

Notes of Discussions November 9, 2015

Council Members (X In attendance)

X Lois Bruinooge - Executive Director, The Last Green Valley (on phone)

Jan Collins - CT Horse Council

X Bob Dickinson – Appalachian Mountain Club

X Bruce Donald – President of Farmington Valley Trails Council

X Tracy Gionfriddo - Eversource – Acting Secretary

X Rista Malanca – Naugatuck River Greenway

X Joe Hickey - CT Forest & Park Assoc.

X William D. O'Neill - East Coast Greenway Alliance (on phone)

Michelle Eckman – CT Audubon Society

Jason Vincent – Norwich Community Development Authority

X Laurie Giannotti (*DEEP Liaison*) - *Ex-Officio Member*

Katherine Rattan (DOT Non-Motorized Transportation Coordinator) - *Ex-Officio Member*

Steve Mitchell – Mitchell Auto Group (member not approved)

Call to Order 9:35 am by Bruce Donald. Visitors: Kevin Tedesco, DOT (on behalf of Kate R.)

Adoption of Minutes July 2015 meeting minutes. As submitted.

Chairman's Report – Bruce Donald

- Trails Council annual meeting. Speakers did a great job speaking of what CT has not built but have been done in Europe. Bruce expects that we will see more of this going forward.
- Plainville project has been scoped.
- Rail with Trail Liability issues perceived by railroads. Discussion of legislation and blanket liability protection to municipalities did not include railroads. Going forward state can figure out liability platform. Issue for Southington and Plainville connectors. Possible integration with Fastrac project.
- CT Bonding Commission: DOT is proposing to fund various segments of the trail. Downside is the money that was set aside for DEEP was not put up for a vote. Could be a “bait and switch.” Still waiting for it to be put forth. Has become a political issue. Will start speaking to those that can help. Need to talk to the governor's office or OPM. Partner with CFPA.
- License plate. Beth Bye's assistant in discussions with this and other items such as Trail liability.

Correspondence – Laurie Giannotti

- CT Bike Walks annual meeting at CCSU
- Farmington River Trail (Kevin will address)

CT DOT & Bike/Ped Advisory Comm. – Kevin T.

- Farmington River Trail ribbon cutting on Nov. 16th. See invite on web.

- DOT 5 year plan for trails. VHB wrote it. Goes through all the trails and highlights what was done, what is in pipeline, and gaps (with \$). Includes data gathering going forward to assist with planning.
- Possible route through Hartford of Greenway. Mayor support.
- Want update of trail restoration.
- Manchester to Bolton Notch. Article in Courant over the weekend. Lebanon to Windham ribbon cutting.
- CT Bike Ped advisory board looking at ebikes. Possible legislation. Discussed at Farmington Trails meeting. ADA and speed limits issues. Kevin recommends looking at it as a speed limit issue as something else could replace ebikes. Federal regulations cover.
- RBD attending ECG annual meeting in Miami, will report back to GC and requested folks send him issues we would like him to raise.
- Community Connectivity Fund: DOT grants. Putnum bridge connections. Will provide funds based on consultants' reports, safety assessments (bike ped). Press release recently regarding this issue and will be sent to Bruce. Gets the right people involved with road safety assessments.

Legislative Report – not noted except as above.

Old Business –

- NVCOC: survey. Bruce has been in contact with them. They have applied for grants waiting for bond money that is expected at the end of the year (?) for trail counters. Farmington Trails Council is applying for grants as well for data gathering.
- Discussion of merging Farmington Trails Council with Farmington Canal Trails program.
- Linear parks will need maintenance and thoughts to put together for management by CTDEEP. CFPA has a good model of a “roving crew.”
- Branding of Farmington Trails as one thing. When it is completed it will be an enormous tourist draw and massively used. Will need to be recognized by the state as this. Should it be a National Heritage Trail? National Park? Talks for 2018 and being considered now. From Lois: Heritage funding will be coming down as other areas are added. There is a push to make the areas permanent (and then the funding will not sunset.) Branding of the Farmington Trails will allow is to continue with the same name.

New Business

- National river trail funding application for Shetucket River by Lois
- Torrington's Walk Talks. Laurie wants to know if the Greenways Council will sponsor it next year and CTDEEP will organize. An annual meeting to discuss recreational trails. Agreed. This year's event was well attended and everyone was well informed. Bruce has ideas for agenda and can add more items.
- Put information on website and use as a clearinghouse for additional information to allow people to be able to use as a website.
- Airline Trail completion. Quarterly newsletter will become more formal. Helping towns with marketing and identity. New York “consultants” that will come in to focus on

Airline Trail, but can include groups like Farmington Trails, and towns can include the trail in marketing and economic development work.

- Small grant for web app for trail users for Rail Trails. Developing a pilot program. GPS based, see where parking lots are, elevation changes, etc. Bruce will send Laurie information on the Burlington app that is being developed. Kevin is also pushing CTDOT in a similar direction. Farmington River Trail guide (book form) for purchase with hotels, restaurants, etc.
- Reviewed meeting dates for 2016. Trails Day June 3. Conference will be in October.

Public Q&A – None

Next Meeting – Eversource, January 11, 2016

Adjournment: 11:18 AM