

# AMBASSADOR PROGRAM FAQ'S



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## ***1. Welcome to the FVTC Ambassador Program***

### **Why:**

- To act as guides, keepers of historical and modern facts, handouts such as rules and etiquette information as well as maps, bells and water bottles that have real value as well as act as branding aids and importantly, to generate new members.
- The more people know about the FVTC, the East Coast Greenway, the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail and the Farmington River (loop) Trail, the more people will want to use them and support their completion and maintenance.
- To act as eyes and ears on the trail, identifying any problems, actual or potential criminal activity such as graffiti or defacement of property.
- Advocacy for the building of multi-use trails necessarily involves state and local officials, who want to hear of their constituents' support. Information about our specific trail gaps and general information about greenways, such as health, decrease in pollution, economic development, alternative transportation, and community livability increases willingness to support the FVTC.

### **What:**

- Increase awareness about the FVTC, including funding for construction, maintenance, amenities and encourage volunteerism in our organization.
- Promote the **SAFE** use of the FCHT and the FRT through proper etiquette.
- Build support for finishing local trails.
- Increase membership in the FVTC.

### **How:**

- Sign up with the Volunteer Committee and complete your three hour training session. These sessions will be held at least once a year.
- Receive your package of materials, hat, shirt, reflective vest, maps, membership forms and other information necessary to be conversant in local and regional trails activity.
- Select on-trail venues or events that based on your local knowledge, will enable you to effectively “spread the word” about and promote the FVTC and the Trails.
- Conduct yourself in an easygoing, open manner – do not be pushy.
- Make sure to tell everyone that more information is on the Website.
- Make an effort to be on the trails or in other venues as much as you can and keep a list of your hours spent and any important contacts made.
- Contact the organization with any questions, comments, maintenance issues, etc.
- Think about and note ways to improve the Ambassador program and the materials provided.

## ***2. What is the History behind the Trails?***

The over eighty miles of the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail (FCHT) and the nineteen miles of the Farmington River Trail (FRT) constitute one of the most picturesque and historic greenways in New England. The Connecticut section from New Haven to Suffield runs fifty four miles through eleven towns and connects with many more biking and walking trails. The FCHT has been designated a Community Millennium Trail under the federal Millennium Trails Initiative based upon its special value to the communities it serves. It is also a major part of the East Coast Greenway (43 miles) from New Haven to Route 315 in Simsbury. The ECG runs 3,000 miles from Florida to Maine. The FRT and 11 miles of the FCHT constitute the Five-Town, 28-Mile Loop Trail, one of the few in the United States.

### **The Farmington Canal**

President Thomas Jefferson knew that to bind the fledgling country together a dependable national transportation system was needed. The country had doubled in size with the Louisiana Purchase in 1804. With this in mind, he turned to his Treasury Secretary Albert Gallatin and asked him to develop a plan which would connect east coast ports with farmers and merchants west of the Appalachians. Soon Gallatin presented a plan consisting of a cohesive system of waterborne transportation and turnpikes and the “canal craze” began. Throughout the United States, from Cleveland to Akron, from Richmond to the Blue Ridge Mountains, from Albany to Buffalo, canals with their sophisticated lock systems were being constructed in order to facilitate trade between the interior of the United States and its coastal ports.

Encouraged by the success of the 363-mile Erie Canal and looking for ways to more effectively compete with the port of Hartford, a group of New Haven businessmen met to discuss the idea of a canal route from New Haven to the Massachusetts border and beyond. Led by New Haven lawyer, James Hillhouse, representatives from seventeen towns met in Farmington, CT in January 1822 and persuaded the legislature to issue a charter for the formation of the Farmington Canal Company. At about the same time the Hampshire and Hampden Canal Company was formed in Massachusetts to extend the canal from Southwick, MA north to the Connecticut River in Northampton.

On July 4, 1825, ground breaking ceremonies were held at Salmon Brook Village in Granby, CT. Governor Oliver Wolcott had the honor of turning the first shovelful of dirt. The shovel broke - an ominous sign of things to come. The Canal Corporation was beset by problems at the outset. Chronically under-capitalized and receiving no financial support from the State of Connecticut, the Corporation was forced to employ construction shortcuts with the predictably disastrous results. The canal leaked at many points, the banks collapsed and aqueducts were washed away. In addition, farmers, unhappy that the canal encroached on their land, sabotaged the work.

Nevertheless, the company persevered and in 1828 the first commercial canal boat, the James Hillhouse, left New Haven bound for Simsbury, CT. In 1835, the canal was finally completed from New Haven to Northampton, a distance of 84 miles. A series of 28 locks in Connecticut provided a drop of 220 feet from the Massachusetts border to New Haven. On average the Farmington Canal was 36 feet wide and four feet deep with a 10 foot wide towpath. The canal boats themselves were 85 feet long and were pulled along by horses or mules. During its heyday the canal carried a variety

of cargo through the Farmington Valley, but was never able to turn a profit. Bowing to the inevitable, the shareholders of the Farmington Canal Co. petitioned the legislature for authority to build a railroad. In 1848 commercial operations on the Canal ceased.

## **The Railroads**

While many factors led to the demise of the Farmington Canal, none was more important than the invention of the steam engine. In 1831 an English built locomotive named the John Bull established once and for all that the steam engine would provide the next enduring development in the transportation evolution. By the mid-1800's, more than one hundred separate railroad companies operated in Connecticut. The New Haven and Northampton Railroad Co. was chartered in 1846. Dubbed the "Canal Line", the first section from New Haven to Plainville was completed in 1847, mostly along the route of the canal. By 1850 the line had been completed from Plainville to the Massachusetts border with branches out to Tariffville, Unionville and Collinsville. By the late 1800s, the small private lines were merging with larger companies. In 1872, the Canal Line was consolidated with the New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad. The New York, New Haven & Hartford operated until 1969 when it was consolidated with the Penn Central.

In 1869 another railroad broke ground in Winsted, CT. The Central New England Railroad, as it came to be known, ran in an easterly to westerly direction. In a concession to Avon Mountain however, the line ran from Hartford north to Tariffville then turned south through West Simsbury and Stratton Brook to Collinsville where it turned northwest for its run out to Winsted and Lakeville. Over the years the railroad operated under many names, most notably the New York, New Haven & Hartford.

