



Meeting Notes

Place: New Britain City Hall
Room 202
27 West Main Street
New Britain, CT

Date: July 27, 2016

Notes Taken by: Chris Faulkner, P.E.

Project #: 42201.00

Re: Technical Team Meeting #1
Farmington Canal Heritage Trail Gap Closure Study and
CTfastrak Connection Study (Gap Closure Study)

ATTENDEES

Steering Committee

Tim Malone, Capitol Region Council of Governments
Bruce Donald, East Coast Greenway
Jim Cassidy – Farmington Valley Trails Council /
Plainville Greenway Alliance
John Bossi, Town of Plainville
Mark Devoe – Town of Plainville
Kevin Tedesco, CT Department of Transportation
(CTDOT)
Maureen Lawrence, CTDOT
Mark Moriarity, City of New Britain
Carl Gandza, City of New Britain
Mark Hoffman – Bike New Britain
Jim Grappone – Town of Southington

Consultant Team

Dave Head, VHB
Chris Faulkner, VHB
Dan Burden, Blue Zones

Mr. Dave Head began the meeting by introducing the VHB team present at the meeting, Chris Faulkner and Dan Burden. He then laid out the reason for the meeting and led introductions of the attending members of the Technical Team (TT). As part of the TT 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 TT:

- Identify a route that's agreeable
- Compromise will be required
- Safety/Security
- Connections (first and last mile)
- Off-road trail
- Entice the End Users

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Mr. Head then reviewed the meeting schedule for the TT for the duration of the study. The TT was informed that they are scheduled to meet four (4) more times during the study and that the meetings would take place at New Britain City Hall or the Plainville Public Library. Afternoon sessions were agreed upon for the meeting times.

Mr. Chris Faulkner then discussed the role of the TT to ensure the members knew what would be expected of them. The main role of the TT entails:

- Help the Study Team with the technical aspects of the study
- Assist in evaluating the feasibility of alternatives
- Act as Study Team Liaison
- Share Local knowledge
- Provide guidance on town/city/organization design standards

Mr. Head then provided a brief overview of the scope of work, schedule, objectives of the Study, and the Study's Vision Statement. Mr. Head added that the project's website was now active and asked the TT to encourage others to sign up for the email list and to take the survey that is linked on the website.

Mr. Burden then gave a short presentation on bicycle and pedestrian treatments that can be used for closing the gap. The presentation touched on best practices from around the country and discussed which of these have worked well in other parts of the country.

The next topic discussed was the Decision Matrix for the study. Mr. Head stated that VHB had developed a draft of the matrix and provided the draft to the CRCOG for review and comment. Mr. Head indicated that the matrix would be used to objectively evaluate alternatives against each other and that the matrix criteria needed to be definable and measurable. The decision matrix criteria developed by VHB include the following:

- Connectivity
- Safety
- Off Road/On Road Alternative
- Environmental
- Property Impacts
- Cost

Mr. Head then reviewed each of the decision matrix criteria beginning with connectivity. Mr. Head stated that connectivity would be measured by the number of schools, recreational areas, commercial locations, and cultural resources within a ¼ mile of a proposed alignment. Kevin Tedesco, CTDOT asked if the study would be looking at providing connections to the locations that are being included in the evaluation. Mr. Head indicated that the final report would make recommendations as to providing connections to certain areas, but the evaluation and design of those connections are not included in this project.

Mr. Head continued with the matrix criteria, indicating that the safety criteria would evaluate the number of traffic conflicts along the trail, specifically, how many commercial driveways and how many intersections are crossed, as well as, how many mid-block road crossings there are. Jim Cassidy requested that security also be added as a

criteria since part of the vision of the trail is to not only provide a safe trail for all users, but also a comfortable environment for trail users. He added that trail users need to feel secure to encourage use of the trail.

The next criteria discussed was how much of the proposed alignment would be off road or on road. Several members of the TT said it would be helpful if definitions and images were provided for multi-use trails, bicycle lanes, separated bicycle lanes, shared lanes, etc. so everyone would understand what was being discussed. Mr. Head indicated that he would provide the necessary information so everyone would have a clear understanding of the various types of treatments. Several members of the team also indicated that "comfort", including amenities such as shade, should be included in the matrix.

Mr. Head next presented the environmental criteria. Trail alternatives will be evaluated on wetland impact (percentage of trail in or out of wetlands), impact to the 100-year floodplain (percentage of trail in or out of the floodplain), negative affect on cultural resources, impact to hazardous materials locations, and additional impervious surface (pavement) being added. Mr. Head stated that at the Steering Committee meeting there was some discussion on whether environmental considerations should even be included as an evaluation criteria and requested feedback from the TT. Most of the TT believed that environmental considerations should be included and that the two most important were the wetland and floodplain impacts. A few members of the TT stated that the negative impact to cultural resources was most important criteria since that was the only impact that couldn't be mitigated. After further discussion, it was decided to keep all the environmental criteria in the matrix. A TT member asked if trail profiles were going to be developed as a part of the concept development. Mr. Faulkner indicated that while the Study Team didn't have detailed topographic information, the Team would be developing conceptual profiles in critical areas (i.e. stream/river crossings) so structure sizes can be determined.

Mr. Head went on to discuss the property impact criteria. Property impacts will be evaluated on whether the property being impacted is publicly or privately owned. This impact is being defined as the trail being within 10 feet of a property line.

The last criteria to be evaluated is the cost. Each alignment developed will include the preparation of a cost estimate which will be developed from recently bid CTDOT projects. Included in the costs will be an estimate for the maintenance cost of the proposed facility. Several members of the team brought up examples of maintenance issues and indicated that sample maintenance cost data from existing trails is available.

Next Steps

- The Study Team will review the information received at the TT meeting and update and finalize the Decision Matrix.
- The Study Team will develop the weighting for each of the decision matrix criteria and forward for review.
- The Study Team will begin developing trail alternatives based on the feedback received at the public information meeting, focus group meetings, technical team meeting, and the Plainville and New Britain mobility tours.

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

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