

River Council Meeting

Tuesday, November 13, 2007

Present: Cheryl Box, Bob Butcher, Linda Couchon, Jennifer Fais, Dave Grier, Mike Haas, Don Hall, Jim Hare, Mike Hastrich, Keith Matthews, Jennifer Miller, Debbie Peterson, Jim Pfifer, Lee Younge, Tom Beecher, Eileen Heaton, Peggy Coleman, Jeff Spencer, Tom O'Brien, Andy Fagan

1) County Support

Tom Santulli told Cheryl Box that Extension was planning on keeping the River Work. Andy Fagan, Interim Director of Extension, said that Extension would be willing to continue work on the River if funds were available and it fit Extension's mission.

Action: Andy Fagan, Cheryl Box, Lee Younge, Jennifer Miller and Jennifer Fais will meet on Tuesday, November 20th at 9 am at Extension to discuss Extension's role.

2) Unit Costs of Construction

Mike Haas distributed a "unit costs of construction" sheet that identifies costs for various trail applications, construction items and site development projects. The unit costs include everything that would be involved, for example, a linear foot of 12 foot asphalt is \$55 per foot which includes permitting, earthwork, engineering, as well as the application of asphalt.

3) Trail and Project Development Costs

Mike Haas distributed trail and project development costs by municipality. Total project costs include a 25% contingency and a 25% design/construction administration amount. Totals may seem high but are realistic.

4) Identifying 3-4 projects

About \$35,000 is available for 3-4 high priority project designs in the current City LWRP. Mike Haas has requested that we identify approximately 1-3 projects per municipality or 10-12 overall.

The three projects previously identified are below. We need to clarify municipal interests/match support and address obstacles involved in these and/or other projects.

Big Flats Trail from Bottcher's Launch Site to Miniers Launch Site

Includes Willow Creek Golf Course and about 4 private property owners.
Need matching funds/in-kind.

City boat portage (carry-out/carry-in) on south side of Hibbard Chase Dam

City access over south side levee wall (possible trail to Clemens Center Parkway Bridge?)

White Wagon Park/Town of Chemung

Chemung Valley Conservancy owns property---Conservancy is concerned about liability if park is built. There is a SHPO hit (State Historical Preservation Officer) on the site that needs to be addressed. STEG is fine with idea and would be involved in design to compliment industrial park

Chemung County Soil and Water District board is not interested in having staff manage construction of the site.

Town of Chemung has some financial cash/match.

Kiosks

Historical/cultural/wildlife/tourism information, maps, location of amenities, etc. Possible touch screen. Solar powered.

Discussion: River Council can recommend projects but municipalities/stakeholders need to make final decision and support projects.

Action:

Mike Haas will create “summary sheets” on the Bottchers-Minier trail, the City portage, City south levee access, White Wagon park and the kiosks.

Jim Pfiffer, Lee Younge and Jennifer Miller will meet with municipalities to discuss projects/project costs and River Council recommendations. Municipal priorities, commitment and financial/in-kind support will be discussed. Lee will set up meetings.

5) New LWRP due Dec. 7

2007 has been extremely hectic since we have been simultaneously executing three grants. Based on the work still left to be done and the difficulty identifying matching funds for the LWRP (a 50:50 match requirement) it was agreed to submit a small LWRP, possibly for the kiosks. Other grants such as the Transportation Enhancement Funds have smaller match requirements and might be more feasible at this point.

5) River Project Management

See bottom of minutes for key functions needed at this time.

Action: Andy Fagan, Cheryl Box, Lee Younge, Jennifer Miller and Jennifer Fais will look at what needs to be done to wrap up current grants and what is needed over the next 12-18 months to coordinate River Council work and grants.

6) Final Master Plan Public Presentation by the Haas Team

Tentative date: **January 10, in evening**

Need to identify location, publicize, create goals/outcomes desired.

7) Rotary Presentation

Jim Pfiffer agreed to do a Rotary River presentation for Dustin Hewitt’s Rotary group.

8) Application for technical support from Parks and Trails New York (PTNY)

Tom O’Brien shared an application to PTNY for technical assistance for developing a multi-use trail from Corning to Elmira. The Chemung Basin River Trail Partnership is the applicant and Tom will be the contact person. A copy of the application is at the end of the minutes. Looks Great!

9) City of Corning LWRP Proposal

Jennifer Fais has written and garnered support from the City of Corning (lead applicant) and the Town of Corning, Village of Painted Post and Village of Riverside for the 2008 LWRP. The grant would fund visioning and development of revitalization strategies for the Chemung River in Steuben County. This creates a complimentary river plan across the county border and allows for future regional/two County River project implementation.

10) Meeting schedule

November 27, 3:00 at Steele Memorial Library Auditorium

December 11, 3:00 at Steele Memorial Library Auditorium

January 8, location to be announced

January 22, location to be announced

Lee Younge will send out meeting notices

River Project Coordination/Management		
Complete Big Flats Contract	Attend January 10 training in Albany	
	Write LWRP plan/report	
	Develop Greenway compact	
Complete City LWRP	River Council meetings/minutes/follow up/ Communications/meetings Final Public Presentation-Jan. 10? Write final report for priority projects/City LWRP	
New 2008 LWRP proposal	Write? Coordinate writing?	
Pursue other funding	public/private/foundations	

APPLICATION OF CHEMUNG BASIN RIVER TRAIL PARTNERSHIP TO PARKS AND TRAILS NEW YORK'S HEALTHY TRAILS, HEALTHY PEOPLE PROGRAM FOR HELP IN DEVELOPING A PLAN FOR CREATION OF A MULTI-USE TRAIL ALONG THE CHEMUNG RIVER FROM CORNING TO ELMIRA

Draft November 14, 2007

Parks & Trails
New York

29 Elk Street
Albany, NY 12207
518-434-1583
518-427-0067 FAX

Healthy Trails,
Healthy People

Helping communities become more
active through the creation of multi-
use trails

www.ptny.org

To apply to become a 2008 Healthy Trails, Healthy People Program community, complete the questions below and submit it to Parks & Trails New York with **two support letters** from community partners or local governments. Applications must be postmarked, faxed, or emailed by **January 11, 2008**. Selected communities will be announced on **February 8, 2008**.

