

Report from the Chair

by Dan Buckley

Dear Friends,

What a year Shoreline Greenway Trail has had! As you read through the following articles, you will get a feel for the activity, improvements, challenges and accomplishments that Shoreline Greenway Trail and its members and users have experienced.

From adding several new members to the board to creating new programs with wonderful partners, it has been gratifying to see Shoreline Greenway Trail enter its third decade on its mission to build a trail from the border with East Haven and New Haven through Madison to the Clinton border, for everyone to enjoy using safe, non-motorized transportation.

And all of this is due to our Members, Volunteers and Supporters. Without you, none of this would happen. Thank you.

So, enjoy reading about our past year and relish the beautiful pictures that capture the energy, fun and dreams of more to come.







Trail Metrics

Shoreline Greenway Trail saw a lot of progress in adding new sections, obtaining grants for design for more and the investigation of possible options for routing where connections are needed.

In addition, the City of New Haven was the recipient of a Federal Grant of \$7 million that will go, in part, to the route connections to East Haven. **WOW!**

Total Miles*	25.00
Multipurpose/Wooded trails	4.6
Sharrows/Sidewalks	0.75
In Design	0.50
Active proposals	3.50

^{*} New Haven- East Haven border to Madison-Clinton border

Please help us support additional trail identification and development along with the continued maintenance of the existing sections. Volunteer and/or contribute now!!!



Trolleys & Trails Series

Over the summer, Shoreline Greenway Trail partnered with the Shore Line Trolley Museum to host a series of Trolleys & Trails walks in each of our four towns. Each walk featured a speaker from the SLTM describing how the local trolley route ran along the shoreline and where it aligned with the Shoreline Greenway Trail routing. Tom Laurenson, Museum volunteer, presented compelling stories often followed by questions from his fellow walkers. All were great events with between 30 and 60 people attending each.

For more about Shore Line Trolley Museum, visit their website **www.shorelinetrolley.org**



SGT 25

September saw the second "SGT 25" bike ride with riders beginning at Lighthouse Point in New Haven and tracing a route along SGT trails, proposed routings and connection corridors all the way to the end in Madison at the Clinton town line.

Each town hosted a snack and water stop to welcome the peddlers. The entire group and several of the volunteers enjoyed a celebration at the end to the ride where each of the



riders, who rode the entire length, received their commemorative sticker! Look for these as you travel about and congratulate the rider on their great accomplishment!



Planning for next year!

As this was a bit of a test ride for a possible larger event in 2024, logistics, timing and support needs were noted and will be included in the planning. If interested in either riding or volunteering, please reach out and stay tuned!



2023 Masters Series

Following on a successful inaugural year in 2022, we continued to provide walks along trail sections with a MASTER speaker as a leader. Birds, Shrubs and Trees were very popular topics for several of the walks. This gave another reason to enjoy the trail and learn about the trail.

Plans call for expanding our Masters topic list to include other topics such as HISTORY, GEOLOGY, INSECTS, MARINE BIOLOGY, you name it.

Please feel free to send us a note to INFO if you would like to lead a Masters walk.





First Saturday Walks

This tradition continued this year with all four towns hosting a walk on alternating months. Although several were rained out and the February one in Madison was cancelled due to 15dF temperature and wind chill of -20df, most were enjoyed by both local members and users as well as visitors from other towns.

Here are the remaining 2023 dates and the 2024 Calendar. We hope you can make one or more!!

First Saturday Walks	2023 Date Town	2024 Date Town
January	1 (Sun) Branford	1 (Mon) Branford
February	4 Madison	3 Guilford
March	4 East Haven	2 East Haven
April	1 Guilford	6 Madison
May	6 Branford	4 Branford
June	3 Branford-EH	1 Bfd/EH
July	1 East Haven	6 Guilford
August	5 Guilford	3 Madison
September	2 Branford	7 Branford
October	7 Guilford	5 East Haven
November	4 East Haven	2 Guilford
December	2 Madison	7 Madison



Trail Census and Survey

Shoreline Greenway Trail has participated in the Connecticut Trail Census since 2016. Currently, 26 infra-red 'counters' are placed along participating trails

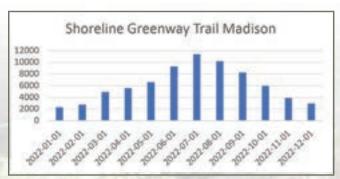


around the state. We have a single counter placed along the Hammonasset West section in Madison. It counts people walking or riding by and records it for later collection, analysis, and use.

