



Meeting Notes

Place: Plainville Town Library
Auditorium
56 East Main Street
Plainville, CT 06062

Date: April 28, 2016

Notes Taken by: Andrea Drabicki

Project #: 42201.00

Re: Steering Committee Meeting #1
Farmington Canal Heritage Trail Gap Closure Study and
CTfastrak Connection Study

ATTENDEES

Steering Committee

Tim Malone, Capitol Region Council of Governments
Matt Blume, Town of Farmington
Bruce Donald, East Coast Greenway / Farmington Valley
Trails Council / CT Greenways Council
Robert Lee , Town of Plainville
Mark DeVoe, Town of Plainville
Pete Salomone, Plainville Greenway Alliance
Jim Grappone, Town of Southington
Jill Scheibenpflug, CT Department of Energy and
Environmental Protection
Grayson Wright, CT Department of Transportation
Sue Jacozzi, Plainville-Southington Health District
Mark Moriarity, City of New Britain
Carl Gandza, City of New Britain

Consultant Team

Dave Head, VHB
Andrea Drabicki, VHB
Mark Jewell, VHB

Mr. Dave Head began the meeting by introducing the VHB team present at the meeting, Andrea Drabicki and Mark Jewell. He then laid out the reason for the meeting and led introductions by the members of the Steering Committee (SC) present. As part of the SC introductions each member was asked to define what they felt the biggest hurdle for the study was. The following were "hurdles" that were noted by the SC:

- Identify a route that's agreeable
- Identifying funding sources
- The Spur to CTfastrak
- Safety
- Implementation Process
- Approval Process (i.e., permitting)
- Right of Way Non-existent

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- Entice the End Users
- Traffic Calming

Mr. Head then discussed the role of the SC to ensure the members knew what would be expected of them and the number of meetings that are scheduled for the duration of the study. The SC was informed that they are scheduled to meet eight (8) more times during the study and that the meetings would take place at the Plainville Public Library. Afternoon sessions were agreed upon for the meeting times. The main role of the SC entails:

- Help the Study Team Guide the study process
- Assist in evaluating the feasibility of alternative
- Act as Study Team Liaison
- Share Local knowledge
- Assist with the Public Outreach

An overview of the scope of work was discussed with the SC with a more detailed discussion of the Public Engagement Plan (PEP) following. The items from the scope of work discussed are as follows:

- Project Management
- Public Engagement Program
- Data Collection/Base Map Creation
- Assessment of Existing Conditions
- Identification of Alternatives
- Implementation Plan
- Final Report

The items from the PEP were discussed as follows.

- Meetings:
 - Steering Committee (9)
 - Technical Team (5)
 - Discovery Phase (Focus Group Meetings, 8), (Stakeholder Interviews, 10), (Mobile Study Tours, 2)
 - Charrettes (2)
 - Public Informational Meetings (4)
 - Surveys (3)
 - Town Meetings (10)
- Website
- Newsletters (6)
- Translation Services
- Schedule

Bruce Donald, East Coast Greenway, FVTC, and the PGA, indicated that Plainville advocacy bike groups can assist in outreach and notifying the public of upcoming events and potentially locating a facility that the Study Team may be able to use during Discovery Week as a location for public informational sessions and focus group meetings.

The next topic discussed was the Vision for the study. Mr. Head began with a sample vision for the study and asked the SC for comments and thoughts on what they felt the vision should entail. A good conversation ensued on what the SC felt a vision should cover, some of the "key words" noted from the SC are listed:

- Safe
- Limit Barriers to Entry
- Friendly
- All end user types have access
- Connectivity to Communities
- Consistent Functionality
- Unity
 - Branding
 - Design
 - Economic Development Opportunity
- Define Imperatives
 - Leadership of Standards
 - International Influence
 - Standardization
 - Redefine Culture
 - "World Class"
 - Define Opportunity

Ms. Drabicki then posed the question to the SC if there were any existing cultural perception issues, i.e. institutional culture, and if so what, in the opinion SC, could the Study Team do to assist in redefining the culture? What could the Study Team do to assist the SC in achieving greater buy-in of the public and other stakeholders?

The SC had a brief discussion confirming that there had been past institutional challenges to get buy-in from the CT Department of Transportation (CTDOT) to support and fund trail feasibility studies and improvement projects involving state infrastructure. Members of the SC concurred that recently there had been a cultural shift within the last five (5) years at the CTDOT.