### ***3. How Have the Trails Been Built?***

Trucks and automobiles almost completely replaced the freight and passenger rail service of the Canal Line and Central New England, and most services ended by the late 1980s. As rail lines around the country fell into disrepair groups of creative individuals explored the idea of converting abandoned rail beds and canal towpaths into recreational trails and the "rails-to-trails" movement was born. Congress provided funding through the Transportation Enhancement (TE) portion of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) and the FVTC was formed soon after in 1992 to promote and support the conversion. Six town governments in the Valley cooperated in the creation of the trail development committee and in providing the 20% of funds not supplied by federal TE funds. The first sections of the "Farmington Valley Greenway" were paved in Simsbury and Farmington beginning in 1993/4. Raising the 20% matching funds is difficult for many towns as CT has been reluctant to provide any State funding in the past. Much of the trail system is complete with the exception of a 9.1-mile piece running south from southern Farmington, through all of Plainville into northern Southington. As the railroad abandons use of the rails south of Farmington, it is expected that we will be joined to trails already paved from Southington to New Haven, with only two gaps in Cheshire. Southwick, Massachusetts is completed, with only 4.5 miles of Westfield (much of which will be elevated) and all of Southampton remaining to the north.

## 4. *Who Are We?*

### **Corporate Background:**

- The Farmington Valley Trails Council, Inc. is a **CT 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization** founded in 1992 by Preston Reed of Farmington to advocate for multi-use “rails-to-trails” in the Farmington Valley.
- We are now the largest such organization in New England with over **800 paying memberships**. We fully recognize that the political advocacy and economic strength of the organization stem directly from the vibrancy of our membership.
- Every cent (except our very low administration costs) goes to the trails, ***we are all volunteers***.
- Spending on construction, maintenance and amenities has averaged ***over \$38,000 a year over the last 7 years***.

### **Officers 2015-16:**

Bruce Donald, **President**, Farmington

Jim Cassidy, **Vice President**, Plainville

Steve Noble, **Treasurer**, Tariffville – *Note: 2017 Treasurer will be Rob Kazior of Farmington*

Doug Gerlach, **Secretary**, Farmington

### **Directors:**

Nancy Anstey, Avon, Barbara Collins, West Hartford, Lisa Fernandez, New Haven, Joy Himmelfarb, Simsbury, Rob Kazior, Farmington, Gary Miller, Canton, Susan Mitchell, Simsbury, Rich Rowleson, Avon, Laura Russotto, Burlington, Al Ryan, Suffield, Dwight Weed, West Hartford.

## 5. *What Do We Do?*

### **FVTC Mission Statement:**

*Our mission is to build, maintain, beautify and connect off-road multi-use trails throughout central Connecticut communities.*

### **Broad Corporate Activity:**

- Advocate for the completion of (1) the FCHT (2) the FRT and (3) the ECG in Connecticut.
- Promote the benefits and branding of this multi-use trail system as the 80-mile Farmington Canal Heritage Trail and the 28-mile Farmington River (Loop) Trail.
- Help our area towns through funding trail construction, enhancements and maintenance.
- Build alliances with federal, State, town and advocacy organizations.
- Educate the public by providing maps (20,000 a year), information and events that promote safety and proper etiquette on the trail system.
- Provide up-to-date information on a high quality Website and through timely communications such as a Newsletter and email list.
- Publish papers on trail advocacy, policy, maintenance and safety.

- Hold events like monthly rides, trail-side tables, and our annual Clean-Up Day in April.
- Our Adopt-a-Trail Program helps our eight towns keep the trail clean and safe with over 100 volunteers.
- Increase membership and volunteer coordination, renewal and retention.
- Manage FVTC activities requiring assistance from members/volunteers.
- Business Plan 2016-19: Board retreat: Long term goals. Implement 3 and 6-month goals.

#### **FVTC Trailwide Initiatives:**

- FVTC Maintenance Matching Fund: Recent projects for Avon and Farmington.
- Targeted Funds: Salmon Brook Bridge Fund granted \$70,000 to East Granby for completion of the Bridge.
- Rules and Etiquette Signage
- Safety: Handlebar bell Program, Free blinkies, Laser Counter Program
- Painted Center Lines
- Unified Design Policy
- Commercial Signage Standards
- “You are Here” Trail Program, Trail Ambassador Program
- Boy Scout Eagle Projects (T.J. Taylor, Coordinator)

## **6. Committees**

#### **The Strategic Planning Committee (Jim Cassidy) [james\\_p\\_cassidy@mac.com](mailto:james_p_cassidy@mac.com)**

- Analyzes the progress each Committee had made on its short term and long term goals.
- Solicits input from the FVTC Officers and Directors concerning future plans of FVTC.
- Presents to the Board for its consideration and action, any analysis and recommendations for changes, if any, to the short term and long term goals of each committee for the coming year. Works closely with the Finance Committee on the Annual Budget.
- Updates and amends the Business Plan of the Organization.
- Each of the officers of FVTC shall be members of the Committee.

#### **Advocacy & Outreach (Bruce Donald) [president@fvgreenway.org](mailto:president@fvgreenway.org) (860-202-3928)**

- Maintain regular & consistent contact with: Federal, State and Municipal officials who can impact creation/maintenance of trails of interest to FVTC, esp. unfinished sections of Farmington & Plainville.
- Coordinate with other trail advocacy organizations: ECG, Bike/Walk CT, FCRTTA.
- Maintain a role as speaker at various venues to make local businesses/groups aware of how trails benefit them and why they should support FVTC.
- Publish papers and other materials advancing the advocacy of the FVTC.

#### **Volunteer (Susan Mitchell) [fitzy.susan@gmail.com](mailto:fitzy.susan@gmail.com)**

- Implements recruitment and retention programs to increase and maintain volunteerism, particularly for Events, Committees and Adopt-a-Trail programs.

- Recruits volunteers that will mentor other volunteers until they are accepted and established as working members of the Council.
- Inculcate our desire that all who are willing to help feel welcome and valued.
- Specific duties include: Receive and record all volunteer offers from telephone, email, Website, event staffing and new/renewal membership communications.
- Plans events such as Monthly Rides, Trail Clean-up Day and Trail Assistance Staffing for the “You Are Here” trail orientation program.
- Disseminate listing of the existing standing committees and their objectives. Solicit choices, connect with committee chairs and follow up until there is closure.
- Assure the Adopt-a-Trail coordinators that volunteer wants the task for the next year and help recruit replacements as needed.
- Assure that the Kiosk coordinator annually verifies the Kiosk volunteers want to continue one more year and help recruit replacements as needed

**Membership (Gary Miller) [garymiller\\_fvtc@mac.com](mailto:garymiller_fvtc@mac.com)**

- Implements recruitment and retention programs to increase and maintain membership.
- Maintains a current roster of members, dues paid, and communications.
- Assures that annual renewal notices are sent out and new members receive return mail.
- Updates the Volunteer Committee on any member expressing interest in volunteer duties.
- Creates and maintains a database of pertinent contact information.
- Searches for new software systems to enhance our recordkeeping and communications.
- Updates the Electronic Communications Committee with information for, and changes to, the email list-serve.