It provides great information on how important the trail is for public use whether recreating, commuting, or exercising as well as a great benefit to one's overall health improvement.

The data is also used by both the Shoreline Greenway Trail, the Connecticut Greenways Council and other public officials for justification of improvements and other funding opportunities.

While 2023 data is not complete, our total usage for 2022 was more than 74,000 counts over the year!! Peak months were, unsurprisingly, July and August with more than 11,000 counts each. The December/January months were still strong in with almost 3,000 each.



More info on a great program for temporary census counters is contained in the Intern report which follows.

In addition, we conducted a member/user survey to better understand what people like about the trail so far and what they see as needed most. Although we don't have the results fully compiled at press time, look for improvements based on your feedback –

Thank You!

Volunteers!!

How would ANY of Shoreline Greenway Trails existence and accomplishments happen without all of your support and time volunteering.

From the identification of possible new trail sections, the work to finance and maintain them, the trail clean-up days, the continued care for the pollinator garden in Branford, the participation in local events to get our message out, the organizing and leading events; none of this would be possible without you

and your support..

A great story is that of a note from out of the blue to our website. A trail user said, "I am going out on the trail and plan



Photo credit: Michael Futoma

to pick up trash that may have been left by others. WHERE can I help most?" Later adding, "...Aside from all the trash, I was able to recycle 20-25 items I found on the trail, mostly glass bottles and metal cans... a small win!" WOW. What a great gesture!

For anyone looking to help out, please see our VOLUNTEER page on our website Volunteers - Shoreline Greenway Trail or reach out to one of your town leaders.



Intern Report - Claire Corwin, The Hopkins School, '25

This summer I interned for the Shoreline Greenway Trail. The two projects I focused on were the Census Count Program and Grant Tracker. While so much happened over the course of the summer, here are some highlights:

Census Count Program

In late July, members of the Shoreline Greenway Trail partnered with UConn's Connecticut Trail Census Program to install temporary census counters in both East Haven and Branford. This is in addition to the permanent one in Madison.

The goal of this program is to collect data on trail usage that will directly influence SGT decision-making, resource allocation, and enhance our program development.

The Branford counter was placed beside the Branford Trolley Bridge. The East Haven census counter was placed at the entrance to the trail segment off Elliot Street at the former site of DC Moore School. The counters recorded "hits" for approximately five weeks, and the results were amazing!

On average, the Branford census counter showed that nearly 300 people visited the section of the trail passing the trolley bridge each day of the temporary count! The daily record in Branford was placed on August 19 where a whopping 606 people went by.



East Haven maintained an average of 35 people per day on its segment of trail. For this location, the most popular day to visit was Sundays.



Special thanks to Aaron and Adelheid of the UConn Trail Census Program for providing us with materials and logistics. To learn more about their program please visit http://cttrailcensus.uconn.edu.

Grant Tracker

In this program I researched potential grants that align with the Shoreline Greenway Trail. The grants varied in award amount, and many of them were based on community and the environment. Based on my findings, I see great potential for grant opportunities in the future that would be valuable for us. We will keep our Shoreline Greenway Trail community updated as we progress along the application processes.

Thank you all for your help this summer and beyond! I really appreciate it. It was an amazing summer, so I can't wait to see what we can do in the fall.

NOTE: Shoreline Greenway Trail had another GREAT experience with our second intern in two years and we understand they did too! For 2024, we will start application process in February, but if any of you have friends, relatives or acquaintances that might be interested or want more information, please reach out to info@shorelinegreenwaytrail.org

2022

Financials

Shoreline Greenway Trail had a good year and ended similarly to last year. Given that several of our initiatives for Trail Development & Maintenance will require our financial support, the need is still great for your contributions.

