

Connecticut Greenways Council
Minutes of Meeting
November 9, 2021
9:00 a.m.
Via teleconference

The regular meeting of the CT Greenways Council was held Tuesday November 9, 2021 via teleconference. Attending were chairman Bruce Donald, Paula Burton, Bob Dickinson, Stacey Stearns, Lois Bruinooge, Bill Champagne, Anna Bergeron, Jay Annis and Gwen Marrison.

Call to Order, Welcome: Bruce called the meeting to order at 9:05.

Adoption of Minutes: Lois moved and Bob seconded the adoption of the October 2021 minutes. Approved unanimously.

Chairman's Report and Legislative Updates: Federal transportation representatives had a phone call with the Secretary of the National Economics Council and others. If Build Back Better passes, CT DOT will have implementation power and the State will have more money for bike/ped projects. \$15 billion will be for multimodal projects. Anna said there might be more money than projects. There is \$11 billion in the bill for "safety". A first ever Safe Streets for All program will aim to eliminate traffic fatalities.

CT DOT and Bike/Ped Advisory Committee: Anna reported that she and Bill Champagne are working on a program to collect trail maintenance agreements that exist for multiuse trails across the state so that responsibility for maintenance on aging trails can be identified. DOT is considering setting up a trail maintenance program although there is not enough funding for it now. Another project is looking into the chip seal issue. The pavement design team went to MA to see their application and CT may try it. Chip sealing is a method of covering asphalt with hot tar and pea stones. Loose pea stones create a problem for cyclists. Community Connectivity Program: Anna thinks DOT will get more funding for this. Towns currently are not spending funding fast enough. They need to get their projects off the ground so more projects can be funded because towns can't apply for more funding until projects are complete.

Old Business: License plate fund: the existing funds were moved into the greenways account October 1. About \$1,500 in the fund. Rules for grants under this fund are being reviewed by DEEP. Jay asked if greenways plates are available now – yes. DEEP updated the trifold brochure and is looking for funding to print them. Paula suggested using social media to publicize the plates.

New Business: RTP grant applications: files not complete yet. At least 30 applications submitted so far. The subcommittee, consisting of Lois, Bruce, Paula, Laurie, Anna, Bill O and Rista, will meet Dec. 3 from 8:00 to 12:00 at the CFPA office. After that they will send notes to the full Council and then we will meet 2 weeks later to discuss. Bob asked if it's ok for other Council members to attend the subcommittee meeting – yes. Lois said she feels the process needs to be followed according the existing rubric because applicants have expectations that it will be followed when they apply. The rubric favors long distance trails and connectors but other types of trails should be considered in the future. Paula said she feels trail culture has changed and people are looking for more local trails, and the subcommittee should review the scoring rubric to allow for more innovative projects. Bruce noted that there are 13 East Coast Greenway projects in CT with a median price of \$3 million/mile. Paula mentioned a trail in Bentonville AK where there is a paved trail with a mountain biking trail next to it. If all the focus is on paved trails, missing out on serving the horse and pedestrian users. Bruce said the Council can reconsider the criteria in the future.

Natural Surface Trails: Paula surveyed many groups, asking for information on natural (dirt) surface trails in communities. Her memo of her findings is attached. Council should focus more on natural surface trails.

Bruce said the Farmington Valley Council is meeting this Friday with Bruce presiding. An AMC director is speaking.

Public Comment: Jay asked about the New York – Danbury connection. Bruce said the parties agreed to meet.

Next meeting: No December meeting is scheduled but a special meeting will probably be scheduled in order to review applications under the RTP.

Adjournment: 10:04

Submitted by



Gwen Marrison