



Naugatuck River Greenway Steering Committee

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

Meeting Notes

Wednesday February 8th, 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 Submissions & Support

- **Derby**
 - Derby NRG Pedestrian Bridge Repair
 - One of the pedestrian bridges has design flaws and is corroded on its underside. 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.
- **Naugatuck**
 - Maple St to Breen Field Design
 - The Borough has issued an RFP for the development of Breen Field and preparing a submission for the Recreational Trails grant for the design of a trail between Maple Street and Breen Field. LOTCIP funding will be used for trail construction.
- **Seymour**
 - Greenway Trail & Linear Park
 - The Town is looking to apply for a grant for design funds to complete a 3-mile loop around the Tingue Dam and fish bypass. The current portion of the Greenway is adjacent to Seymour's historic downtown district. The Town previously submitted an unsuccessful grant application for a routing study to connect the Seymour and Ansonia portions of the trail.
 - Mr. Budris stated the Seymour-Ansonia connection is complex, but there will be new opportunities for that portion of the trail coming up with the removal of Kinneytown Dam.
- **Thomaston**
 - Watertown Road to Old Waterbury Road Design
 - 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. Design costs are estimated at \$250,000.
- **Waterbury**
 - Mad River Trail Spur Design
 - Phase I of the Greenway was completed in January. The City received \$21 million in federal funding to complete phase II. 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 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.

"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."

- **Watertown**
 - Frost Bridge Road to Branch Brook
 - 2.4-mile extension 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 a City of Waterbury water supply main.
 - If funded, the design of this section would unlock LOTCIP construction funding for this section and the adjacent section in Thomaston.
 - The NRGSC has previously identified this project as a top priority
- **Beacon Falls**
 - Toby's Pond Trail Improvements
 - The Town applied for sub-\$20,000 grant to repair trails that encircle Toby's Pond. The Greenway is immediately to the west.
- **Torrington**
 - 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.
- **UConn Connecticut Trail Finder/Trail Census**
 - UConn requested two-years of funding in the last round, receiving half. Mr. Budris requested the Committee's support to secure bridge funding for 2023 and extend the program an additional year.
 - Funding would be used to expand the Trail Census and develop novel data.
 - NVCOG supports the program with technical compacity.
- **Ansonia**
 - The City completed a routing study to connect the Ansonia and Seymour portions that will be completed in the coming weeks. The City will apply for design funds. A public hearing will be held on February 16th.

Mr. Budris stated \$9 million in total funding is available. Ms. Malanca reiterated the grant is extremely competitive. The last round received \$20 million in submissions for \$3 million in available funding.

In response to questions regarding project prioritization, Ms. Malanca stated all the proposed projects align with the goals and planning of the Committee and recommended submitting support for each.

Ms. Malanca asked for a motion for the Naugatuck River Greenway Steering Committee to letters of support for all discussed projects. The motion was made by Jack Walsh and seconded by Mr. Mizeski. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Budris will draft letters of support and distribute them for signatures.

Project/ Funding Updates

Waterbury Phase I: Complete. The project will proceed to Phase II. A grand opening is scheduled for the spring. Emergency response locating signs have been designed and ordered. Mr. Budris noted the signs can easily be ordered for other sections of the trail.

Waterbury Phase II (RAISE grant): Judy Mancini shared that the city has submitted paperwork to Federal Highway Administration. An RFQ is being crafted for engineering and construction services.

Ansonia Routing Study: The City completed a routing study to connect the Ansonia and Seymour portions that will be completed in the coming weeks. The City will apply for design funds. A public hearing will be held on February 16th.

Derby/Shelton Bridge: Mr. Walsh noted that one of the new lanes has been opened on the bridge and stated that will be a great connector of the two downtown areas. Mr. Budris stated the expected completion date is November 27th, 2023.

Derby Route 34: Construction underway and work is continuing through the winter. Route 34 is immediately adjacent to the Greenway. The expected completion date is October 31, 2024. Mr. Walsh also noted the construction of a fishing pier on O'Sullivan's Island. Work will begin shortly and is expected to be complete by summer 2023.

Torrington Scoville Street: The trail extending from Toro Field to the Litchfield line is complete. Ms. Malanca explained that access to a northern portion of the trail was previously accessed via a lesser-traveled road. The City recently reconstructed the road to a single-lane, facilitating a dedicated pedestrian walkway.

Funding Submissions and Opportunities

Congressional Directed Spending: Mr. Budris stated Oxford received \$3.6 million to construct their portion of the Greenway adjacent to Route 67. Mr. Budris said the applications are fairly straightforward and encouraged everyone to contact their delegation members if they have an idea for a project.

