



Naugatuck River Greenway Steering Committee

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

Meeting Notes

Wednesday February 14th, 2024, 9am Via Zoom

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

Jack Walsh started the meeting, and introductions were made.

Representatives presented [2024 DEEP Recreational Trails applications](#) to be considered for support from the Committee.

Harwinton – Marc McCarthy presented a project to refine the 2020 Routing Study and develop conceptual design for the NRG Trail in Harwinton south of Bogue Road to Valley Road (Sections 1, 2, and 3 from the NRG Torrington to Thomaston Routing Study).

Thomaston – Stacey Sefcik and Amanda Burch presented an application to supplement the partially funded design project for the section of NRG Trail between Watertown Road to the WPCA on Old Waterbury Road. Thomaston was awarded \$150k of a \$250k ask last round and will be requesting the unfunded portion in 2024.

Seymour – Brian Sirowich presented a project for a study to find a preferred alignment through the town of Seymour.

Ansonia – Mark Jewell presented an application that would supplement funding received last round to design the NRG Trail from Pershing Drive to Nolan Field.

NVCOG – Christine O’Neill presented a regional project to design a portion of NRG Trail on the Kinneytown Dam Property in Seymour and Ansonia. The project will design a trail between Ansonia and Seymour, and help reconnect residents to the river.

WestCOG – Christine presented a request from WestCOG to support a planning project to route an East-West trail from the Empire Trail in Eastern NY to the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail, including a connection to the NRG

Oxford – Not directly connected to the NRG Trail, but Christine O’Neill presented a request from Oxford for a project that will develop parking and trails on a newly acquired town open space parcel that will provide connections to the blue-blazed Pomperaug Trail and Jackson’s Cove Park.

Beacon Falls – Larry Wissink presented a project to connect Pent Road to the Naugatuck Forest, and the town is considering other potential project ideas.

The Committee **voted unanimously** on a motion by Stacey Sefcik, seconded by Rista Malanca, **to submit letters of support for all projects presented.**

CNVMPPO (NVCOG) RAISE Application

Mark Nielsen and Richard Donovan discussed an NVCOG (CNVMPO) application to the federal RAISE Program to fully design “gaps” in the NRG Trail between Breen Field in Naugatuck and East Main Street in Thomaston. The

“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.”

project would focus on the 6 miles of the 16-mile corridor that has not been completed or received funding for design and would fully design those pieces and conduct all environmental review to satisfy NEPA on the entire corridor. The sections in question are very challenging with constraints including the railroad, roads, highway, brownfield sites and others. It will include an initial alternatives analysis to confirm trail routing. Thomaston, Watertown, Waterbury and Naugatuck are all supporting the project. Previously allocated funding received through the CT DEEP Rec Trails program to design sections of trail in the corridor will be used to achieve the required 20% of non-federal match. Mark and Rich fielded questions about the choice of project area, and why it was not extended, responding that the amount of available Rec Trails funding for match was a limiting factor, and that the routing of this section included in the application is well understood. Deadline is February 28th. Announcements of awards would be expected in June.

Project Updates

Watertown – Steele Brook Greenway is under design – currently at PD - being conducted by Weston and Sampson and funded under a Transportation Alternatives award. The town is preparing to release an RFQ for design of the NRG between Branch Brook and Frost Bridge Road, funded under a 2023 DEEP Rec Trails award.

Waterbury – Design is underway on the City’s RAISE grant, focusing on the section of NRG Trail from Eagle Street to West Main Street.

Derby/Shelton Bridge - Progress being made. North side of bridge completed, traffic has been shifted so that work can commence on the southern half of the bridge which will feature a pedestrian causeway and bidirectional cycle track. Expected completion Spring 2024.

Derby Route 34 - Construction is progressing, with a wide sidewalk and parking on the southbound side of Route 34, including trailhead parking. Traffic has been moved to the south side while work begins on the north side. Paver parking lot has been completed, and will act as an NRG trailhead.

Funding Opportunities

Mark explained that there will be two more rounds of [RAISE](#), so partners should start thinking about potential large-scale projects that could be funded under future rounds.

DOT has initiated a **microgrant program** to grant small sums - \$5k or less – to towns or non-profits to be used for small purchases like benches, signage, etc. Details are still being finalized, and should be solicited in fall 2024.

Events and Public Outreach

Jack Walsh discussed the 40-mile bike ride that took place in 2012 that was highly successful. John Monroe from the National Parks Service helped organize and attended the event. At the last meeting, Jason Mangini discussed and offered to reach out to Waterbury YMCA. Rista Malanca suggested setting up a subcommittee to put together a concept to be ready for the opening of the DOT microgrant program that may be able to help pay for an event. Several towns may be able to apply separately. Jack asked for volunteers for a subcommittee, and both Rista and Jack expressed interest, asking others who are interested in exploring the idea to contact one of them.

Event registration for Trails Day 2024 begins on Feb. 28th and is a great opportunity to highlight open sections of NRG Trail. NVCOG has been discussing an event on the new Waterbury section internally.

Other Business/ News

Richard Crowther, NVCOG Senior GIS Analyst, explained that he recently attended a training at UConn CLEAR about the Avenza mapping application that allows trail managers to map trails on mobile devices for free, and can be a great way to collect data for CT Trailfinder. Richard has more information if anyone is interested.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 10:00 a.m. **Next Meeting May 8, 2024**

Naugatuck River Greenway Steering Committee (present in BOLD)

Municipal Representatives

Torrington	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

Rista Malanca* – Northwest Hills Council of Governments

Marc McCarthy - Litchfield Community Greenway

Jim O'Rourke - Waterbury YMCA

John Ceretta - Railroad Museum of New England

Josh Carey – Connecticut Community Foundation

Kevin Zak – Naugatuck River Revival Group

Kim Bradley - CT DEEP Greenways

Mark Nielsen – Naugatuck Valley Council of Governments

Matthew Coleman – US Army Corps of Engineers

Robert Phillips - Northwest Hills Council of Governments

Steve Casey – Railroad Museum of New England

Susan Peterson - CT DEEP Watershed Program

Other Participants

Rich Donovan – NVCOG

Richard Crowther, NVCOG

Desira Blanchard, NVCOG

Christine O'Neill – NVCOG

Larry Wissink – Beacon Falls Conservation Commission

Jerry Lukowski – Town of Watertown

Mark Jewell – VHB