PROJECT CONTACT PERSON:

Name: Thomas C. O'Brien

Organization: Chemung Basin River Trail Partnership

Address: 36 West 5th Street, Corning NY 14830

Phone: (607) 936-8737

Email: bfbrien@stny.rr.com

Project Information

Trail Name (if known): Chemung Basin River Trail

Town(s): Elmira; West Elmira; Big Flats; Southport; Ashland; Chemung; Corning; Erwin

Village(s): _____ City: Elmira; Corning

County: Steuben; Chemung

1. **Community Character: (Select all that apply):** Rural Suburban Urban Village

2. **Has a potential trail corridor(s) been identified?** Yes Go to question 3.
No Go to question 5.

3. **Corridor Characteristics: (Select all that apply)**

a. Type of corridor: rail canal lakeside riverbank park
Other: _____

b. Ownership: town village city county state railroad private
Other _____

c. Current Use: public, multi-use trail informal trail use adjacent landowner use
party spot active rail line unknown
Other: levees; farmland; hedge rows; other riverbank uses

d. Condition: overgrown cleared bridges missing culverts missing eroded
drainage problems rutted trail surface unknown Other: trail is non-existent through most of corridor

e. Proposed Uses: walking bicycling horseback riding cross country skiing
snowmobiling Other: roller blading

f. Potential for links to: schools commercial areas parks/recreational areas public
transport senior centers/nursing homes residential areas libraries Other: all communities and resources along the river

g. Inclusion in existing planning documents: state local county Other: see Item 4, below

h. Proposed Length: approximately 16 miles Miles open: (if any) approximately 14
(Please indicate on a map approximate location of trail corridor and any road crossings)
See attached map.

On separate sheets (maximum two pages total), please provide a brief answer to each of the following questions:

4. List prior trail development efforts and results (for example: grant applications, work projects, fundraising, etc.).

Answer*: a. Corning has secured a Federal \$300,000 SAFETEA grant to fund construction of a paved, levee-top trail along the north side of the Chemung River in Corning (approximately 7/10 of a mile long) from the Bridge St. Bridge to East High School. Construction is expected in 2009. DEC approval of the levee-top trail is considered an important break-through for future trail projects. The paved, levee-top trail will complete a 1.7 mile loop trail in the center of Corning (on both sides of the river and across the Bridge Street and Centerway Bridges).

b. The Chemung River Basin Council has secured approximately \$110,000 funding from NYS for development of a Chemung River Master Plan within Chemung County. The Council has completed a preliminary plan for River-related projects, which include, bike lanes, boat launches, a white-water park, trail connections and in-town hike/bike trails. The final plan is expected to be approved in early 2008.

c. Hiking/biking parks and trails in the vicinity of the Corning-to-Elmira river corridor include: the Catherine Valley Rails-to-Trails trail; the Steege Hill Nature Preserve; a (1-mile) Big Flats rails-trail; the Tanglewood Nature Center and Museum; the Big Flats Community Park; Denison Park in Corning; and the Finger Lakes Trail system.

d. In Steuben County, the Steuben County partners of the Chemung Basin River Trail Partnership are in the process of submitting an application to NY State to fund the creation of a master plan for the Chemung River in Steuben County similar to that being prepared for Chemung County.

5. Describe the level of community interest in and support for a trail. Is there local government support?

Answer*: The Chemung Basin River Trail Partnership was formed in 1999 to develop a river trail system in the Chemung valley. The Partnership includes representatives from

*Further details can be provided on request.

virtually all municipalities in the vicinity of the Chemung River, as well as business and community development groups, health organizations, sports clubs, civic groups and local businesses. The Partnership's members participate in their respective County's master planning projects for the Chemung River (see Items 4(b) and (d), above).

6. List existing and any possible local opportunities for partnerships (for example: persons with disabilities, seniors, civic groups, local governments and agencies, educational institutions, local businesses and corporations, and health care providers and associations). Briefly describe the support these partnerships will provide.

Answer: A partnership already exists among the members of the Chemung Basin River Trail Partnership. Funding requirements, however, currently split the Partnership's efforts into separate Chemung County and Steuben County projects. This proposal is designed to bring the two counties together around a single

Chemung River hike/bike trail. Seniors, persons with disabilities, health care providers and education groups have expressed strong interests in the proposed Corning-to-Elmira river trail. Partnership members can provide in-kind services and local share contributions (although commitments have not yet been requested or promised).

7. Why would you like assistance from Parks & Trails New York? Be as specific as possible. *For help in completing this question, please contact Parks & Trails New York to discuss your project.*

Answer: Funding requirements of existing programs limit Chemung River plans to projects which do not cross the Chemung-Steuben county borders. The purpose of this proposal is to secure help in developing a complete hike/bike trail along the Chemung River from Corning to Elmira that will unite Chemung and Steuben Counties and the communities along the River, while opening the full potential and beauty of the River to area residents and tourists.