Shoreline Greenway Trail, Inc.
Statement of Financial Position - Cash Basis
As of September 30, 2023 and 2022

ASSETS

2023

	2023	<u> </u>
Fixed Assets, net of depreciation	_	_
TOTAL ASSETS	\$524,139	\$482,724

NET ASSETS

TOTAL NET ASSETS	\$524,139	\$482,724

Draft Statement 2023 Assets Reflect \$45,000 of grants not spent as of 9/30/2023

East Haven Update

Barbara Brow. Town Chair.

The town team is pleased to report trail development has taken a giant step forward. The existing trail off Elliot Street (former site of D.C. Moore School) is extended by means of sidewalks and sharrows to Cosey Beach Avenue, to the shoreline. This uninterrupted path connects pedestrians, bicyclists and wheelchair users safely to the shoreline. The extension utilized federal/state grant funds to build Shoreline Greenway Trail. We are most grateful to Mayor Joe Carfora, Town Engineer, Jonathan Bodwell and Director of Administration and Management, Michelle Benivegna for their support of Shoreline Greenway Trail and their great effort to bring the extension to fruition.

Our next trail development project is to seek grant funds for the design phase to extend the trail from Cosey Beach Avenue to South End Road to meet the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail.



The team is pleased to welcome two new members, Gloria Luzzatto and Steve Koss, enthusiastic hikers, bird watchers and kayakers.

The town team greatly appreciates the support and assistance of our business partnerships, East Haven Public School District (9 years) and recently with One World Roasters. And we appreciate the support and

assistance of our community partners: Scout Master Ned Taylor and Boy Scout Troop 401(21 years), East Haven Rotary Club, Shoreline Community Garden Club of East Haven, Shore Line Trolley Museum, East Haven Health and Wellness Committee, East Haven Chamber of Commerce and East Haven Public Service Department.



On Earth Day, members of Shoreline Community Garden Club of East Haven adorned the trail with Siberian Irises, Solomon Seed, Root Geraniums and Lillies of the Valley. Garden club member, Kristinia maintains the sites and spreads positive uplifting messages on painted rocks on the trail and throughout the town.

On May 21, Shoreline Greenway Trail's business partner, Christine Ucich of One World Roasters led a Forest Bathing walk for team members on the trail in Farm River State Park. Christine guided the team to experience and connect mindfully to nature using our senses of sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch. It was a relaxing calming experience.

East Haven and Branford town teams cosponsored with the Shore Line Trolley Museum once again a trolley ride and walk on June 3 to celebrate CT. Trails Day. Bill Richardson, Shoreline Greenway Trail member and museum volunteer operated one of the two trolleys taking attendees through the beautiful Farm River Estuary. After disembarking, participants walked to the site of the old dike at Farm River and to the remains of an old crushing plant. On the return trip, attendees had the opportunity to view an exhibit of old trolleys.

Busy fun time at the trail!

Branford Update

Judith Miller, Town Chair

2023 has been a busy year for Shoreline Greenway Trail in Branford.

Most exciting was the development by Branford Public Works of an interconnected trail system connecting to the Shoreline Greenway Trail in Tabor Park. On Saturday, May 6, we had the good fortune of a perfect sunny day for the opening of these trails and the dedication of a tree and bench to honor volunteers Joshua Wood and David Howley. The occasion also honored Jack Wood for his contribution to the development of the Wood Trail and auxiliary parking lot. With four members of Branford's Public Works crew in attendance, we thanked them for their hard work in making Tabor a beautiful place to visit, and especially for the three new trails they recently built. In addition to the Wood Trail, they have built a winding trail to connect the Shoreline Greenway Trail to Ecology Park, and they've completed the Tabor Loop, a 1.25 mile walk around the periphery of the property. A good-sized group joined us as we walked the Tabor Loop and up to Ecology Park. following the signs contributed by Shoreline Greenway Trail. Special thanks to head of Public Works Gary Zielinkski and his crew, and Branford team members Tracey Brooks, Sue Smith, and Chris Willems for their help.