**Maintenance & Enhancements (Al Ryan) [aryan92645@aol.com](mailto:aryan92645@aol.com)**

- Identifies trails in need of: Maintenance, Root remediation/repaving, Fencing repair, Enhancements, Safety/rules signage. Initiates projects as needed.
- Maintains and updates information in all of the Kiosks on the trail system.
- Encourage/promote sharing of equipment among municipalities for better, more frequent maintenance.
- Manages efforts of: Adopt-a-trail volunteers, Boy Scouts, Others wishing to install trail enhancements.
- Oversees Spring Cleanup Day subcommittee with Chair, Diana Moody.

**Publicity (Nancy Anstey) [nancy.anstey@comcast.net](mailto:nancy.anstey@comcast.net)**

- Oversees the creation of, and revisions to; Folding Trail maps, Press releases, Newsletter
- Develops/implements Publicity Plan: Identify individuals, organizations, businesses that utilize/benefit from CT trail network
- Determines how FVTC can assist in delivery of benefits identified

**Electronic Communications (Joy Himmelfarb) [joyhimmelfarb@comcast.net](mailto:joyhimmelfarb@comcast.net)**

- Maintains FVTC website; act as liaison with Development and IT professionals
- Distributes email communications to members: Periodic newsletters, Notification of upcoming FVTC events, Other events of interest to members
- Cooperates in migration of all communications from hard mailings to electronic distribution

**Finance (Steve Noble) [steve.cris.noble@comcast.net](mailto:steve.cris.noble@comcast.net) (Rob Kazior) [rkazior@gmail.com](mailto:rkazior@gmail.com)**

- Prepares Corporate taxes
- Prepares monthly and year-end statements
- Provides for all banking services
- Pays all Board approved expenditures
- Accepts and records all monetary inflows
- Oversees third party audit of FVTC financial records annually

**Safety & Education (Doug Gerlach) [gerlach@gmail.com](mailto:gerlach@gmail.com) (Laura Russotto) [llmr@snet.net](mailto:llmr@snet.net)**

- Plans/implements programs to educate public about safe use of bikes on and off trails.
- Oversees safety initiatives such as Bike bells, Helmets.
- Oversees placement of historical markers to interpret trail significance in Farmington Valley.
- Establishes presence for FVTC at: Sam Collins Day (Collinsville), Avon Day, Tariffville Day, Unionville Day.
- Trail Counter Program

**The Fundraising/Corporate Liaison Committee (Dwight Weed) [dweed1379@aol.com](mailto:dweed1379@aol.com)**

- Plans and implements efforts to raise funding for FVTC from an array of outside sources.
- Seeks out opportunities for corporate and government grants.
- Creates a program and documentation making local businesses aware of how the trails benefit them and why they should support FVTC.
- Merchandising.
- Other fundraising initiatives.

## 7. What is the Current State of the Trails?

The approximately **80.2 miles** of the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail (FCHT) from New Haven, CT to Northampton, MA, and the **16.1 miles** of the Farmington River Trail (FRT) is one of the most picturesque and historic greenways in New England. Chart as of February, 2016.

<b>Farmington Canal Heritage Trail</b>						
<u>Town</u>	<u>Distance</u>	<u>Completed</u>	<u>Remaining</u>	<u>Designed</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Funded</u>
Northampton	3.5	3.5	0		100	
Easthampton	3.7	3.7	0		100	
Southampton	3.9	0	3.9		0	
Westfield	7.4	2.6	4.8		35	
Southwick	6.2	6.1	0		100	
<b>Total (MA)</b>	<b>24.7</b>	<b>15.9</b>	<b>8.7</b>	<b>0.0</b>	<b>63%</b>	
Suffield	1.2	1.2	0		100	
Granby	1.1	1.1	0		100	
East Granby	5.3	5.3	0		100	
Simsbury	7.5	7.5	0		100	
Avon	4.7	4.7	0		100	
Farmington	4.8	2.3	2.5	2.5	48	\$5.1m
Plainville	4.3	0	4.3	0	0	Yes, plan
Southington	6.6	4.0	2.6	2.6	61	
Cheshire	7.1	3.9	3.2	2.5	55	Yes
Hamden	9.5	9.5	0		100	
New Haven	3.4	1.8	1.6	1.6	47	Yes
<b>Total (CT)</b>	<b>55.5</b>	<b>41.3</b>	<b>14.2</b>	<b>7.2</b>	<b>73%</b>	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>80.2</b>	<b>57.2</b>	<b>22.9</b>	<b>10.1</b>	<b>71%</b>	
<b>Farmington River Trail</b>						
Farmington	3.7	3.7	0		100	
Burlington	2.3	2.3	0		100	
Canton	4.3	3.1	1.2	0.2	72	
Simsbury	5.8	1.7*	3.1		29	*Stone dust
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>16.1</b>	<b>10.8</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>67%</b>	
<i>Note: 43 miles of the FCHT is designated as part of the 2,900-mile East Coast Greenway</i>						

## **From South to North:**

### **FARMINGTON CANAL HERITAGE TRAIL *fygreenway.org***

#### **New Haven (1.6/3.4 miles; 47% complete)**

- Bridges at Hillhouse Ave., Temple and Prospect Street are done.
- Section IV to Long Wharf is designed and funded but held up by abutting landowners.
- There are occasional closures in the southern part of this section while Yale University develops two new residential colleges in the area.

#### **Hamden (9.5 miles 100% complete)**

- The tunnel under Skiff St. is done and farther north, the construction at the West Woods Road/Mt. Carmel Avenue intersection is now complete. The trail now runs farther to the west, away from Whitney Avenue.

#### **Cheshire (3.9/7.1 miles; 55% complete)**

- Cornwall to W. Main: CTDOT has completed preliminary design internally. Part of this work-around Dalton Industries (.67 miles) will be elevated boardwalk through the abutting swamp. Estimated to start construction in 2017. Still requires permitting and construction funding.
- West Main to Jarvis: Complete early spring 2016. 1.5 miles. It includes building a pedestrian crossing with a “HAWK” beacon (pedestrian activated red) instead of a conventional traffic signal for safe passage across West Main St. by trail users.
- Southington to Jarvis: Funding is in place. Design by DOT internally, 77-space parking lot at terminus, with restrooms. Construction by autumn 2016; 2.5 miles.

#### **Southington (4.0/6.6 miles; 61% complete)**

- Hart/Curtiss St. to Lazy Lane (SRS parcel in part): Arcadis Engineering was hired by Solvent Recovery Services to complete trail design from pavement to pavement on this “brownfield” land. Funding is in place. Expected completion in 2016. A new bridge to the south has been constructed on DEEP land.
- What was two sections have been made into one from West Queen St. across Townline Road ending 1,500 feet into Plainville. The Town has selected a consultant to design this section of trail.
- At Center Street, demolition of the Ideal Forging site has commenced. A mixed use residential, retail and parking complex is in the works, to occupy both sides of the trail. The selected consultant will also develop a preliminary design for this segment.

