



## Meeting Notes

Place: Plainville High School  
Cafeteria  
47 Robert Holcomb Way  
Plainville, CT 06062

Date: October 24, 2017

Notes Taken by: Geoffrey Morrison-Logan

Project #: 42201.00

Re: Plainville and New Britain Planning Public Meeting Summary  
Farmington Canal Heritage Trail Gap Closure Study and CT**fastrak**  
Connection Study (Gap Closure Trail Study)

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The public meeting took place on Wednesday, October 18, 2017 from 6:00-8:00pm. The meeting consisted of an Open House format that included a short presentation to report on the work that had been undertaken since the May 2017 Public Meeting. Five breakout stations were set up for participants to engage with the consultant team, Steering Committee, and Town Officials in a dialog about issues and opportunities related to the revised Alignment "C" Trail in Plainville and the Alignment "E" Trail in New Britain. For Plainville, the North, South, and Downtown segments of Alignment "C" were set up at stations to allow conversations about each of those sections of the trail. There was a station set up for the connection to CT**fastrak**, as well as a station dedicated to background information on the Gap Closure Project.

At 7pm, a presentation was given that provided an overview of process used to narrow the alternatives into the Preferred Alignments. The presentation provided a summary of the revised Alignment C through Plainville and featured a discussion of the prototypical trail facilities that were recommended for various sections of the trail. The presentation was followed by a general question and answer period. The PowerPoint presentation and PDF's of the boards used at the five breakout stations were made available on the project website.

The focus of the meeting was to present Alignment C as the preferred trail alignment connecting the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail (FCHT) in Plainville and Alignment E as the preferred trail alignment connecting Plainville with the CT**fastrak** station in New Britain. These alignments had been presented at the last community meeting which had been held in May 2017. Alignment E is largely the same as presented in May, however several refinements have been made to Alignment C since May:

- *Between Northwest Drive and Route 72* – following conversations with Carling Technologies the alignment has been shifted east to the western side of their property between Johnson Road and the Granger Lane Transfer Station. The refined Alignment C will travel down the eastern side of Perron Road between Northwest Drive and Johnson Road, then travel east along Johnson Road to the Carling Technologies property, and south along the western side of the Carling Technologies property to the Town-owned transfer station property. The refined alignment does not enter Tomasso Nature Park.
- *Between Route 72 and Downtown Plainville* – the preferred alignment remains the same for this section but insufficient detail exists to know whether a culvert under Route 72 is feasible. Therefore the updated alignment maps show an alternate alignment which would, north of Route 72 travel west to Route 177, turn south across Route 72 at grade, and turn east again, south of Route 72. Another alternate alignment was shown which would continue west, past Route 177, to Camp Street, travel in public right-of-way on Camp Street and connect back up with the original trail alignment south of Route 72.

- *Between Downtown Plainville and Norton Park* – two options are shown for Alignment C along Pierce Street between West Main Street and Broad Street. The first is the side path along the east side of Pierce Street which was shown at the May 2017 community meeting. The second is an on-road option for Pierce Street. In addition, the earlier version of Alignment C shown in May traveled along the historic Farmington Canal. Following discussions over the summer with CTDOT this alignment was shifted to Broad Street, due to constraints within this section of the canal alignment. The current alignment shows options along Broad Street (a side path to the north, a side path to the south, and a median boulevard), and options to connect to Norton Park. The preferred alignment turns south, west of Hemingway Street. Alternate alignments include traveling within the Hemingway Street right-of-way as well as within the Pearl and Willis rights-of-way.
- *Between Norton Park and Town Line Road* – the preferred alignment remains the same as shown in May for this section, which is to follow the historic remnants of the Farmington Canal. However, an alternate alignment was also presented to the community at the October 18<sup>th</sup> meeting which would diverge from the historic canal alignment at the north edge of the industrial park, traveling east and then south between the industrial and agricultural properties parallel to Robert Jackson Way. This alternate alignment would then travel west within the right-of-way of Town Line Road to connect with the Southington section of the FCHT.

A total of 136 members of the public signed in at the meeting, and 36 comment forms were submitted.