Part of our mission is to make the trails accessible to the public, to make the public aware of the trails, and to encourage their use. The Branford team has been active in this regard, starting with a New Year's Day walk at Tabor. Over sixty people joined us for a walk that ended with cider and donuts at the Ecology Park gazebo.



The Branford team continued its tradition of leading walks for Walsh School fifth graders. On four days we led different teams of fifth graders, starting at our Birch Road kiosk, taking them to the Community Garden, where they were told about the garden

by a member, then along the Branford Trail, newly designated as a Connecticut Greenway, and up to Ecology Park, where they ate the snacks, they had brought with them. We returned to Birch Road by way of Chet's Pond and the Branford labyrinth. This is a great way of introducing Branford's school children to the Shoreline Greenway Trail. Thanks to walk leaders Leo Cristofar and Judy Miller.

Other walks included co-sponsoring the annual Connecticut Trails Day activity with the East Haven Shoreline Greenway Trail team and the Shoreline

Trolley Museum that involved a trolley ride and a history walk out to the old crushing plan on the Farm River.



Our public outreach efforts not only include walks, but

representation at various events around Branford. The Branford team participated in Branford's Earth Day Fair on the town green, emphasizing the environmental role that the trail plays. Our biggest outreach was our booth at the annual Branford Festival in June, where hundreds of people stopped by our booth to pick up maps and information. As usual, the door painted and decorated with a map of the Tabor Trail was a great success with young children. Later in June, we participated in the Blackstone Library's Volunteer Fair, an opportunity to talk with a lot of potential volunteers to help us with our project. Membership financial support has allowed us to develop the Tabor pollinator garden, another reminder of our environmental mission. The garden was a great success this year and has been registered with the Pollinator Pathways project, a national effort to create linked pollinator gardens through the United States.

Branford Shoreline Greenway Trail could not move forward without the work of wonderful volunteers: Tracy Brookes, Christopher Calkins, Jean Connal, Tony Corso, Leo Cristofar, Ashley Donnert, Michael Futoma, Bimmie Herget, Mike McCall, Chris Willems, Jack Wood, Jo Zaehringer, and Steve Zaehringer. And a huge thank you to all of those in Branford who contribute financially to our ability to help develop, maintain, and utilize the Branford sections of the Shoreline Greenway Trail!

Guilford Update

Pam Simonds, Brad Kronstat, Town Co-Chairs

We have focused on expanding our Team and are happy to report that two new members have joined us this year, Wendy Sabol and Jeff Carroll. They each bring unique experience to our efforts.

Wendy, a Guilford resident for 30 years, is a hiker. A retired environmental educator, she and her husband have hiked and biked with their two kids on almost all rail-trails in New England, and all of Guilford's walking trails. We are pleased that Wendy has joined our Board of Directors.

Jeff recently moved to Guilford from Wilton, is a major biker. After he retired from his database marketing career, he was a volunteer steward on the Norwalk River Valley Trail. And, he decided to bike the entire length of Connecticut's shoreline, which he did! He would like us to find and build at least one safe off-road trail section.



We hope that among YOU, our Guilford supporters, there are some seniors, or parents, or young enthusiastic bikers, who want a safe place to bike for you, or your kids, or your grandkids. We NEED YOU TO JOIN OUR TEAM. {Please contact the Team co-chairs if you want to help.!}

We are strengthening our partnerships with key local organizations with similar interests, to advance our goal to expand local resources in Guilford for safer recreational biking and walking for everyone, especially kids and families. We have met with the Guilford Park & Recreation Department among other Guilford groups and continue to follow the important work of the Safe Streets Task Force.



Though routing through Guilford remains a challenge, the town team is very involved in identifying suitable routes that will fulfill our mission as well as be embraced by our members and the public. Several areas are being assessed and under discussion. We also have presence, on behalf of Guilford and Branford SGT supporters, in the major study by DOT to find solutions to make Route 146 safer for bikers and pedestrians.

