over the next two years. A legislative version of the budget proposed \$10m per year for two years. So DEEP is anticipating more rounds of increased funding in the coming years, although it may be delayed depending on how quickly the department can issue the current round of contracts. Contracts for the current awards should be expected in the Fall.

DECD CT Communities Challenge Round 3 closed on May 3, but there will likely be additional rounds coming. Mobility improvements including bike/ped and trail projects are eligible, but the program stresses public private partnerships and the leveraging of private dollars.

Congressional Directed Spending: There have been successful trail projects funded under CDS including a section of Oxford's multiuse trail along Route 67 last year. Applications are pretty straightforward and usually collected in the early spring each year.

Transportation Alternatives: All funding has been allocated with a solicitation in 2019. Limited funding in the program doesn't go too far. Watertown received funding for a portion of the Steele Brook Greenway and Thomaston for a section of NRG between Route 6 and Route 254. NVCOG is working with the department to allocate the funds to the Thomaston project. Watertown is underway.

RAISE: A large federal discretionary program through USDOT. Trails are eligible. The next round should be announced this fall, giving time to put together concepts for submission. Applications are very involved and are for large projects. Waterbury received a RAISE Grant last year that includes part of the NRG Trail. There could be potential to construct some of the larger gap sections through this program, specifically in Waterbury or

Naugatuck. Sal Porzio explained that a big reason that Waterbury received their grant was the pre planning work on the NRG Trail and Waest Main Street that did conceptual and preliminary design work.

Community Connectivity: has a new round open due in September, with an increased upper limit (800k), which can be used for trails or pedestrian improvements. Oxford used CC to construct their first section of multiuse trail along Route 67. Will fund 100% of construction, but the town is responsible for design.

Transportation Rural Improvement Program (TRIP): Applications have been received and graded by DOT.

Public Outreach Opportunities

CT Trails day/ weekend is coming up on June 3 and 4th. NVCOG has supplies to table with at events if anyone is interested in promoting the greenway. DEEP is planning a trails awards ceremony at Hammonasset State Park on June 2nd, details forthcoming.

Other Business/News

CT Trail Census/ Trail Finder: Aaron Budris reported that the [CT Trail Census](#) will be releasing a 2022 trail count report very soon and it will be distributed to the Steering Committee. UConn is also working on a new data dashboard that will host all of the CT Trail Census Count Data in a user-friendly interactive format, and it should be publicly available this summer. [Trail Finder](#) staff have added all of the DEEP Sky's the Limit Challenge trails to the site, and will be working to implement "Trailside Services" on the site in the coming year that will highlight and help connect trail users to local businesses.

DEEP is updating the [Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan \(SCORP\)](#) and [State Trail Plan](#) this year, and the CT Trail Finder and the data behind it will play an important role in that effort. Trail managers are encouraged to add their trails.

Waterbury Phase I Overview

Sal Porzio explained that the City recently completed its first phase of the NRG Trail in the City, stretching 2.2 miles from Bristol Street to Eagle Street. The trail has been the subject of positive comments so far, and the City is hoping to promote it and get more of the community out there. There were several long delays including for archaeological work that needed to be done after Native American artifacts were found along the River. A new park was built with amenities including restrooms a canoe/kayak launch, reading circles and amphitheater at the Corner of South Main and Platts Mill Road. The City used various federal, state and local funding to complete the project including various federal earmarks. Planning began for the trail in 2007, so it has been a long process to get the trail built.

The City has RAISE funding to design and construct Phase II that will bring the trail into Downtown, and has just received Rec Trails funding to design a spur trail along the Mad River to a new park being constructed by the City.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:00 a.m. Next Meeting Wednesday, August 9th, 2023.

A walk on the Waterbury NRG Phase I Trail followed. Photos of the walk have been posted here:

<https://flic.kr/s/aHBqjADvaM>

Naugatuck River Greenway Steering Committee (present in BOLD)

Municipal Representatives

Torrington **Rista Malanca***
 Jeremy Leifert
Litchfield Cleve Fuessenich
Harwinton **Kerri Stolle**
 Joan Kirchner
Thomaston **Stacey Sefcik**
 Amanda Burch
Watertown **Paul Bunevich**
Waterbury Kenny Curran
 Judy Mancini
Naugatuck Jim Stewart
 Vincent Seifert
Beacon Falls Liz Falzone
 Josh Carey
Seymour **Brian Sirowich**
Ansonia Sheila O'Malley
Derby **Jack Walsh***

Stakeholder Representatives

Aaron Budris – Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments
Anna Bergeron – CT DOT
Bill Purcell – Valley Chamber
Bob Gregorski - Trout Unlimited
Chuck Berger – Retired Watertown Town Engineer
Clifford Cooper - Litchfield Community Greenway
Dave Faber –Naugatuck Valley Outdoors Club
Janell Mullen – Northwest Hills Council of Governments
Jim MacBroom – Milone and MacBroom
Jim O'Rourke - Waterbury
John Ceretta - Railroad Museum of New England
Jolene Podgorski - Watertown DPW
Josh Carey – Connecticut Community Foundation
Kevin Zak – Naugatuck River Revival Group
Kim Bradley – CT DEEP
Mark Nielsen – Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments
Matthew Coleman – US Army Corps of Engineers
Melanie Zimyeski – CT DOT
Mike Jastremski – Housatonic Valley Association
Robert Phillips - Northwest Hills Council of Governments
Steve Casey – Railroad Museum of New England
Susan Peterson - CT DEEP Watershed Program
Vicki Barnes - Watertown - Steele Brook Rangers

Also Present

Desira Blanchard – NVCOG
Christine O'Neill – NVCOG
Mark Jewel, VHB
James Kulpa, VHB
Sal Porzio – City of Waterbury
Tony Ciriello – SLR/ Watertown
Chris Roberts