#### **Plainville (FCHT 4.3; 0% Completed)**

- Plainville, through the Capital Region Council of Governments is nearly finished with hiring a consultant to finalize the route of the FCHT through the town.
- The project will be from West Queen St. in Southington to south of Northwest Dr. in Plainville, meeting the 2016 Farmington FCHT project parking lot.
- Given the absence of a traditional path for the trail along an abandoned RR right-of-way, part of the gap solution will be on-road, and must, therefore, be designed to be as attractive and safe as possible so that the route is palatable to the casual trail user as well as the serious cyclist.

**Farmington (FRT 4.3; 100% Completed, FCHT 5.0; 52% Completed)**

- The Town received bronze Bike Friendly Community Status in May 2014.
- The 2.5-mile section south from Red Oak Hill Road past Northwest Drive into Plainville is 100% designed, including a 125-foot bridge over RT 6. The plans include a terminus with a 40- space parking lot and pavilion. Funding is in place in a brand-new CT bonding initiative where the total cost of \$5.1 million. This is the first time in state history that the state has completely funded a section of trail without using federal money. Completion date is estimated by mid-2017.
- Note that Mile 0 (north) for both the FCHT and the 28.5 mile FRT (Loop Trail) starts at Red Oak Hill Road/New Britain Ave.

**Avon (FCHT 4.7; 100% Completed)**

- The Town is in design process for an exciting new “Town Center Plan” and the trail will run through the new area, realigning to avoid the police station and providing a safer, easier route.

**Simsbury (FCHT 7.5; 100% Completed; FRT 5.8; 0%)**

- The town awaits approvals for final design and construction funding for the eastern and western pieces of the East Coast Greenway spur from RT 315 to the parks in Tariffville and from Governors Bridge to the Bloomfield line. Bloomfield expects to start construction of approx. 2 miles of the trail in 2016.
- River Trail interim sharrows painted for on-road route. Upgraded stone-dust park trails finished in the Town Forest portion.
- Town received Silver Bicycle Friendly Community Status and is the first such Community in CT.

**East Granby 5.3 & Granby 1.1 (FCHT 6.4; 100% Completed)**

- The historic Salmon Brook Bridge was completed in 2009 with a \$70,000 grant from the FVTC. Note the trail follows the outside borders of Imperial Nurseries after negotiations on the ROW.

**Suffield (FCHT 1.2; 100% Completed)**

- The Coca-Cola North America grant of \$55,000 was used for a new parking lot & Info Center near Phelps Road (we supplied an \$8,000 kiosk) and a granite CT/MA border crossing monument.
- The FVTC is providing a bicycle Fix-It station at the parking lot in 2016.

**Southwick (6.1; 100% complete) [southwickrailtrail.org](http://southwickrailtrail.org)**

**Westfield (2.6/7.4 miles; 35% complete) [columbiagreenway.org](http://columbiagreenway.org)**

- Phase 1 of the Columbia River Trail (1.1 miles) is complete with parking at Shaker Farms Country Club (the only at-grade crossing in town).
- Phase II involved renovation and rehabilitation of two bridges across Little River. It is now up to the Town Center and a ribbon-cutting was held in Nov. 2015. This piece ends at Stop & Shop Plaza at Main St.

- Phase III requires a bridge over the Westfield River north.

**Southampton (3.9; 0% complete) *southamptongreenway.org***

- Recent Open Space Master Plan calls for the purchase of the ROW from Pan Am Southern Railway. Voters approved the purchase in November 2012.

**Easthampton (3.7; 100% complete) *manhanrailtrail.org***

- The **Manhan Trail** is now 6 miles long and is part of the FCHT.

**Northampton (3.5; 100% complete) *fntg.net***

- The **Norwottuck Trail** is complete and is the terminus of 80.1 miles of the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail. Northampton now has over 11 miles of trail.

**FARMINGTON RIVER TRAIL**

**Collinsville/Canton (FRT 2.9/4.9; 59% Completed)**

- The FVTC and the Town are proposing a River Trail parking and information area to be in the Shoppes at Farmington. Negotiations substantially complete, awaiting final approval.
- Collinsville Center Information Project includes \$5,000 RTC grant and matching funds from FVTC for a kiosk. Completed as an integral part of the Collinsville Center reconstruction project. The FVTC will also install a bicycle Fix-It station as part of this project in 2016.
- Interim sharrows to be painted for on-road FRT route to the Simsbury line.
- Canton to propose funding for 1,400' of trail in front of new playing field up Lawton Rd.

**Burlington (FRT 100% Completed)**

- The FVTC donated an \$8,000 information Kiosk to the town which has been installed at the northern terminus of the FRT in Burlington at Arch St.
- A ribbon-cutting for the reconstruction project was held in the fall of 2015.

## ***8. Why Build Multi-Use Trails At All?***

### **Executive Summary**

43.2 completed miles of the multi-use (asphalt surfaced) Farmington Canal Heritage Trail (FCHT) bisect Connecticut from New Haven to Suffield. Its sister loop trail, the Farmington River Trail, (FRT) boasts an additional 10.1 miles. They have proven to be a remarkable success. By connecting 13 towns, they allow point-to-point off-road travel providing a safe system of linear parks that can be accessed at multiple points by both able and handicapped users. The trails serve multiple positive purposes for their communities and the surrounding region. Unfortunately large gaps remain in both these trails.

### ***The case for multi-use trails in Connecticut has been proven:***

They are used as recreational facilities for physical activity and health, as tourist destinations and sources of economic development, as an abatement of pollution and noise by replacing automobile trips, as a significant community amenity where people congregate and interact, and as a growing form of alternative transportation through commutation. Intermodal opportunities through connections with bus lines and other mass transportation are expanding and are slowly and steadily increasing in use.

- Every dollar spent building multi-use trails returns a multiple of that yearly.
- Immediate successes when built, indicating heavy demand, they attract thousands of users.
- Those local and out of town users add significantly to the economy;
- Residents are overwhelmingly positive about them, communities that have them are more desirable, and properties near trails sell faster at higher prices.
- These repurposed rail corridors are retained permanently as improved community open space.

### ***Barriers remain:***

- The State of Connecticut has lagged behind its neighbors in recognizing walking and bicycling planning as an integral part of transportation.
- No dedicated state funding is available to communities for the planning, development, and construction of these facilities. Funds for feasibility and design studies are non-existent.
- Communities have relied on federal Transportation Enhancement dollars for 80% of project costs and the fate of that funding is now uncertain. They must raise the additional 20% alone.
- Limited funding does exist but many “shovel ready” trail programs languish unfunded.
- Municipalities that want multi-use trail facilities face steep hurdles because of these issues and this creates a chilling effect on their expansion.

### **Introduction**

Imagine Central Connecticut as a place where people can choose to use a bicycle or walk to travel from town to town, commute to work, stay healthy or just relax. It has steadily become a region where elected officials, organizations and residents have recognized the value of walking and bicycling and have made a commitment to change their communities. A mix of advocates, such as

the FVTC, FCRTTA and Bike/Walk CT, municipalities, ConnDOT, DEEP, the Capital Region Council of Governments (CRCOG) and the Central Connecticut Regional Planning Authority (CCRPA) have worked together to overcome the physical, social and institutional barriers which have limited our choice to walk and bicycle. In all cases, when a multi-use trail has been built, it has become an immediate success. This indicates a very real pent-up demand.

