

June 12, 2007

River Council Notes

Present: Mike Haas, Bob Butcher, Jim Arey, Bob Bailey, Jim Birney, Cheryl Box, Sam Draper, Jennifer Fais, Doc Gee, Dave Grier, Don Hall, Mike Hastrich, Keith Mathews, Jenn Miller, Jim Pfiffer, Debbie Peterson, Lee Younge, Tom Beecher, Linda Couchon, Gil Brown, Tom Giles

1) 5/22/07 River Tour

18 people participated in the all day River Trolley River Tour throughout Chemung County. In addition to the data collected beforehand, additional ideas/thoughts include:

- need for signage including street signs on bridges for paddlers
- possible horse trails
- creating walking loops with bridges as connectors
- importance of dam portage
- possible trail on old railroad bed running south of I86 from Elmira to Wellsburg—connecting with Newtown Battlefield and historic corridor
- new White Wagon launch site could be a master plan site plan (one of up to three site plans in the master plan)
- River Road between Town of Chemung and Waverly is one lane with bike lanes on either side.

2 Connecting Assets

River Council members and friends: please review attached list of “Connecting Assets”. Call or email Linda if we have left off any important assets.

3. I86/17 Rail Road Bed meeting

The Haas Team will be meeting with DOT, the Elmira-Chemung Transportation Council and others in the next few weeks to discuss creative possibilities related to River rail bed development. The Trolley Tour visited the old rail bed off of route 17 at MM 192. Meetings are also anticipated with NYS Parks related to Newtown Battlefield.

4. Haas Team preliminary plan

The Team is currently in the data collection phase. Kelly Salidas, the Environmental Scientist, is currently reaching out to the Army Corps of Engineers, checking on hazardous waste sites, archeological sites, etc. We hope to begin public participation in late July. The Haas Team will be facilitating a couple of central public participation meetings plus Cornell Extension and River Council will be reaching out to numerous groups and constituencies.

5. Municipal Updates

W. Elmira: DEC is doing work behind Pirozzola Park to mitigate the build up from last winter’s ice jams.
City of Elmira grant: The City recently got word of an appropriation bill spurred by a meeting with Hillary Clinton two years ago that would grant \$5 million dollars to the City to fix the sewer siphon that runs under the Chemung River between the Holiday Inn and Brand Park. The funds would cover the siphon (estimated at \$2.2 million) plus other City river projects. The City should hear back near the end of July.

6. Private Property Issues

Gil Brown, intern with Cornell Extension, prepared a summary of property owner issues (attached). Please feel free to share this with others. Linda is getting copies of a “Community Trail Handbook for Landowners” which will be made available to all.

7. Publicity

The River Council identified an ongoing need for publicity and public awareness. Jim Pfiffer and Lee Younge will lead this effort. Jeff Murray at the Star Gazette is the contact for the paper. Both TV stations will also be contacted. In addition to giving River Council updates they will include municipal contact information, information on timeline and ideas, request for groups to invite us to come to their meetings/community to solicit feedback on river plan development.

8. River Walk and Talks

Jim Pfiffer is willing to put together three River Walks and Talks this summer. Amy Wilson from the Chemung Valley History Museum is willing to give historical talks and others are also willing to participate. After the walks, the group could dine together at a local establishment!

9. Grant matching requirements

All! Please fill out attached "River Grants Match Sheet" for all time, expense, mileage, research done for River Council outside of the River Council meetings and River Trolley Tour---retroactive to January 1, 2007. Please include other people's time and expenses who have helped who are not River Council members on your form. Please mail, fax or bring these forms to the next meeting.

The River Grants Match Sheets will be used as required "match" documentation for two of the three river development grants. Both of the Local Waterfront Revitalization Grants require a 50:50 match. The Quality Community grant requires a 10% cash match which has been provided by all of the municipalities.

10. Funding

Transportation Enhancement Funds: Jim Arey is hoping to submit a multi-county application for these funds. The notice of funding availability is expected in March-April 2008.

Linda is looking into the NYS Parks Grant programs due June 29, 2007.

11. Water Rescue

James Sincock, Elmira Police Dept. talked to Jennifer Fais about the need for water rescue coordination and equipment. Linda has already talked to Pine City, Big Flats and Town of Elmira Fire Departments. She will contact Jim.

12. Meeting schedule-please mark calendars

The next meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, June 26 at 3:00** in room 110 of the Human Resource Building.

River Council meets are the
2nd Tuesday of each month

July 10
Aug. 14
Sept. 11
Oct. 9
Nov. 13
Dec. 11

If needed, we will also meet the
4th Tuesday of each month

June 26
July 24
Aug 28
Sept 25
Oct. 23
Nov. 27

Attachments

Landowner Issues

Assets

River Grants Match Sheet

Landowner Issues & Concerns

- Liability: Protection for Landowners by Home Owners Insurance and NY Recreation Use Statute
 - no greater risk than for landowners who post their property against trespass (if you do not charge fee or maliciously fail to guard against hazards)
 - NY-NJ Trail Conference/over 1700 miles of trail with no lawsuits.

