

Connecticut Greenways Council
Minutes of Meeting
October 12, 2020
Via teleconference due to coronavirus

A regular meeting of the CT Greenways Council was held Monday, October 12, 2020 via teleconference. Participating were chairman Bruce Donald, Laurie Gianotti, Bill O’Neill, Stacey Stearns, Richard Lutz, Bill Boles, Judy Miller, Aziz Dehkan and Gwen Marrion.

Call to Order, Welcome: Bruce called the meeting to order at 9:41. A quorum is not present.

September 14, 2020 Minutes: Corrections were made to the following names of attendees: Timothy Malone, Ron Walters and Clare Cain.

Chairman’s Report

- Bruce is pleased with the October 1 celebration, especially with the diversity of attendees.
- Putnam crossing project is going well. Tunnels are being paved. Bridge abutments have been ordered and could be in place in 2-3 weeks. Big improvements for safety.
- There needs to be an overall plan for trail maintenance, i.e. erosion in Thompson. DOT mowing and grading annually would help a lot.
- Moosup Valley State Park – 2 ½ miles from east of the center of Sterling CT into Coventry RI – could be part of the East Coast Greenway soon. Not ready for road bike tires yet.
- Plainville: slightly delayed but continuing.
- New Haven: bids being opened.
- Southington: in permitting for bridge. Going to bid late fall.

Introduction of Aziz Dehkan, new Executive Director of Shoreline Greenway Trail, Inc. Aziz said Covid is making it difficult to hold events but they are re-starting First Saturday events. They are updating their website. The Hammonasset Trail is getting a lot of use. Judy Miller said she is trying to have that trail be a regional project and wants to be part of the Council’s work. Judy mentioned Aziz’s experience with the NYC Community Garden Commission and said he is interested in bringing that experience to CT’s trails. Laurie suggested models such as the butterfly garden, seating areas and bicycle repair stations along the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail. Recommends riding it to see the “parklets”.

Bill O’Neill reported that the bridge on Hartford Road in Manchester is under construction and that the gap in Bolton between Bolton Notch Pond and the post office plaza is in design. He also reported that the “Tri Town Trail” in Vernon, Manchester, Bolton and East Hartford is close to being finished. There is another “Tri Town” trail in Preston and Groton so perhaps this one should have a different name.

CT DOT and Bike/Ped Advisory Committee: No report.

Correspondence: Bill requested greenway designation for a section of trail in Manchester. Laurie will send the application and summary to Council members to determine if it meets the criteria.

Old Business

- Greenways Celebration Oct. 1: Bruce thanked the Rotary, Town of Manchester and Ebony Horsemen. Gwen added compliments about the diversity of the award recipients, the beautiful venue and that recipients kept their speeches short. Laurie added that the venue was public-facing, CGC got exposure, was good to hear recipients' remarks. Bruce agreed that when recipients speak you can understand their motivations. Stacey said Penny Foisy was thrilled to be recognized and the Ebony Horsemen were glad they were appreciated. Laurie said all multi-use trails in the state are equestrian-friendly.
- Awards Committee: Gwen, Rista, Stacey and Laurie. Gwen will email all to set up a meeting.
- Greenways License plate fund: Bill and Bruce will work on. Also will try to push safety legislation and CT RTP funding through Transportation and Finance Committee.
- Promoting inclusivity and diversity: Stacey said we should continue the conversation. Gwen said the Oct. 1 celebration showed that the Council promotes diversity and suggested using social media to show Council activities. Stacey has posted some photos on her personal FB page. Perhaps Amy could speak at one of our meetings.
- US 1-A Corridor: in planning. Bruce spoke to someone in Westerly RI and they are excited about the project. Goal is to have whole shoreline connected. Judy would like to have the Shoreline Greenway Trail connect with New Haven and the CT River.
- New Haven to Providence Guide: send info to Bruce
- Bolton Tunnel lighting: Gwen reported that she asked Bolton's administration if she could apply for funding under the Community Connectivity program. They said the town cannot because there is a current grant that has not been started or completed (a path through the center of Bolton). Laurie said DEEP and DOT are meeting this Wednesday about the tunnel.

New Business: Review of CGC meeting time and day. Bruce said volunteers prefer night meetings while professionals prefer day meetings. One possible way to accommodate both is to have meetings start at 4:00 p.m. Gwen said night meetings not preferable. Bruce agreed. Laurie will send an email to members asking for two preferred times. Also maybe future meetings should be by teleconference even after virus is gone because attendance has been good.

Public Comment - None

Next meeting: Monday, November 9, 2020. No December meeting.

Adjournment: 10:52

Submitted by

Gwen Marrison