Our hope is that this document will help to make a case for completion of the highly successful Farmington Canal Heritage Trail (FCHT) and the Farmington River Loop Trail (FRT) from Canton to Simsbury. This vision enables us to imagine a transformed region where population centers are connected and people can use this alternative transportation corridor of dedicated bike and pedestrian paths, free from the increasing costs of automobile travel, pollution and noise. The FCHT and the FRT now have almost 32 miles of contiguous paved off-road trail. The FRT will be one of a handful of long (30 miles) off-road contiguous loops in America and a major tourism draw. The historic 82-mile FCHT corridor echoing the Farmington Canal from New Haven, CT to Northampton, MA, is also part of the East Coast Greenway which stretches 3,000 miles from Calais, ME to Key West, FL.

It is imperative that our communities continue to investment in sidewalks, bike lanes, wide shoulders, wide outside lanes, and multi-use trails. New pedestrians and bicyclists need fewer barriers in their quest to avoid inevitable clashes with automobiles. When asked, they are most concerned with having separate, off-road space. More experienced bicyclists appreciate separate facilities but are more willing to bicycle on the road. Intermodal connections are also critical, and the expansion of transit service with bike racks and pedestrian access to stops, stations, and commuter lots help this connectivity. Education on enforcement of traffic regulations for police, safe riding skills for bicyclists, and sharing the road for all users is also a key component.

Given the remarkable success of the FCHT and the FRT, it is truly sad that the remaining gaps in the system have yet to be filled. Considering the dramatic returns to both the communities and the region in which it has been built, and the tiny cost vs. the total ConnDOT budget, it becomes almost comical. Plainville has been working hard since 2004 to plan for the construction of the FCHT in their community, which is the last major gap in the system, along with southern Farmington and northern Southington; a 9.1 mile stretch. To the south the FCHT is completed with only a 3.2-mile gap in Cheshire left to construct.

Yet for decades they have not been considered legitimate forms of transportation in Connecticut and little attention has been paid to the bike/ped environment or to their needs. Increasingly, Connecticut has been catching up to the rest of New England in recognizing the value of this form of “active transportation”, taking new and important steps to improve pedestrian and bicycle access and safety. Several towns in the region have newly active committees that are examining bike/ped infrastructure and issues. Simsbury was recently named a Silver Bicycle Friendly Community by the League of American Bicyclists. They are first one in Connecticut, and one of only a handful in New England. Since then Farmington and West Hartford have become bronze towns. The towns of the Farmington Valley have successfully built the majority of the northern portion of the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail, which stretches from southern Farmington to the Massachusetts border. New Haven Hamden, Cheshire and Southington to our south have either finished or are close to finishing their sections. It is recognized nationally as an important completed part of the East Coast Greenway. This greenway, along with the Farmington River Loop Trail connects the town centers of Collinsville, Unionville, Farmington, Avon and Simsbury in the Valley, but will eventually connect 13 town centers together;

a rarity in New England. It has become a very popular amenity for recreation, tourism, and the economy bringing in millions for its communities. It is also heavily used for point to point commutation.

Until recently, transportation officials viewed mobility in terms of movement of vehicles and not movement of people. At the base level, everyone is a pedestrian of some kind. Walking is in fact the primary form of transportation. Most trips involve some element of walking, whether from the home to the car, from the home to the bus stop, or from the vehicle to the final destination. A balanced transportation system must address motor vehicle needs along with public transit, walking, and bicycling. Our region cannot thrive if everyone drives for all their transportation needs. We do not have enough room nor can we afford to build enough roads and highways for this. In fact, walking and bicycling infrastructure make public transit more effective in meeting travel needs. Public transit is dependent upon safe and convenient pedestrian access to get patrons to and from their ultimate destinations. In addition, bicycle access to transit can expand transit's reach, especially in suburban communities. "Cities with more bike paths and lanes have significantly higher bike commuting rates." (Buehler, R., and J. Pucher. "Cycling to Work in 90 Large American Cities: New Evidence on the Role of Bike Paths and Lanes." *Transportation*, 2012.) Apropos to this, a recent grant administered by CCRPA will allow for signage to be installed directing FCHT users in Farmington and Plainville to the nearest bus stop, giving directions and mileage, and bus users directions to the trail.

## **Public Health**

An obesity epidemic, fueled by sedentary lifestyles has created new urgency for providing close-to-home opportunities for physical activity. Our mode of travel is making us less healthy. According to the Thunderhead Alliance 2007 Benchmarking Report, between 1960 and 2000, levels of bicycling and walking to work fell 67% while adult obesity levels rose 241%. At the same time, the number of children who bike or walk to school fell 68% as levels of overweight children rose 367%. The Surgeon General recommends moderate physical activity, including walking, is one of the best antidotes to the obesity epidemic. Just ½ hour of walking, 5 times a week, can greatly change an individual's health status (CRCOG Regional Pedestrian Plan, "Walking Matters"). A recent report estimated that Portland, Oregon's regional trail network saves the city approximately \$115 million per year in healthcare costs. (Beil, K. *Physical Activity and the Intertwine: A Public Health Method of Reducing Obesity and Healthcare Costs*, 2011.)

By 2017, Portland, Oregon residents will have saved \$64 million in health care costs thanks to bicycling. By 2040, the city will have invested \$138-605 million in bicycling yet saved \$388-594 million in health care costs and \$143-218 million in fuel costs, a benefit-cost ratio of up to 4 to 1. (Gotschi, T. *Costs and benefits of bicycling investments in Portland, Oregon, Journal of Physical Activity and Health*, 8 (Supp 1), S49-S58, 2011)

Physically active people tend to have better mental health. Compared with inactive people, the physically active had higher scores for positive self-concept, more self-esteem and more positive "moods" and "affects." These findings seem similar in both young people and adults. Physical activity has also been used to treat mental health problems such as depression according to <http://www.americanheart.org>. Trails are beneficial in promoting physical activity. According to a Center for Disease Control funded study, this is especially true among those groups traditionally at

highest risk for inactivity, especially women and individuals on lower socioeconomic groups (*Rails-to-Trails Conservancy*, “Healthy Places for Healthy People: Active Transportation and Health” 2007). Finally, there is a cost – but it seems cheap to us: “By building a bicycle trail, it costs just \$98 to help a person become more physically active.” (Wang, G., et al. “Cost effectiveness of a bicycle/pedestrian trail development in health promotion”, *Preventive Medicine*, 237-42, 2004)

