

Farmington Valley Trails Council

Greenway News

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President's Letter



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This summer's *Letter* is mercifully short so that we can publish the work of the Strategic Planning Committee on a new Business Plan for the FVTC. Rich Rowlson headed up this task and has written the two pages inside. While much of our mission statement remains the same we recognize the need to help our towns with maintenance issues, and we will be soliciting for the Maintenance Fund in the coming months. If you have any interest in joining one of the committees please get in contact with us.

This summer we have made grants to Simsbury for trail line painting (see sidebar on p. 3) and we are finalizing a grant to Avon for fence repair. One of the big things on the agenda is resurfacing the River Trail in Burlington, and I hope to have information on that issue shortly. We have been making a big effort to keep you informed on a real-time basis, so please see the front page of fvgreenway.org for the latest on the trail system.

The Tariffville Connector

By Dwight Weed

On June 6, 2011, Simsbury Town Engineer, Richard Sawitzke, moderated an information session at the Tariffville School cafeteria to present proposals for a multi-use trail connecting the Village of Tariffville to the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail at the intersection of Routes 315 and 10/202.

Representatives from the consulting firm Milone & MacBroom presented three possible routes running generally along the northerly side of RT 315 from its intersection with RT 10/202 to its intersection with Quarry Road. From that point two alternatives were presented. The less costly route would continue along, but separate from, RT 315 toward Tariffville before turning toward the river at the utility transmission right of way and ending at the Governor's Bridge Condominium complex. Apparently the idea of a trail over the abandoned rail bed has itself been abandoned as too costly.

The more scenic, but more costly alternative turns away from RT 315 toward the river near the Curtis Park boat launch and proceeds in a generally north easterly direction across the island formed by the old river channel or oxbow. Crossing back to the mainland requires construction of a bridge across the old channel adding to the cost. As these proposals are developed, plans for parking and trail access, particularly as it affects Governor's Bridge, will be considered. Maps of the proposed routes should now be available on the Town website. The Town is soliciting comments on the proposal which should be directed to Mr. Sawitzke. Trail Council members from Simsbury are urged to weigh in on this important topic.

The importance of the "connector" can not be over estimated. Once a multi-use trail crosses the ridge between Simsbury and Tariffville, it will be possible to connect to Hartford and points east along the route of the old Griffin Line as it passes through Bloomfield into Hartford. When complete this route will be a critical link in the Maine to Florida East Coast Greenway.

Save the Date

The **FVTC Annual Meeting** is being held November 18th at 7:00 PM at the Avon Senior Center. FVTC President Bruce Donald will give his presentation on the Council and the state of the trails. We will have special guest speakers, fun and refreshments as always.

FVTC New Strategic Plan

14th Annual

Trails in Motion

June 4th was a spectacular day and we had almost 400 participants turn out for the best TiM ever. Our sincere thanks to all of the volunteers who make the event possible and our super sponsors:

Bagels Plus of Canton
Benidorm Bikes
Berlin Bike
Bicycle Cellar
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Central Wheel
Collinsville Canoe & Kayak
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Eastern Mountain Sports
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Fitzgerald's Food Market
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Sartorius Sports
Shadow & Trees Massage
Starbucks, Simsbury
Suburban Sports
Sun & Ski Sports
Town of Simsbury

Thanks!

The efforts of The Farmington Valley Trails Council and countless FVTC members and supporters over 20+ years have resulted in the near-completion of the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail and the Farmington River Trail. What an incredible accomplishment. Does that mean that FVTC's job is over? *No, not by a long shot.*

The trails that we all enjoy so much with our friends and families are heavily used and need maintenance, repair and new amenities. But, this continuing meticulous attention must take place at a time when town and State governmental resources are sorely stretched. What can be done to assure that the Farmington Valley trails do not get the short end of the stick?

To address this problem, last year, the FVTC Board created a Strategic Planning Committee to look at the overall governance and operation of the Board and how it can meet the future needs of the Farmington Valley trails. The Committee included members with longstanding experience with the trails, as well as one member with strategic planning experience from working with other non-profit organizations. The Committee solicited the views of all FVTC Board members about what needs to be done in the coming years to not only maintain the trails as they were originally envisioned, but to actually improve them. The Committee distilled this work product into general and specific recommendations, which were debated and unanimously adopted by the FVTC Board. The recommendations can be summarized into **3 overriding goals:**

1. Continued attention to maintaining and enhancing the trails, including encouraging the towns to maintain, repair, and improve the trails.
2. Advocate for bike friendly roads.
3. To promote 1 and 2, above, transition the Board to a more active committee structure, with more business being taken care of at the committee level, and each committee chair reporting at the Board meetings. In other words, push as much work as possible down to committees specifically charged with the tasks assigned to those committees.

The Board established 10 standing committees, each to be chaired by a Board member, and designed to include numerous interested public volunteers. This will have two beneficial effects. First, it will spread the work among many hands, meaning that each committee member will have a more manageable workload. No one should be overburdened. Second, it will give the committee chairs an opportunity to identify committee members for future election to the FVTC Board of Directors. This will promote a continuing source of fresh, energetic talent to the FVTC Board.

Set forth below is a description of the 10 committees, with the name of each chair. Everyone is encouraged contact one of the chairs and volunteer to become a member. ***We need as many energetic volunteers as possible who have a love for the Farmington Valley trail system.***

Membership and Volunteer Coordination Committee: Creates and implements recruitment and retention programs to increase and maintain membership. The Committee will maintain a current roster of members and whether dues are current or not for each member. The Committee will assure that annual membership renewal notices are sent out. The Committee also recruits volunteers to serve on FVTC committees and manages FVTC activities that require assistance from members and community volunteers.

