

Connecticut Greenways Council
Minutes of Meeting
April 12, 2022
9:00 a.m.
Via teleconference

The regular meeting of the CT Greenways Council was held Tuesday April 12, 2022 via teleconference. Attending were chairman Bruce Donald, Bob Dickinson, Stacey Stearns, Jay Annis, Clare Cain, Aaron Goode, Kimberly Bradley, Emily Wilson, Cathy Hagadorn, Paula Burton, Bill Champagne, Kimberly Drellich, Tom Olson, Mary Cockram, Heather Geist, Barbara Collins, Dave Holdridge and Gwen Marrion.

Call to Order, Welcome: Bruce called the meeting to order at 9:07.

Adoption of Minutes: Stacey moved, seconded by Paula, to approve the minutes of the March 8 meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Chairman's Report and Legislative Updates: HB 5291 (more funding for the Rec Trails Program) got through committee and into an omnibus bill. Would mean \$6 million for trail projects. Next step is getting it onto the Bond Commission agenda. After TCI failed similar legislation is back in piecemeal fashion.

Projects:

Southington – to bid

Moosup Valley – to bid

New Haven Phase 4 is only large project in construction

Paula reported trails in Pomfret and Salem are being built. There will be a "trail school" on May 21. Hope that more north-south oriented trails will be built, i.e. Patchaug to Woodstock. "Bike packing" along trails is gaining in popularity and more camping spots along trails are needed.

CT DOT and Bike/Ped Advisory Committee: Bill Champagne reported:

- Some progress on trail maintenance agreement inventory. DOT is looking at problems such as erosion, sight line concern areas and bridges. These will be listed and State will try to repair then shift responsibility to towns. Mile points have been identified to help locate problem areas. Mapping is based on VHB's. Trail features (i.e. gates, bridges, intersections) also being noted. Gwen suggested coordinating with Trail Finder. Kim Bradley said they are using DEEP's data and asked what trails are being looked at by DOT because having one database would be good. Emily Wilson said there is a state GIS schema. DOT is looking at DOT-funded trails so there is not much overlap, but Emily noted that DOT trails are included in Trail Finder.
- New rural grant trail program - towns with 50% or more population living in a rural area will be eligible to apply. Called Transportation Rural Improvement Program (TRIP). Announcement should be in a few months.
- Farmington Canal Heritage Trail gap project: the tunnel under the Route 72 exit ramp is an obstacle.

Correspondence: None.

Old Business:

1) License plate fund: Bruce said Brian Wilson said DEEP is working on a rack card. Bruce said the Council should think about a public relations policy to use money to get people to buy greenways plates. Use Save the Sound campaign as a model.

- 2) CT Trail Finder/Census: Kim said over 150 trail systems are on the website and another 100 are in progress. The CT Trails Learning Community was launched. Will meet on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 2:00.
- 3) New Haven & Northampton Canal Greenway name: This group is working on connections between CT and MA trails.
- 4) Greenways Day: Friday June 3. No location yet. Paula said we need a point person to organize this.
- 5) Trail Summit: Bruce asked for volunteers to help plan it. Kim volunteered and Dan Buckley volunteered last month. Bruce will send an email to Council members and friends asking for others.

New Business: Discuss and vote on greenway designations:

Individuals: A lifetime achievement award for Laurie Giannotti was recommended. Other nominees are Ruth Strontzer, Lisa Watts, and Mark Jewell. Gwen reminded the Council that in 2020 the awards subcommittee recommended that the plaque not specify a category but instead state what the individual contributed which led to the nomination. Paula moved, seconded by Cathy, to accept these nominations as recipients of greenways awards. The motion carried unanimously.

Greenways designations:

- 1) Cheney Rail Trail System – was approved by the Council in Feb. 2021
 - 2) Rocky Hill – was approved by the Council in October 2021.
 - 3) Groton Cross Town Greenway – Gwen said she thinks the trail system is well-thought out and likes how it connects places of interest.
 - 4) Tri Town Trail Greenway (Groton)
 - 5) Norfolk “Mountain Express”
- Stacey moved, seconded by Gwen, to designate the Groton Cross Town Greenway, Tri Town Trail Greenway and Norfolk “Mountain Express” as state-designated greenways. The motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment:

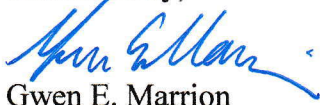
- Bruce asked if meetings should be in person. Gwen suggested periodically. Paula agreed.
- Tom Olson of the Groton Trails Coordinating Task Force said he appreciates the kind words about the Groton greenways and that the task force is working to expand the greenways into low income areas to help pull the town together. He suggested Groton might host Greenways Days and someone should contact Mark Berry.

Next Meeting: June 14. Stacey asked if we could hold it on June 3 after the Greenways Day ceremony?

- Bob reported that the Hawk system on Route 20 hardware is in place but not on line yet. This is where the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail crosses Route 20 in East Granby. Has been a 6-year discussion with DOT. Bill C said there were staff changes and all is in order, it just needs to be activated.

Meeting adjourned at 10:14.

Submitted by,



Gwen E. Marrion