In May, we held our third Bike Safety Rodeo, in partnership with the Guilford Police and Fire Departments, Guilford Park & Recreation, Guilford Safe Streets Task Force, bikes for kids and Cox Elementary School. The rain did not deter the kids from going through the safety program. After they had their helmet fit checked by Marilyn Mather and bikes checked by volunteers Jim Bussman and Bob Low, they rode the winding course and received their "Guilford" bike license plates.



Madison Update

Virginia Raff, Town Chair.

The most exciting development for the trail in Madison this year is that the CT Dept. of Energy and Environmental Protection has given its blessing to a proposed trail extension through the eastern area of Hammonasset Park. This new section will result in a continuous trail of nearly two miles from Webster Point Road to the border of Madison's Salt Meadow Park. It will forge a pathway through an undeveloped portion of the state park with coastal forests and beautiful views of salt marshes and Long Island Sound. It will eventually connect to Salt Meadow Park giving bikers a safe off-road route from Webster Point Road to the athletic fields at Salt Meadow Park. The new section will be Hammonasset East to distinguish it from the original section now Hammonasset West.



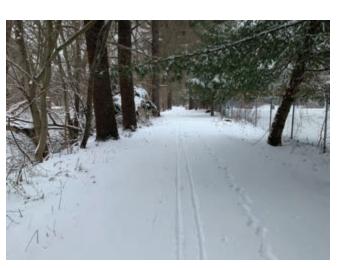
The trail was awarded two grants for the planning and design work. The first grant is from the town's American Rescue Plan funds and the second is from the Connecticut Recreation Trails program. We are deeply grateful to both, and now planning is underway. Because the trail will have to clear its way through an undeveloped area and cross some wetlands, the preliminary work will be extensive. Our goal includes preserving sensitive environments & habitats which remains our priority throughout any expansions.

We hope to have the planning phase finished and begin clearing and construction in 2024. The



planning phase will tell us approximately how much construction will cost. At this point we are estimating it at approximately \$1,000,000.

On the existing trail, our volunteer maintenance crew, headed by Perry Rianhard, has been hard at work over the year keeping the trail in good condition. Erosion mitigation and repairs to the aging walkway as well as waging war with weeds and invasive vines have kept them busy. A lot of volunteers have been involved, and we are grateful to every one of them, but the most active (in alpha order) have been Justice Lee, Steve Mack, Eric Marsh, and Ted Raff, a great team!



Members/Contributors/Supporters July 2022 through June 2023

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Ines & Terry Reardon

Joan Steitz

Neal & Katherine Thomas

Fred Volkmar & Elizabeth Weisner

Joe & Cynthia Goldberg Peter & Maureen Herbert

David & Amv Jaffe David Knapp Carl & Nora Lund Jerry & Roslyn Meyer Judy Miller & Ron Heiferman

Nancy Rankin

Abigail & Michael Scholl Pam & Bruce Simonds William Tracy IV Louis & Cynthia Ursini Jacqueline Ward

Moreson Kaplan & Nina Adams George & Anne Aghajanian

Michael K. Ahlijanian Barbara Albro

James Alexander

Anonymous Contributions Peter Aronson & Marie Landry

John & Carla Augustyn Louise Beecher

Peter Bialobrzeski

Harry Blair & Barbara Shailor Wendy & Gary Brockman

Tracey Brooks

Julie & Anthony Broom Barbara & Fred Brow

Robert Buckholz & Anne Elizabeth Fonaine

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Ann Clark

Jeff & Martha Clark

David & Barbara Collev Maureen & George Collins

Anthony & Rosanne Corso

Keith & Patricia Cunningham

Mick Jager & Agnes Czibulka

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Emilia Van Beugen & Kenneth Florey

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Alan Forman & Chris Wood

Paul & Pamela Gallagher

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Beebe Dock & Mooring Systems, LLC

The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven Connecticut Recreational Trails program - DEEP

Garden Club of Madison

FedEx

One World Coffee & Tea

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Tabor Evangelical Lutheran Church

Town of East Haven
Town of Madison

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