Chairs: Jerry Ledger, Mary-Jane Gately

Advocacy and Outreach Committee: Works to further FVTC's interests in a variety of ways including (1) maintaining regular and consistent contact with Federal, State



and municipal officials that can impact the establishment and maintenance of trails, particularly completion of the unfinished trail sections in Farmington and Plainville, (2) coordinating with other organizations that advocate for trails including the East Coast Greenway Alliance, Bike/Walk Connecticut, etc. (3) making local businesses aware of how the trails benefit them and why they should support FVTC. **Chair:** Bruce Donald

Maintenance and Enhancement Committee: Identifies to municipalities locations on trails that need maintenance, root remediation, fence replacement, enhancements and signage. The Committee will work to encourage the sharing of maintenance and repair equipment with nearby municipalities with the goal of achieving better and more frequent trail maintenance. The Committee also manages Adopt A Trail volunteers and Boy Scouts, along with others who wish to install trail enhancements. The Committee will maintain a list of, and designs for, approved enhancements. The Committee will oversee a Spring Cleanup subcommittee which will plan, organize and manage the annual spring trails cleanup. **Chair:** Al Ryan

Publicity Committee: Oversees creation, revision, distribution and posting of trails maps, and (2) drafting of FVTC newsletters and press releases. The Committee will develop and implement a publicity plan that identifies individuals, organizations and businesses that may utilize or benefit from well developed trail systems in Connecticut and how FVTC can assist in delivery of those benefits. **Chair:** Nancy Anstey

Electronic Communications Committee: Maintains the FVTC web site and distributes via e-mail all communications to members, including but not limited to periodic newsletters and notifications of upcoming FVTC sponsored and other events of interest to members. The Committee will cooperate in the migration of all communication from hard mailings to electronic e-mail distribution. **Chair:** Joy Himmelfarb, Gary Miller

Finance Committee: Plans and implements efforts to raise funding for FVTC from an array of outside sources. The Committee will identify and cultivate potential donors to support the activities, events and programs of FVTC. The FVTC Treasurer will Chair. The Committee will also evaluate and propose expenditures to the FVTC Board and oversee an annual third-party audit of the FVTC financial records maintained by the Treasurer. **Chair:** Steve Noble

Safety and Education Committee: Plans and implements programs designed to educate the public about safe use of bikes on and off the trails. The Committee will oversee the Helmet Initiative and creation and placement of markers to explain the historical significance of the trails in the Farmington Valley. The Committee will establish a presence at local civic events including Sam Collins Day, Avon Day, Tariffville Day and Unionville Day. **Chairs:** Scott Myrick, Kathy & Steve Cole

TIM Committee: Plans, organizes and manages the annual Trails In Motion event that takes place in June each year. The Committee will work in conjunction with the Membership and Volunteer Coordination Committee to identify a sufficient number of volunteers for the event. **Chairs:** Ron Coleman, Bruce Donald

Strategic Planning Committee: Analyzes on an annual basis the progress that each committee had made on its short term and long term goals. The Committee will solicit input from the FVTC directors concerning the future plans of FVTC. The Committee will present to the Board for its consideration and action, the Committee's analysis and recommendations for changes, if any, to the short term and long term goals of each committee for the coming year. Each of the officers of FVTC shall be members of the Committee. **Chair:** Jim Cassidy

TRAIL CENTER LINES

The FVTC was pleased to provide a \$3,400 matching grant to Simsbury to enable a test of a painted center line on the trail north of Iron Horse Blvd. and "sharrows" on some of the more important street routes.

The FVTC conducted a survey of trail users to see how the test striping has been received. There were 93 responses, of which 59 were Very Positive or Positive; 12 Indifferent; 19 Negative and 3 Unsure. With over 60 % of respondents believing the line is necessary for safety and will be helpful in managing traffic flow, we believe the project should be completed throughout the Farmington Valley.

Our Member's opinions are VERY important to us. Don't hesitate to get in touch with your feelings on this or any other topic.

FVTC DIRECTORS

- Bruce Donald - President
- Jerry Ledger, Vice President
- Steve Noble, Treasurer
- Mary-Jane Gately, Secretary
- Nancy Anstey
- Jim Cassidy
- Cathy Cole
- Steve Cole
- Ron Coleman
- Barb Collins
- Joy Himmelfarb
- Richard Kramer
- Scott Myrick
- Allen Ryan
- Dwight Weed
- Preston Reed - Founder

VOLUNTEER TODAY TO HELP MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE OUR FARMINGTON VALLEY TRAILS! Contact us at 860-202-3928 or info@fvgreenway.org

**FARMINGTON VALLEY
GREENWAY NEWS**

This publication is written and formatted by board members. The Farmington Valley Trails Council is a 501 (c) (3) not-for-profit corporation dedicated to advocacy, education, beautification and building multi-use trails in the Farmington Valley of Connecticut. Contributions to the FVTC are generally tax-deductible. This newsletter is available electronically, or printed and distributed by our friends at FAVARH.

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We're on the Web!

www.fvgreenway.org

Your Support is Important!



Check desired box and enclose membership fee:

- \$15 Senior 65+ / Junior under 18
- \$20 Single
- \$30 Family
- \$100 Friend
- \$500 Sustaining Member
- \$1,000 Lifetime Benefactor

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (days) _____ (eves) _____

E-mail _____

Would you like to be contacted for volunteer opportunities? Y / N

Comments?

Detach and mail to FVTC, P.O. Box 576, Tariffville, CT 06070

**Farmington Valley Trails Council
P.O. Box 576
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