

**Greenwoods Property
– Stakeholder Meeting –
Draft Summary of “Magic Wall” and Reflections, Conclusions, Next Steps
Barkhamsted Highway Garage
Wednesday January 21, 2015**

Attendees (Please double check and fill in missing info): Ray Gaudette (Barkhamsted - Hogback Commission), Bill Baldwin (New Hartford EDC), Mike Beauchene (DEEP Fisheries), Deb Simon (Barkhamsted Cons. Comm.), Don Stein (Barkhamsted First Selectman), Ginny Apple (Barkhamsted EDC and Cons. Comm.), Dave Hurley (New Hartford property owner), Deb Brydon (Barkhamsted Land Use Officer), Bob Geiger (Barkhamsted EDC), Carol Youell (MDC), Steve Sadlowski (NH Land Use), Alesia Kennerson (NH BOS), Dan Jerram (NH FS), David Krimmel (NH Ec Dev), Dave Childs (NH Ec Dev), Eileen Fielding (FRWA), Liz Lacy (FRCC/NPS)

Summary of “Magic Wall” Notes (exact duplicates are combined with ‘x’ the number of times it was mentioned)

Wild & Scenic River –

- Tranquil – not likely to be overrun
- Wild & Scenic – How so with bikes whizzing by
- Clear Water
- Cold Water
- We all need quiet places to sustain our spirit
- Very Scenic
- Little imposition on River
- Maintaining Natural Habitat
- floodplain forests, Floodplain
- Great seasonal variation – river flow etc.
- MDC Defense (from water diversion)

Recreation –

- Recreation
- good recreation possibilities, expanded recreational activities
- Outstanding Fisheries, Fishing x5, Awesome fishing regionally, fishing destinations
- Liability?
- Hunting x 2,
- birding, bird watching
- mountain biking,
- hiking x 3,
- biking,
- boating,
- rails to trails
- exploration of passive path possibly for recreation
- natural marked paths, better for health, no bikes, more scenic
- good place for walking, other passive rec.
- safe pristine walking path
- already popular hiking/cross country skiing
- walking, hiking primary
- Hunters & bike riders will meet
- Bird hunting/deer hunting need to be accommodated
- Wildlife watching, viewing wildlife
- Corridor & connector, fish & wildlife movement
- Singular ownership simplifies planning
- Allow diversity of access, senior access, Public access by all, public access
- Already has improved access

- Family time
- Communing with nature
- Views, incredible views
- Open Space
- Peaceful spot in a residential area
- Atmosphere of remoteness & quiet
- Vast size – gives feeling of separation
- Undeveloped, remote
- Mild Topography Appeals to All levels of hikers

Water Supply –

- Protection of water sources & habitat
- Riparian rights
- Aquifer
- Protecting Wetlands
- Water supply unaffected
- ☒ contamination
- H2O Recharge

Regional & Statewide Connections-

- Close to village + stores
- Good way to connect communities
- Regional Recreation
- Could be key link to NH/PV to Riverton
- Connectivity
- Connect Communities
- If they build it “they will come” - Trump’s casino good example – now closed
- How many will truly use – a very short distance
- Not possible to connect to other trails w/o using major roads

Historical Land Uses -

- Historic uses - mill, water power
- Impoundment
- Ice x 2
- Gravel
- Manufacturing
- Cultural/historical features
- 1700s Road
- Interesting Trestle columns
- Timber

Economic Activity –

- Economic benefits x 2
- Cost to taxpayers – grants?
- Tourism
- Compatible housing
- Compatible commercial use
- More tourism = Econ Dev’t

Flora, Fauna & Habitat –

- Birds
- Bald eagle sightings
- Fauna
- Flora

- Rare and Endangered Species
- Avoid vital natural areas
- Species/places of special concern
- Disruption of Natural evolutions – plants/animals/fish/amphibians
- Disturbance of flyway
- Rare species
- Unique species
- Multiple Habitats
- Biodiverse (vulnerability)
- Attention to detail and science - on such a small strip – can increased recreation co-exist w/valuable natural resources
- Numerous species to protect
- Impact on Wildlife
- Impact on Riparian Corridor
- Incredible Biodiversity due to wildlife forced into a narrow area
- All Species connect - what happens to one happens to us all eventually
- “Common” species not guaranteed to remain so
- The CT DEEP is developing a new initiative to keep species common
- Sustainable habitats
- Habitat-rich
- Least disturbance
- Good envir. practices req’d
- More use will tip the balance current wildlife has
- Transitional
- Island