Grayson Wright, CTDOT, confirmed that the Department is vested in the completion of the last trail gap of the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail (FCHT). The Department fully supports the efforts of the alignment study.

It was agreed by all parties the last trail gap, in Plainville, was indeed the most difficult to determine an alignment; that if it was easy the gap would not exist and a trail would exist, thus the FCHT would be contiguous.

In Summary the SC felt the vision should not be limited to a specific design standard or facility type but be a larger vision for the study. The VHB team will refine the vision statement and send it back to the SC for their review.

Ms. Drabicki gave an overview of the data collection that is going on and the behind the scenes work that has been started since the notice to proceed was given by the Region.

- Behind the scenes
 - Mobilized an internal project support team of +10 people
 - Seven (7) specialized departments involved
- Data collected to date
 - Traffic data
 - Reports & Policies
 - Geographic Information Systems (GIS)

Ms. Drabicki then discussed the project branding, relaying why this was important the areas that the project brand would be used and showed a couple of potential options for a logo design. She requested feedback from the SC on the logo design and the VHB team received feedback on the design, and is summarized below:

- Arrows instead of filled in circles (nodes) (might they represent: Northampton, New Haven, Hartford)
- Add a Center line stripe in Option #1, to show a "trail" section in the "A"
- "See a hole" provide a visual gap in the logo to represent the "hole" in the trail system
- Use "roadway"/"walkway"
- Use state of CT outline as a background for the logo
- Color options – green
- "it [logo] looks better smaller"

Mr. Jewell was then asked to lead the SC in an activity to gather their input on several questions that were posed to them. Mr. Jewell began by discussing the section directly north of the Trail in Farmington and Southington noting the ongoing projects and discussing their beginning and ending points. These include:

- The Solvents Recovery Service of New England (SRSNE) Superfund site remediation project is designing and constructing (2016) the trail and associated amenities from Curtis Street north to Lazy Lane.
- State Project 131-203 in Southington involves the design of an off-road multi-use trail from Lazy Lane north to approximately 1,500' north of Town Line Rd. Southington (Mr. Grappone) noted that the Town may consider utilizing the State ROW along Birch St (SR 532) to extend the trail northerly to Town Line Road.
- State Project 51-268 in Farmington is a 2 mile long, \$5.1 M project from Northwest Drive in Plainville northerly to Red Oak Hill Rd, scheduled to be under construction in June 2016. This completes the FCHT in Farmington.

The SC was asked to gather around large scale maps and discuss several questions noted in the presentation. These questions were:

- 1.) Where do you think the corridor should be?
- 2.) What is important to you?
- 3.) Where are the problem areas?
- 4.) What works well?
- 5.) Other Items??

The SC was encouraged to discuss these questions and mark up the maps with markers and post it notes to capture their thoughts. The SC theme throughout the exercise seemed to be that a multi-use trail is preferred if an appropriate corridor could be found.

Tim Malone went over a memorandum regarding outreach to environmental justice communities and limited English-proficiency populations. Mr. Malone noted that such a memo is required for every study that CRCOG undertakes. Mr. Malone outlined the steps that CRCOG would take, which included: coordinating with municipal officials to identify appropriate outreach methods for environmental justice communities; putting a notice of translation availability on all meeting announcements; translating newsletters for the project; translating a two-page summary of the final report; and coordinating with municipal officials to identify media outlets and organizations through which to engage Spanish and Polish speaking populations. Those in attendance agreed with the approach. Mr. Malone asked the SC members to send him any comments they have.

Next Steps

- Steering Committee to review the list of plans and reports identified by VHB and provide input if the resources are the most current and make recommendations for additional information that should be considered for the Study.
- Steering Committee members are to identify any pertinent upcoming events that Study Team might consider attending or conducting outreach
- Bruce Donald, East Coast Greenway, FVTC, and the PGA, indicated that Plainville advocacy bike groups can assist in outreach and notifying the public of upcoming events
- The City of New Britain will identify the proper person(s) to contact regarding LEP/EJ community leaders that the City may already be working with.
- VHB will revise the vision statement and send it to the SC.
- VHB will revise the logo and send it to the SC.

Statement of Accuracy:

- We believe these minutes accurately describe the discussion and determinations of this meeting. Unless notified to the contrary within 5 business days, we will assume all in attendance concur with the accuracy of these notes.

Notes Submitted by:



David Head

Notes Approved by:



Tim Malone

Distribution: Attendees
Project File 42201.00