



AMERICA'S GREAT OUTDOORS

**Naugatuck River Greenway
Steering Committee**

MAY 14, 2014, Seymour Town Hall

Meeting Notes

Upcoming Events

- **June 7-8, 2014 - National Trails Day Weekend** : <http://www.ctwoodlands.org/CT-TrailsDayWeekend2014>
Cutoff for inclusion in the online supplement is **May 28!**
 - **Ansonia:** Ansonia Nature and Rec Center/ Raptor Woods Trail
 - **Beacon Falls:** Naugatuck State Forest/ Naugatuck Trail
 - **Harwinton:** Joan Kirchner is organizing a 5K Walk, Wheelchair & Run event. For more info, see web site: <http://tinyurl.com/k8rgfex>.
 - **Derby:** Osbornedale State Park
 - **Litchfield:** Walks at White Memorial, Stillman-Danaher, and Hauser preserves
 - **Naugatuck:** Webb Road Property
 - **Seymour:** Pine Hill Recreation Area
 - **Torrington:** John Brown Trail and Paugnut State Forest
 - **Watertown:** Steele Brook Greenway event along the Phase II route.
 - **Waterbury:** Fulton Park guided and self-guided walking tours and canoe/kayak in the ponds.
- **September 9-** Down by the River, Bike for Hope and Music Festival in Shelton: <http://www.dbtr.org/>

News

- **Seymour:** Fred Messore welcomed the Committee to Seymour Town Hall, and informed everyone that First Selectman Miller planned to welcome us himself, but was out sick.
 - Fred introduced the Tingue Dam Fish Bypass project as well as the planned trail loop along the Naugatuck River in the same vicinity. The trail will be just under a mile long and will include a foot bridge across the River with views of the Tingue Dam and Fish Bypass. A small park is being built alongside the fish bypass, and will allow ADA access to the river bank just below the dam, as well as an easy canoe and kayak portage route.
 - The bypass, park and greenway projects all tie in to development taking place in Downtown Seymour. Improvements have been made to the Train Station, and efforts are being made to boost retail including antique shops, and the added foot traffic resulting to the greenway and trail will help this effort.
 - Planimetrics has written a Master Plan for the greenway, and has been recognized by CT Main Street.
 - EV Charging stations will be added to parking areas along the proposed trail.
- **Thomaston:** Will Cummings reported on the 14+ acre parcel of land in Thomaston that is adjacent to the location of the future CT Transit maintenance facility.
 - The property is located between the Naugatuck River and Waterbury Rd. just north of Frost Bridge Rd., and includes a section of blue-blazed trail. The property will be auctioned off this summer for back taxes. The DEEP Acquisitions department has been made aware of the auction

and may bid on it, but members are encouraged to monitor the situation and bid on it if necessary.

- A trail cleanup took place on April 26. 15 students cleaned up 300' of trail.
- **Watertown:** Chuck Berger discussed the public hearing that was held last month concerning the planned CT Transit bus facility that DOT is planning on the site of the old Watertown Drive-in.
 - DOT agreed to include a trailhead and parking lot in their plans after a request was made by COGCNV. The plans that DOT has drawn up only include grading of a 7 space parking lot and the construction of a gravel driveway.
 - Several comments (including those by the Town of Watertown, COGCNV and this Committee) were made, publicly and in writing, requesting that more be done by DOT including a larger finished parking lot, water delivery to the site, and construction of an approximately 2,000 foot section of trail adjacent to the trailhead and bus facility.
 - Response from DOT at the public hearing was that they are restricted by their funding source from including these upgrades. They explained that their funding is for construction of a bus facility only.
 - A **motion** was made by Sam Gold to write a **letter to the commissioner of the CTDOT asking for the above improvements, and to ask for support from representatives** (Elizabeth Esty and Chris Murphy were mentioned), **the motion was seconded by Bob Gregorski, and unanimously approved** (to be drafted by COG).
- **Torrington:** Rista Malanca discussed a project that is bringing local artists together with business owners to beautify public spaces.
 - A local artist, with help from local youth, is creating a mural on the back of Staples, adjacent to the river and across from a brownfield which is being considered for redevelopment for parking and a possible trail.
- **Waterbury:**
 - Reports from 2014 River Race and Paddle Day:
 - **The River Race** on May 3rd was cancelled due to unsafe conditions resulting from heavy rains.
 - **Paddle Day** on May 10th drew about 30 paddlers.
 - **Bikeshare:** COGCNV partnered with Capital Region Council of Governments to conduct a feasibility study of a regional bikeshare system. Preliminary reports from the consultant, Foursquare ITP, envisions a large bikeshare system serving first downtown Hartford, then rolling out to surrounding communities and stops along the New Britain Busway (CTfastrack), and finally to Waterbury with a smaller standalone system. Users would pay a yearly fee, and short trips using system bikes would be free.
- **Beacon Falls:** Rich Minnick reported that there has been some progress with a potential weir on the river to provide safe access and canoe/kayak takeout, using money from the GE PCB Settlement. The town is also looking at several river adjacent parcels and planning several parks.
- **World Fish Migration Day-** Laura Wildman reported that she has been invited to speak in Poland about dam removal and anadromous fish restoration. She has decided to present the Naugatuck River as a case study in how to overcome obstacles to dam removal and fish passage restoration. The program can be found here: http://www.worldfishmigrationday.com/event_download.php?id=41