1. **Open House 6pm-7pm:** Participants were welcomed at the sign in table and at the five breakout stations. Participants were provided with an agenda and a map of the room layout and were directed to engage in conversations with the facilitators at the breakout stations. The five stations include:
  - a. **a Project Background Station**, that included information on the overall study, goals, and the process for narrowing the Alternatives down to the Preferred Alignments.
  - b. **a Plainville North Station**, where the northern section of the trail alignment was discussed, and had maps and renderings indicating the proposed alignments and facilities.
  - c. **a Plainville South Station**, where the southern section of the trail alignment was discussed, and had maps and renderings indicating the proposed alignments and facilities.
  - d. **a Plainville Downtown Station**, where the downtown section of the trail alignment was discussed, and had maps and renderings indicating the proposed alignments and facilities.
  - e. **a Connection to CTfrastak Station**, where the New Britain section of the trail alignment was discussed, and had maps and renderings indicating the proposed alignments and facilities.

Participants were encouraged to identify their concerns and issues for the alignments, by placing their written comments on post-it notes, or on large flip chart paper.

2. **Presentation Overview 7pm-7:30pm:**

- a. Mr. DeVoe (Town of Plainville) opened the meeting, welcomed the participants, and provided a brief background on the Gap Closure Project.
- b. Mr. Malone (CROG) provided a brief summary of the planning goals and objectives.

- c. Theresa Carr (VHB) provided a summary of the steps that were undertaken to get to the Preferred Alignments by reviewing the worked that was presented at the May public meeting, the screening criteria that were used to get from the long list to the short list of alignments, and the evaluation criteria.
- d. Mark Jewell (VHB) provided a summary of the revised Plainville Alignment C and presented maps that indicated the general location of the various sections of the alignment. Mr. Jewell presented several before and after images that depicted the general characteristics of the proposed trail facilities.
- e. Mary Embry (MobyCon) provided a summary of three typical facility types that included;
  - i. A Rural Trail Type;
  - ii. An Off-Road Trail Type;
  - iii. An Urban Trail Type;

For this portion of the presentation Mrs. Embry presented a collage of images of the facility types that were built in other communities.

### 3. Public Comment 7:30pm-7:50pm:

The following questions and comments were raised by members of the public during this portion of the meeting:

- A question was asked about the funding sources for the project. The team responded that there are several options for funding the construction of the trail project, but that no one specific source had been identified beyond the planning phase.
- A question was asked about the maintenance of the trail facilities and who would be required to maintain the trails. The team responded that this is a topic that would be addressed in the (future) design phase, and that the maintenance responsibilities vary from trail to trail. Furthermore maintenance responsibilities may vary depending on trail type and location. Most common is that the town would maintain the trail. Some regions have volunteers who are responsible for trail maintenance.
- A question was asked about when the trail would be opened. Tim referred to the schedule slide of the presentation. Because no funding sources have been confirmed at this time the beginning of design and the beginning of construction are uncertain. Design could take a year, and construction could take up to two years. Furthermore, it is possible that the trail would be constructed in phases.
- A question was asked about why the Plainville trail is being connected to CTfastrak. Theresa clarified that the connection to CTfastrak is not a requisite piece of the FCHT moving forward. Though the two trails are packaged for this planning study, it is likely that they would be considered two separate and distinct trails which would move forward on separate schedules.
- A question was asked about parking for the trail, and if it would be provided. The team responded that with parking areas in Farmington (under construction), Southington, and Norton Park, that it was unclear whether additional trailhead parking would be needed. The member of the public followed up that she hoped additional parking would be provided to accommodate those not bicycling, but who wish to walk or rollerblade on a smaller portion of the trail not close to one of these parking locations.

- A question was asked about tax implications for taxpayers. Tim stated that because funding was uncertain specifics on tax implications are unknown at this time, but that the current study was funded through federal and state dollars and it is likely that construction would use state and/or federal funds, to which taxpayer dollars contribute.
- A question was asked about the 2% of on road trail facilities and where the 2% was located. The team responded that this is mainly in the downtown Plainville section of the trail.
- A comment was made about hazardous materials being transported via trains on along the track close to Alignment C in the vicinity of Route 177 and West Cemetery.
- A question was asked about why the land adjacent to the railroad was not considered. The team responded that land adjacent to the railroad, and specifically in the vicinity of the airport, was considered through the alternatives analysis step.

**4. Open House 7:50pm-8:30pm:**

- a. Following the general Question and Answer period, the meeting resumed into an Open House format where participants went back to the breakout tables to further engage in discussions about the issues and opportunities related to the Preferred Alignment.

**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:



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Theresa Carr

Notes Approved by:



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Tim Malone

Distribution: website – interested parties list

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