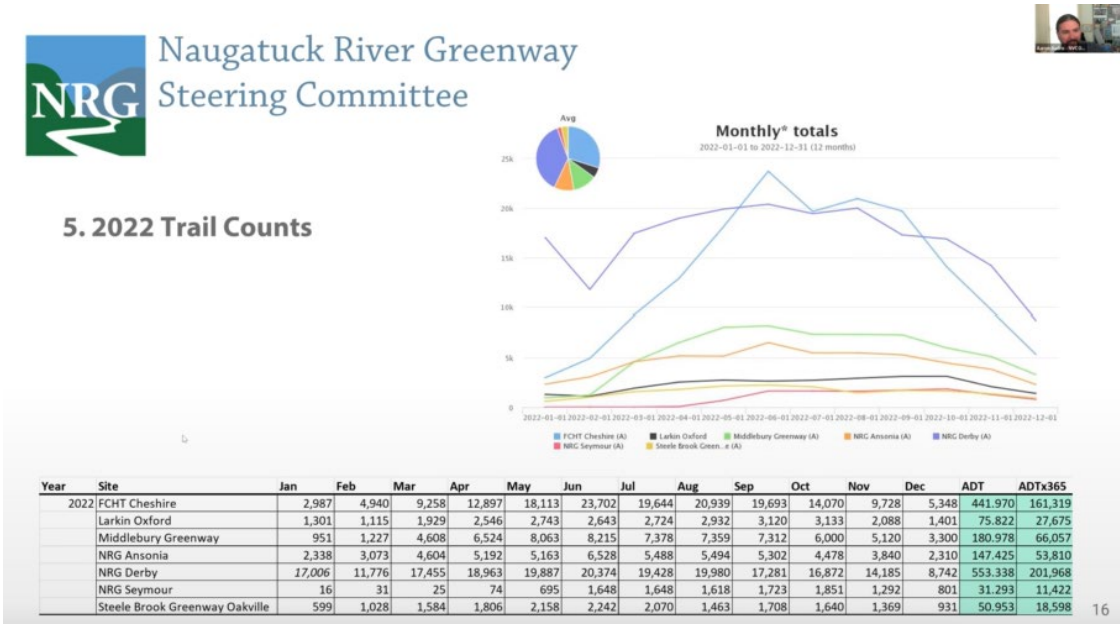
Transportation Alternatives: Mr. Budris stated that TA projects submitted in 2019 are still under review. NVCOG received a request from DOT for local commitments to previously approved projects. Funding notifications are anticipated by the end of March 2023. Mr. Budris noted that MPOs in small urban areas like Waterbury have greater discretion on how this grant funding is spent now under the new Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

DECD CT Communities Challenge Grant/Community Investment Fund: Mr. Budris stated trail funding is eligible for both grants, administered through the CT Department of Economic and Community Development. Ms. Malanca stated Torrington applied for the Communities Challenge Grant and was awarded funding for the extension of trails through the Railroad Square area.

RAISE: Mr. Budris noted the deadline is approaching. The city of Waterbury secured funding for trails projects. In a future round, NVCOG may submit a single application to connect currently isolated portions of the trail.

2022 Trail Counts: Mr. Budris presented an overview of the yearly use of the Greenway.

- The Derby and Ansonia portions are highly used.
- Comparatively, the Deby portion has fewer cyclists that comparable trails in Middlebury, Oxford, and Cheshire.
- The length of the trail and use seem to positively correlate.
- Seymour’s portion of the trail was closed while work was conducted on the adjacent fish bypass.



Public Outreach Opportunities: Mr. Budris invited volunteers to attend Ansonia Earth Day on April 22 and Woodbury Earth Day on April 29. NVCOG has materials for tabling if there are any opportunities for local engagement about the NRG or other topics.

Other Business/News

- **Kinneytown Dam:** Mr. Budris shared that NVCOG received notice of funding for a \$15 million grant administered by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA) to remove the Kinneytown Dam. An EPA assessment grant will facilitate the evaluation of sediments and hazardous materials behind the Dam. Design work must be completed within two years before the full award is released. Mr. Budris noted the goal was to complete a deconstruction plan and all required permitting in the next two years. Removing the reservoir behind the dam will leave space for a section of the Greenway. A crucial part of the application was restoring river access to the environmental justice community in Ansonia.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:04 a.m. Next Meeting Wednesday, May 10, 2023 with the possibility of a hybrid option at the NVCOG offices to walk portions of the Greenway.

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 Rory Burke
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

Rich Crowther – NVCOG
Christine O'Neill – NVCOG
Mark Jewel, VHB on behalf of the City of Ansonia