## **Pollution**

Increasingly, more children are being driven to school and traffic congestion has mushroomed which has increased stress to drivers and risks to pedestrians and cyclists. Parents who drive their children to school make up about a quarter of morning commuters. More traffic also means more vehicular accidents, endangering the lives of children and the adults who drive them (NY Times, “Turning the Ride to School into a Walk”, by *Jane E. Brody* 2007). If the number of kids who walk and bike to school returned to 1969 levels, it would save 3.2 billion vehicle miles, 1.5 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub> and 89,000 tons of other pollutants annually. This is the equivalent of keeping more than 250,000 cars off the road for a year. (Pedroso, M. *Safe Routes to School: Steps to a Greener Future*. 2008)

“When the complete life cycle of the following modes are taken into account, the carbon emissions are approximately: Bicycle, 21 g CO<sub>2</sub>/passenger/km traveled;  
Electric-assist bicycle, 22 g CO<sub>2</sub>/passenger/km traveled;  
Bus, 101 CO<sub>2</sub>/passenger/km traveled; and  
Passenger car, 271 g CO<sub>2</sub>/passenger/km traveled.”

(European Cyclists' Federation, *Cycle More Often 2 Cool Down the Planet: Quantifying CO<sub>2</sub> Savings of Cycling*. 2011)

Air pollution is very costly. According to the American Lung Association, health costs of air pollution are estimated at a minimum of \$10 billion a year, much of which comes from cars, trucks, and SUVs. Road traffic is a major contributor to air pollution. Fortunately for most healthy people, the symptoms of air pollution exposure usually go away as soon as the air quality improves. However, certain groups of people are more sensitive to the effects of air pollution than others. Children experience more illness, such as bronchitis and earaches, in areas of *high* pollution than in areas with cleaner air. People with heart or lung disease also react more severely to polluted air. During times of heavy pollution, their condition may worsen to the point that they must limit their activities or even seek additional medical care. (www.familydoctor.org). Five to fifteen percent fewer vehicle miles are traveled in communities with good walking and cycling conditions than in more automobile dependent areas (*Rails-to-Trails Conservancy*, “The Short Trip with Big Impacts: Walking, Biking and Climate Change” 2007).

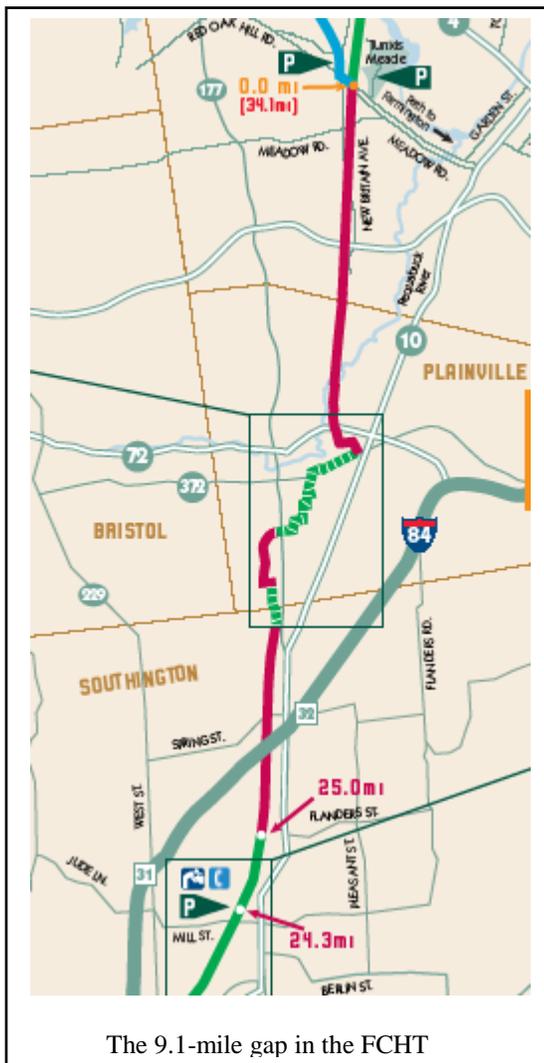
## **Economic Development Considerations**

Bike paths create economic vitality in the towns and neighborhoods through which they pass. The resurgence of Collinsville Center is a case in point, so too is the center of Southington with its brand-new trail. These facilities bring customers to the front door of businesses. Safe and convenient pedestrian and bicycle access enables more individuals full participation in the economy. In 2011 the *Orlando Sentinel* noted that the East Central Florida Regional Planning Council reported that three bike paths in Central Florida bring \$42 million to the local economy every year. There are now a preponderance of properly researched academic studies that confirm this success.

Trail-Oriented Development (TrOD) is an emerging planning tool that seeks to combine the active transportation benefits of a trail with the revitalization potential associated with well-designed and well-managed urban parks to help create more livable communities. TrOD aims to provide a network of local business and housing choices within a web of safe and enticing trails. The amenity of the trail provides a pull for home buyers and a new market for local businesses (*Rails-to-Trails Conservancy*, “From Trail Towns to TrOD: Trails and Economic Development”, 2007).

A report of the four federal Nonmotorized Transportation Pilot Program communities found that; 16 million miles were bicycled or walked that would have otherwise been driven in 2012; the number of bicyclists increased 49 percent on average between 2007 and 2010; the share of trips taken by bicycle increased 36 percent; driving mode share decreased 3 percent; and additional biking and walking trips saved the communities \$6.9 million by reducing the economic cost of mortality. (*Federal Highway Administration, 2012, “Report to the U.S. Congress on the outcomes of the Nonmotorized Transportation Pilot Program SAFETEA-LU Section 1807”.*)

Nationally, bicycle tourists, who are a growing, affluent segment of the tourist market, contribute significantly to local businesses that are well-connected to trails. Along the Virginia Creeper Trail, a 17-mile (one way) "retired" railway corridor of the Virginia - Carolina Railroad in southwest



The 9.1-mile gap in the FCHT

Virginia, visitors spend \$1.59 million annually providing an estimated 27 full time jobs (*Rails-to-Trails Conservancy*, “From Trail Towns to TrOD: Trails and Economic Development”, 2007). Large group rides, bicycling events, local visitors, and day-trippers all purchase food and drinks along a trail and prompt return trips to visit other interesting features in the neighborhood.

The Lancaster, PA *Intelligencer Journal* printed the results of a study on June 4, 2012. It shows the existing 5.5-mile Conewago Recreation Trail and the 15-mile Lebanon Valley Rail-Trail are valued by area residents and stimulate local economies. The trails attracted an estimated 125,244 people in 2011 and pumped \$875,320 into the local economy. Combined with the purchase of durable goods, it's estimated the trails had a \$1.3 million economic impact. ([http://lancasteronline.com/article/local/661723\\_Study-says-rail-trails-are-a-boon.html#ixzz23Fxpofh](http://lancasteronline.com/article/local/661723_Study-says-rail-trails-are-a-boon.html#ixzz23Fxpofh))

These impacts do occasionally lead to new businesses or jobs, but they can more often make existing businesses more profitable. Walkable, bikeable communities are communities of choice. We know from direct experience with realtors that homes abutting Greater Hartford area trails are in very high demand, sell faster, and for higher prices. *Home Sales near Two Massachusetts Rail Trails* by Craig Della Penna, came

out in 2006. He examined sales in the seven Massachusetts towns through which the Minuteman Bikeway and Nashua River Rail Trail run. Statistics on prices and days on the market show that homes near these rail trails sold closer to their list price and much faster than other homes in the area.