Updates from Subcommittees:

- **Local Relationships:**
- **State Relationships:**
- **Economic Development/ Grants:**
- **Advocacy/ Lobbying:**

- **Communications/ Website:** Web design consultant hired to update website.
- **Signage:** Still waiting on grant.
- **Engineering/ Design/ Construction:**
- **Events Coordination:**
- **Environment:**
- **Art:** Waterbury has officially created an art commission, and Sam Gold has been appointed to it.

TIGER Grant Updates

The Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) program is a federal grant administered by the US Department of Transportation aimed at incentivizing transportation projects which generate economic growth, reduce energy use, and transform environmentally degraded areas in economically depressed areas. The TIGER Grant request deadline this year was on April 28.

- Sam Gold explained that **Waterbury** submitted an application requesting \$19million for the approximately \$30million Phase I extension of the Waterbury section of the Naugatuck River Greenway. To emphasize the economic impact that the project could have, the City rebranded the project WATER: *Waterbury Active Transportation and Economic Resurgence*. Recently, the EDD gave support for the project, and Sam reported that the National APA Conference he recently attended included many presentations on the economic benefits of greenways. A page on the Waterbury website presents the application and supporting documentation: <http://www.waterburyct.org/content/25076/default.aspx>
- **Valley COG** also submitted a TIGER grant application for the lower valley. Mark Nielson, Senior Regional Planner for VCOG explained that their application requested funding for several smaller projects that would help create better bike/ped connections to the downtowns of Seymour and Ansonia, and provide better bike/ped access across the lower valley. While the project is not as well defined as Waterbury's, they plan to take comments from the FTA and prepare a stronger application next year if they do not receive funding this round.
 - Mark was asked by Tony SanAngelo about an abandoned project linking Rte 42 in Beacon Falls with Rte 67 in Seymour. Approximately 1/3 of an earmarked allotment was spent on a feasibility study, and DOT determined that the project was not justified. A meeting was suggested to discuss resurrecting the project or re-allocating the remaining funds.

Naugatuck River Watershed Association- River Stewards Program

- Bob Gregorski presented the NRWA River Stewards program which provides no-cost education and guidance to any group organizing a river cleanup or other volunteer river-related program. The River Stewards Program has worked with local High Schools, Scout Packs, and other groups to organize clean up events in the past, and that experience can be shared to make your next event a success. For more information: <http://www.naugawatshed.org/River%20Stewards.htm>

Down by the River/ Bike for Hope

- Tad Duni discussed an upcoming event he is planning, Down by the River, the "Bike for Hope & Music Festival", September 6. The event will consist of a 100, 50, and 25-mile bike along the Naugatuck River, a Music Festival headlined by Shakedown (a Grateful Dead tribute band), and a Chili Cook-Off. A vending area will host a variety of artists, food vendors, arts & crafts, and more. Admission is free.
- All proceeds from the event will go to support MovingWithHOPE, Inc., a Shelton-based 501(c)3 non-profit organization that provides programming scholarships and adaptive equipment for survivors of brain and spinal cord injuries and diseases, so that they may receive year-round access to independent living skills training, recreation, and inclusive socialization.