Education –

- Un-structured exploration for kids
- Nature education
- Wildlife fills the souls of our children’s children’s children – or not – if gone
- Plenty of current use & appreciation
- Educational
- Conservation Education
- Wildlife education
- Outdoor classroom opportunity

Summary of Thoughts and Observations based on wall notes:

- Appreciates and loves the corridor
- Protection – not enough there
- Frequency of recreation and effect on flora/fauna is a concern
- Consistent perceived value of the area – recreational, scenic, habitat
- Likes that education was added
- Balancing act – with conflicting objectives
- There is a “do-nothing” option
- Connection is there – need to educate people about it
- How do we balance oversight with the two towns - how do we manage?
- An investment perspective – an economic advantage to towns
- Lack of extremes – a lot of similar views from not similar stakeholders
- Multi use – multitasking for different scenarios/user groups
- Identified assets and opportunities – educational and economic
- There are still questions as to liability concerns
- The area is valuable to people and animals
- The area has value because of the River
- There is no more information regarding the perspective of the MDC

- Many people appreciate the nature aspect of the area – but it could also be an economic draw
- Drawing card is the world class trout fishing – and the river ☺
- Don't ask the trail to do everything – put it in context

Stewardship – Future Land Uses -

- Management model – Stanclift Cove is a 50 year example of shared management of recreational area
- Farmington River Economic study of 2001 – American Rivers and NPS studied economic benefits of the river on local economies (see <http://www.farmingtonriver.org/ProjectsandReports/Reports/tabid/74/Default.aspx>)
- Encourage this not to be a rails to trails project
- There are different perspectives on definition of a “rail to trail” or “trail” or “resources” ...need to define terms.
- There are no set requirements of this project.
- A thorough survey of resources is needed.
- Improve access to learn what is there.
- Alternative routes for bikes?
- Should be a walking trail in this area.
- Different bikes have different impacts.
- Get the science done.
- When should we allow this activity?
- Make the trail itself a destination – perhaps a nature trail – use the uniqueness of the area.
- We are not going to have 1000s of people descending on this area.
- If people like the area – spend time there – they may support protection of it.
- Could there be more amenities at the ends of the trail – more rustic in the middle.

Closing Observations -

- What are the next steps?
- Look into new, better trail technologies
- John offers his assistance
- How do we proceed?
- Liked this forum and discussion – seems that the walking trail is least objectionable, more preferable.
- Most agree to explore the possibilities of a walking trail - Straw poll is mostly thumbs up, a couple thumbs down, one abstained
- An ERT (environmental review team) is suggested
- Local knowledge review is needed
- Some public outreach is suggested
- MDC is awaiting a conceptual proposal to react to.
- Due diligence needs to be done.
- Next step – map session ...stay tuned.

List of Participants Willing to Go Forward:

Deb Simon- deb_simon@msn.com
 Eileen Fielding - efieldinga@frwa.org
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 Don Stein – dstein@barkhamsted.us
 Ray Gaudette – Barkhamsted (no email address – D. Stein to contact)

Agenda:

By 8:30, Let's Leave With:

- . A list of attributes and annotated map summarizing the importance of this property to
 - o the MDC
 - o the ecosystem of the Wild & Scenic River
 - o the towns and
 - o residents

. Alternate ways to connect New Hartford center to Pleasant Valley, in the interest of promoting both communities.

5:30 Light Dinner Available: Pizza, drinks, cookies

6:15 Welcome by John Monroe, National Park Service

How we'll work together

Introductions

6:30 Objectives and possibilities for creating a recreational connection between the two village centers
by Don Stein and Dan Jerram

6:45 Description of the Property

The site and regional context

Water supply

Wild & Scenic River protection

Rare & threatened species

Recreation

Historical land uses

Other

7:45 Stewardship and Future Land Uses to Consider

8:25 Wrap-up

Next Steps

Plus/Delta Review

8:30 Adjourn