- Safety: Protection for Users and Landowners by Local Law Enforcement and Community “Eyes and Ears”.
 - 1998 Study of 7,000 Miles of trails found Trails to be safest places in communities.

- Privacy & Trespassing: Trails are Directed.
 - Trail placement away from homes and intensive-use areas. Use signage

- Property Value: Increase or Stay the Same.
 - 86% of people on Mohawk-Hudson Trail believe their property has increased or remained constant.

All these issues and more in depth:

Getting Involved – A Community Trail Handbook for Landowners online at www.PTNY.org. (Linda is getting copies)

Connecting Assets

Existing Launch Sites (miles between)

Steuben	Cohocton River Bath Route 11 (?) Campell, Wood Road (about 10) Kinsella Park, Erwin (4 to Conhocton in Corning)
	Canisteo River Canisteo Rotary Park, Canisteo Route 110, Cameron Mills Route 21. Rathbone Village of Addison Erwin, Mulholland Bridge
	Chemung River Conhocton St., Corning (3) River Road, South Corning (4)
Chemung:	Bottcher's Landing, Big Flats (1) Miniers Field, Big Flats (5) Unofficial: Harris Hill Town Park (3 from Miniers, 2 to Fitch's) Fitch's Bridge, Big Flats (3) Grove St., Elmira (2) Dunn, Elmira (6) Toll Bridge, Wellsbury (7) New 427?, Town of Chemung (5) New White Wagon, Town of Chemung (4)
PA	Tozers, Athens, PA Susquehanna River Trail/Susquehanna Greenways
NY	Susquehanna Headwaters Trail

Bigger River Picture

Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network—we are a **designated gateway!**

(a partnership system of parks, refuges, museums, historic sites and water trails)

American Heritage Rivers Initiative---Chemung River is included in this potential federal designation that creates a federally funded River Navigator position to facilitate federal assistance and resources. The River Navigator would be housed with the Upper Susquehanna Coalition.

History

Elmira Civic Historic District (E. Church, Lake, E. Market, Baldwin, Carroll, and State Sts.)
Near Westside Historic District (bounded by Chemung River, College Ave., 2nd and Hoffman)
Chemung Co. Courthouse Complex Historic Dst. (Lake St., between Market and E. Church Sts.)
Chemung Valley History Museum, Elmira
Hendy Homestead
Civil War Prison camp on river
John Jones Museum, Elmira
Woodlawn Cemetary (Civil War, Mark Twain, John Jones)
Underground Railroad history
Native American encampments on River
Railroad Trestle along Newtown Creek—living history park?
The Forbidden Trail, Southern Tier
Chemung Valley Living History

History of Chemung Canal
National Soaring Museum
Newtown Battlefield/Revolutionary War Reenactments
Rorich's Glen
Old Waterboard Building on Hoffman St., Elmira
Mark Twain (Woodlawn Cemetery, Quarry Farm, Elmira College Studies)

Arts

Arnot Art Museum, Elmira
Chemung River School at Art Museum
Community Arts—in old Langdon Mansion on Lake Street
ARTS of the Southern Finger Lakes...regional arts support, art trails

Trails/Parks/Preserves

Steege Hill, Big Flats (Nature Preserve)
Nature Conservancy property-fishing site off of 352 in Big Flats
Pallisades (in DEC Open Space plan), Big Flats
Harris Hill---Soaring museum, soaring field, etc.
Big Flats Community Park across from Miniers
Harris Hill Town Park between Minier's and Fitches
Tanglewood Nature Center/Personious Woods
Pirozollo Park
River Front Park downtown
Promenade under RR trestle to River, downtown
Eldridge Park, Elmira
Lackawanna Trail (Eldridge to East Water)
Brand Park (next to Levi)
Old Rail Bed next to Route 17
Numerous fishing sites---identified by Keith Matthews in ppt
Regional
 Finger Lakes Trail
 Greater Eastern Trail (Steuben connecting to Finger Lakes Trail)
 Bike Route 17
 Two Rivers State Park
 Catherine Valley Trail (Watkins to Eldridge Park)
 Carantouan Greenway, Great blue heronry

Other Attractions

Elmira College
Clemens Center
Dunn Field
First Arena
Wings of Eagles

Other

Hibbard Chase Dam Portage and Fish Ladder
Primitive camping needs
Wildlife---osprey poles, etc.
Connections for B&B's and hotels/Tourism

River Grants Match Sheet

Please document your time and expenses incurred in relation to the Chemung River Council work. Do **NOT** include actual meeting time since that is documented separately.

Name _____

From _____ **to** _____

Return to Linda Couchon
Cornell Extension
Fax 607 734 7740
425 Pennsylvania Avenue, Elmira, NY 14904

Additional time other than River Council meetings: Research, phone calls, subcommittee meetings, community dialogues or other dedicated time

Description/Date

Estimated hours

Other people you meet with including municipal meetings, sports groups, community members

Who

When

Why

Total contact hours
(no. of people x hours)

Mileage to meetings, workshops, discussion, river visits, etc.

Description/Date

Mileage

Other expenses: phone, postage, supplies incurred by you or an organization

Description

Estimated cost

Signature

Date