The *New York City Department of Transportation* in 2011 reported that rents along New York City's Times Square pedestrian and bicycle paths increased 71% in 2010, the greatest rise in the city.

A good example of the metric of cost vs. rate of return was a recent study in Wyoming. “Biking and hiking trails in Teton County, Wyoming create an annual economic benefit of more than \$18 million. The trail system cost \$1.7 million to build over the last decade.” (Kaliszewski, N. *Jackson Hole Trails Project Economic Impact Study*, University of Wyoming, 2011.)

The Great Allegheny Passage is a 141-mile trail built on abandoned rail lines that stretch from Cumberland, MD to Homestead, PA, just outside of Pittsburgh. A 2009 study reported in the Summer 2011 issue of the *American Trails Magazine* concluded that the GAP hosts over 800,000 trips a year and in 2008 generated over \$40 million in direct annual spending and another \$7.5 million in wages, making the trail an important economic generator for its “trail towns” that benefit hugely from visitor spending.

### **A Community Amenity for Families**

Quality of life, providing a safe place to learn to ride a bike, spending time with family away from the TV, making connections with your neighbors, fostering pride, walkability and bikeability build community. Surveys, both national and local, have consistently shown the lure of such communities. Many community leaders have been surprised at how trails have become sources of community identity and pride. These effects are magnified when communities use trails and greenways to highlight and provide access to historic and cultural resources. Many trails and greenways themselves preserve historically significant transportation corridors.

A recent survey conducted by Smart Growth America and the National Association of Realtors indicates that for 72% of the population, having sidewalks and places to walk is an important factor when buying a home. A 2000 Regional Development Issues Survey, conducted for CRCOG by the Center for Survey Research and Analysis at the University of Connecticut indicated that in all three communities surveyed (Hartford, West Hartford, and Suffield), strong majorities (86%, 81% and 65% respectively) agreed that more places where people can walk, rather than drive, from their home to shops, work, and recreation are needed.

In a very well researched and documented study for the CT Greenways Council in 2010, the engineering firm Vanasse, Hangen, Brustlin Inc. (VHB) of Middletown, CT stated unequivocally that “According to the research material found, the economic benefits of a properly designed and built multi-use trail significantly outweigh the costs associated with the design and construction of the trail.” They went on to say that multiple cost benefit studies [cited within] indicate that ‘...even in poor economic times it makes sense to expend state and federal funds on projects that provide proven economic benefits to the users of the facilities, the businesses in the general vicinity, the property owners adjacent to facilities and which also benefit the environment.’”

## 9. Trail Use Study

### Background & Summary

This study seeks to offer a local and regional count of the users of the multi-use paved trail system in the Farmington Valley, which currently runs contiguously from Red Oak Hill Road in southern Farmington, CT north to the State border in Suffield, CT and on into Westfield, MA. It is critically important to quantify usage of bicycle and pedestrian facilities to measure the positive benefits of investments in these modes. The system encompasses the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail (FCHT) and the Farmington River (Loop) Trail (FRT) all told, over 32 miles of paved off-road facilities in the towns of Farmington, Avon, Simsbury, East Granby, Granby, Suffield, Canton and Burlington. These heavily used facilities are essentially linear parks and repurposed rail corridors retained as improved community open space. They are used as recreational facilities for physical activity and health, as tourist destinations and sources of economic development, as an abatement of pollution and noise by replacing automobile trips, as significant regional amenities where people congregate and interact, and as a growing form of alternative transportation through commutation. Intermodal opportunities through connections with bus lines and other mass transportation are expanding and are slowly and steadily increasing in use. For more information please see our Website, [www.fvgreenway.org](http://www.fvgreenway.org).

**Table I. Extrapolated Summary Data**

Metric	Trail Uses 2013	2014	2015
Annual Farmington Total	97,482	80,451	121,584
Annual Canton Total	71,668	156,297	124,429
Annual Suffield Total	159,442	89,639	161,550
<b>Average Total</b>	<b>107,451</b>	<b>108,995</b>	<b>135,854</b>
<b>Annual Regional Trail System Total<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>262,874</b>	<b>261,110</b>	<b>326,050</b>
Weekday Peak Hour	11:00 am	11:00 am	12:00 pm
Weekend Peak Hour	1:00 pm	12:00 pm	12:00 pm
Month with Highest Activity	August	July	August
Month with Lowest Activity	January	January	February
Weekday Peak Day Volume	565	610	698
Weekend Peak Day Volume	1,066	950	940

*Raw data is the average of three days at each site extrapolated using the National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project Methods: <http://bikepeddocumentation.org/>*

<sup>1</sup> This number is approximate and includes an estimate that 20% of uses at each of the three collection sites must be factored out as users traveling to or from another counted site. Note: 2013 numbers are restated to reflect the same time period as 2014 and 2015.

**Table II: Averaged Extrapolated Data by Time Period**

<b>Time</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>
Day	435	403	489
Week	2,758	2,798	3,771
Month	11,876	11,991	16,163
Year	107,451	108,995	135,854

*Average count of users for three days at three sites extrapolated using the National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project Methods: <http://bikepeddocumentation.org/>*

**Table III: Three Year Averaged Annual Data**

<b>Area</b>	<b>3-Year Average</b>
<b>Farmington</b>	<b>99,839</b>
<b>Canton</b>	<b>117,465</b>
<b>Suffield</b>	<b>136,877</b>
<b>Valley Region</b>	<b>283,345</b>

### **Extrapolated Summary Data Methodology**

Regarding the Summary Data shown above in *Table I*, the National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project has developed a method to estimate annual trail usage from raw counter data. The use of expansion factors is common in transportation planning. In this case, they are a tool for taking the seasonal counts and using them to develop estimates of bicycle and pedestrian activity in familiar and comparable units, such as daily, weekly, monthly and yearly activity. This method uses one week of data and multiplies it by a monthly adjustment factor derived from analysis of trail counts from across the country. Given the variability of bicycle and pedestrian activity, these estimates are based on the average of three counts during the same time period and week. The counts were from 12-2 PM on a Sunday, Tuesday and Friday during the same week in mid-September.