- John Monroe suggested making use of Tad's extensive event coordination knowledge to help plan future Greenway events.
- The steering committee should consider having a table at the event, and please get the word out for volunteers.

NaugatuckRiver.net Update

- Sam Dziekan has recently taken over oversight of the website at HVA, and is still familiarizing himself with the project. Several issues were discussed including a timeline for the website update and the process for listing events or news on the site. Kevin Zak explained that the update is progressing behind the scenes, and will not be evident on the current site until it is switched over. In response to trouble having content posted, Kevin explained that he puts everything up that he receives. It was suggested that a receipt be sent in response so that the poster knows that Kevin received the content.
- It was also suggested that a NRG Steering Committee page be added to the site explaining the work that is being done by this group.

Other Business

- The new COGCNV website is up and running at <http://www.cogcnv.org/> . We are working on getting a page set up with the routing studies, maps, as well as agendas and notes from this group's meetings. Eventually you will be able to link to documents on our site, but feel free to post meeting notes on your organization's website in the meantime.
- Two suggestions were made for the June meeting:
 - Derby- Meet at the VCOG offices at the Derby Train Station and tour of the Derby Greenway.
 - Naugatuck – Meeting location TBD with a tour of Naugatuck's finished section of trail.

Tingue Dam Bypass Channel Tour

- Jim MacBroom gave an overview of the Tingue Dam Bypass Channel project, and then led the group on a tour of the active construction site.
- Photos can be viewed at: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/123856448@N05/>

Next Meeting – July 9th chaired by Ingrid Manning- Location TBD

Naugatuck River Greenway Steering Committee

(Present in **Bold**)

Aaron Budris- Council of Governments of the Central Naugatuck Valley

Bill Purcell - Valley Chamber of Commerce

Bob Gregorski - Naugatuck River Watershed Association & Trout Unlimited

Christopher Way - US Army Corps of Engineers

***Chair* Chuck Berger - Watertown Town Engineer**

Clifford Cooper - Litchfield Community Greenway

Dave Faber - CT Outdoors (outfitter in Watertown)

Elaine LaBella - Housatonic Valley Association Land Protection Director

Fred Messore - Town of Seymour

Ingrid Manning – formerly of CT Community Foundation

Jack Walsh - Valley United Way

Jim MacBroom – Milone and MacBroom

Jim O'Rourke - Waterbury Y

Jim Stewart - Naugatuck Borough Engineer

Jim Whitney - Western CT Convention & Visitors Bureau

Joan Kirchner - Harwinton Conservation Commission

Jolene Podgorski - Watertown DPW

John Monroe – National Park Service: Rivers & Trails Program

Kate Rattan - CT DOT Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator

Kathy McNamara - City of Waterbury

Kevin Zak – Naugatuck River Revival Group & Housatonic Valley Association

Kim Barbieri - City of Torrington

Laura Wildman – Princeton Hydro

Laurie Giannotti - CT DEEP Greenways

Liz Falzone - Beacon Falls – Citizens for Tomorrow's Downtown

Mark Jewell – VHB, Inc (CT DOT)

Maura Martin - Thomaston Trails Committee

Mike Jastremski – Housatonic Valley Association

Peter Kisselburgh – Thomaston Trails Committee

Ray Leite - Digital Arts Program at Naugatuck Valley Community College

Rich Minnick – Beacon Falls

Richard Knoll – TEAM Inc. (Community Action agency in Ansonia)

Sam Gold - Council of Governments of the Central Naugatuck Valley

Sheila O'Malley – City of Ansonia

Susan Peterson - CT DEEP Watershed Management Program

Vicki Barnes - Watertown - Steele Brook Rangers

Vincent Gualtieri - US Army Corps of Engineers

Vinnie Scarlata – Ansonia Economic Development Commission

Will Cummings – Thomaston Trail Committee

Yi Ding - Valley COG

Also Present:

Josh Carey – Connecticut Community Foundation

Mark Nielsen – Valley COG

Rista Malanca - Torrington

Sam Dzieken - Housatonic Valley Association

Tad Duni – Moving With Hope

Tony SanAngelo