### **Overall Study Methodology**

The FVTC recognizes that at best this study can only estimate multi-use trail patterns along the FCHT and FRT. These estimates are based on three primary data sources. That source is information

gathered from three TRAFx counters, infrared counters that track trail use at fixed locations along the trail. The counters are located many miles apart to provide local as well as aggregate user counts. They are located on the FCHT in Farmington between the Farmington Bridge and Red Oak Hill Road and near the State line in Suffield. The third counter is on the FRT at Commerce Drive in Canton. Please see *Appendix I* for more detail. An important part of this study is to not only to count locally but to be able to aggregate the count to estimate regionally. Appropriately, the north and south counters on the FCHT are located 21 miles apart and the FRT counter in Canton 9 miles from the southern counter and 20 miles from the northern counter. The data sets cover the 2013 season from May 1<sup>st</sup>, to October 22<sup>nd</sup> and the 2014 and 2015 years in their entirety. The data provided by the trail counters was placed into a Microsoft Excel database so that it could be analyzed. Data was investigated for hourly, daily, monthly, and yearly usage.

### **TRAFx Infrared Counters**

TRAFx counters were picked by the FVTC because they are used by most of the important trail organizations and the federal government. These counters are semi-portable in that they are small and movable, but must be fixed to an immovable object on either side of the trail. They are battery-powered active infrared light beam instruments designed for counting moving objects in the outdoors. In this study, the intent was to count only human trail users as moving objects. The light beam was positioned high enough to not count most animals, with the exception perhaps of deer. It was also placed so that vegetation could not impede the light beam. However it must be noted that this type of counter is still open to a variety of miscounts some of which can be accounted for below, but the results generated from this data should be judged in that light. Note that the counters record the number of “uses” rather than unique “users.” For example, a trail user may pass the counter once when leaving his car and a second time when returning to it. This user would be counted twice.

All infrared trail counters under-count when people travel side by side, or in tight groups. Therefore, it can be said that trail counters yield estimates rather than absolutes. It is difficult to give a single number regarding accuracy because it is dependent upon various factors: how people typically use the trail (single file or side by side), how far apart people are spaced, how busy the trail is, trail width, how a counter is set up, etc. If the trail is narrow and people travel single file and spaced apart, accuracy can be as high as 95 to 100%; however, for the most part the trail system in the Farmington Valley is ten feet wide making accuracy approximately 80%.

## 10. Communications



### FVTC BOARD OF DIRECTORS '16

Name	Title/Comm.	Address	Telephone (860)	E-mail
Anstey, Nancy	Publicity	3 Coplestone Road Avon, 06001	673-1472 (h) 680-5298 (c)	nancy.anstey@comcast.net
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Mitchell, Susan	Volunteer Events	165 Old Farms Road West Simsbury, 06092	593-4298 (c)	fitzy.susan@gmail.com
Noble, Steve	<b>Treasurer</b> Finance	15 Fairchild Road Tariffville 06081	658-4065 (h)	steve.cris.noble@comcast.net
Rowlenson, Rich	Strategic Plan Kiosks	226 Kingswood Drive Avon, 06001	693-1933 (h) 729-0015 (c)	rrowlenson@gmail.com
Russotto, Laura	Safety & Ed. Volunteer	4 Geo Washington Tpke. Burlington 06013	673-0722 (h) 329-7906 (c)	llmr@snet.net
Ryan, Allen	Maintenance Enhancement	9 Valley View Drive Suffield 06078	668-5914 (h)	aryan92645@aol.com
Weed, Dwight	Fund/Corp	1379 Farmington Ave. West Hartford 06107	521-4617 (h) 242-1383 (w)	dweed1379@aol.com

## Reporting

Keep your eyes open! It is very important to know where you are on the trail system when reporting. The nearest cross street should be identified and any mile-marker should be noted. Hand held device GPS is reasonably good but still cannot pinpoint your location.

There are three levels of reporting. The first is for an *active* situation requiring immediate assistance in either a criminal or medical emergency. These situations demand both police and/or ambulance services. **In such cases dial 911** and describe your exact location and the situation to the dispatcher. This includes suspicious activity.

Second is a non-emergency police event. This would include any *non-active* report that the local police station would want to know about. Working with police is an important part of ensuring that a trail is safe to use. Areas like trail crossings and parking lots could generate such reports and would include such things as vandalism or the identification of transients. Use your common sense. If you think the police should be notified but it is not an emergency, call the station:

### Police Station Local Numbers

Avon: 860-409-4200

Burlington: Troop L Litchfield, 911

Canton: 860-693-0221

East Granby: 860-653-4956

Farmington: 860-675-2400

Granby: 860-844-5335

Simsbury: 860-658-3125

Suffield: 860-668-3870

Third is a maintenance event or “inspection event” that is beyond our stated scope of services. Please report NEW heavy maintenance and any safety concerns i.e. asphalt condition, fencing falling down, etc. that cannot be repaired by our Adopt-a-Trail Volunteers.

### Trail Maintenance Contacts: Town Level

Please report NEW heavy maintenance that cannot be done by our Adopt-a-Trail Volunteers.

Avon: Bruce Williams; 673-6151 – [bwilliams@town.avon.ct.us](mailto:bwilliams@town.avon.ct.us)

Burlington: Scott Tharau “Tiro”; 673-6789 – [stharau@yahoo.com](mailto:stharau@yahoo.com)

Canton: Robert Martin; 693-6863 – [rmartin@townofcantonct.org](mailto:rmartin@townofcantonct.org)

East Granby: Edward Hubbard; 653-6822 – [info@egtownhall.com](mailto:info@egtownhall.com)

Farmington: Scott Zenke; 675-6789 – [zenkes@farmington-ct.org](mailto:zenkes@farmington-ct.org)

Granby: James Klase; 653-8960

Simsbury: Gerry Toner; 658-3255 – [gtoner@simsbury-ct.gov](mailto:gtoner@simsbury-ct.gov)

Suffield: John Cloonan; 668-3280 – [ckoren@suffieldtownhall.com](mailto:ckoren@suffieldtownhall.com)

## ***11. Trail User Guidelines***

- Please stay on the designated trail, be courteous, and respect the rights of adjacent property owners.
- The flow of traffic on the Trail is similar to road traffic. Always ride or walk single file on the right and before passing on the left alert others by bell, horn or voice.
- Stop, look and listen before crossing roads. Obey all traffic signs and regulations.
- The bicycle speed limit on the Trail is 12 mph.
- All bicyclists are encouraged to wear protective headgear. Make sure your bicycle or other equipment is in safe operating condition.
- Please do not litter. In consideration of others please keep dogs on a short leash at all times and clean up after your dog.
- Report Trail maintenance problems to [see list].
- Report accidents on the Trail directly to Police: Dial 911. Report your position using the mile markers or road names at crossings.
- Motorized vehicles (except wheelchairs), horses and livestock are prohibited.
- The trail is open for recreational use from sunrise to sunset.
- No alcoholic beverages.
- No fires, hunting or trapping.

## ***12. FVTC APPENDIX***