SHORELINE GREENWAY TRAIL

ANNUAL REPORT - MAY 2013





Letter from the Chair



May 2013

To our 2,600 member families and other supporters and friends:

We are thrilled to report significant progress during this 11th year of our work toward realizing our dream of a continuous 25-mile bikeable Trail along the Shoreline.

In each of the five towns along the proposed route, Trail leaders have made great advances, partnering with government authorities, suffering through the permitting process, working with contractors, negotiating with landowners, laying trail base and topping, building benches and a fabulous boardwalk, removing invasive plants, tackling erosion and other trail maintenance, landscaping, doing outreach, and raising much needed money. Nearly 50% of the Trail is now completed, approved, or in the planning phase.

This year's report headlines important milestones for the Trail and highlights the volunteers who make it happen. Our fabulous volunteers have worked literally thousands of hours, both on the Trail and behind the scenes. At the end of many a long day, our volunteer team can all feel proud knowing they are improving the quality of life here on the Shoreline and leaving a lasting legacy for future generations. As an organization with no paid staff, without our volunteers and donors, and dedicated volunteer Board of Directors, there would be no Shoreline Greenway Trail. I am deeply grateful to them all.

Important Trail milestones for the year:

- Planning has begun in **New Haven** to connect the Trail from East Haven to Lighthouse Point Park;
- One-third of a mile of the Trail in **East Haven** was fully completed with attractive Stony Creek granite final topping, near D.C. Moore School, and the Trailhead and parking lot were completed;
- The **Branford** team constructed the quarter-mile Tilcon Drive section making it ready for final topping;
- Preparations for **Guilford's** first section of Trail are well underway;
- A beautiful boardwalk over the marsh is nearly complete at **Madison's** Hammonasset Beach State Park and final topping was completed on a one-third mile section of the Trail;
- After many bureaucratic twists and turns, we are excited to report that we have begun putting our federal and state grant dollars to work designing new Trail sections in **Madison**, **Guilford**, **Branford** and **East Haven**.

NEW HAVEN

Connecting to New Haven

Shoreline Greenway Trail is excited to report progress in planning to connect the Trail from East Haven to Light House Point Park, spearheaded by our New Haven Team Leader John Cox.

Thanks to funding from the City of New Haven, a feasibility study was conducted this year by Stantec Consulting Services. The study envisions establishing our Trailhead near the butterfly garden in Lighthouse Point Park with the one-half mile Trail passing through grassland and lightly wooded areas and traversing a salt marsh along Morris Creek on a boardwalk before connecting with the planned East Haven section at South End Road.

Shoreline Greenway Trail has also begun the critical step of seeking input from the community. The first public meeting was held last November at New Haven's Nathan Hale School where the overwhelming majority of the 40 attendees saw the Trail as a benefit to the community.

We are grateful to Mayor John DeStefano, New Haven Parks Director Robert Levine and Morris Cove Alderman Salvatore DeCola for their support, and to Ranger Dan Barvir, who cleared hundreds of feet of brush to enable the team to survey the potential route.



View of Morris Creek along potential route of Trail between New Haven and East Haven

Moving Forward

Shoreline Greenway Trail will continue to partner with the city to hold public meetings in 2013 as the comment process progresses. The plan will also undergo regulatory and environmental review to assure that this undertaking offers both community recreational benefits and ecological protection. John Cox is planning to enlarge his core group of volunteers to build on the Trail's momentum in New Hayen.

Volunteer in Action: John Cox

John Cox, our New Haven Team Leader, has done a terrific job moving the Trail forward in New Haven. He has been an active volunteer for several years promoting green space in the city, including as past president and longtime board member of the New Haven Land Trust.

"John is very knowledgeable about how the city works, and has used his skills to prompt the city to undertake the feasibility study," says SGT chair Chip Angle. His outreach is bearing fruit.

"The mayor has been a big supporter as have other leaders in the community. We want to continue to work with the community and incorporate peoples' concerns as much as possible," said Cox. Cox is also excited by the prospect of the Trail serving as a link between the shoreline, downtown New Haven and the Farmington Canal Trail, part of the East Coast Greenway that will extend from Florida to Maine.



New Haven Team Leader John Cox

EAST HAVEN

Celebrating completion of a new Trail section

In 2012, Shoreline Greenway Trail celebrated the completion of our one-third mile D.C. Moore School section. The section has been open for runners and walkers since 2005, and now with the application of our signature Stony Creek pink granite topping the Trail is perfect for bicyclists and families with strollers as well. The East Haven Team has also completed a Shoreline Greenway Trail parking lot and installed our Trailhead kiosk and bollards at the Trail entrance.

We are grateful to State Senator Len Fasano, Mayor Joseph Maturo Jr. and State Representative James Albis for their support.



East Haven Mayor Maturo cuts the ribbon to open the new Trail section, cheered by East Haven SGT Team chair Barbara Brow (second from right). – Photo by Jennifer Higham

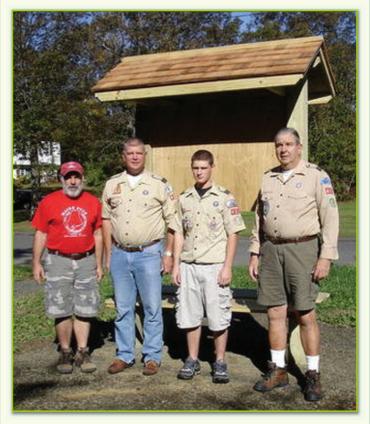
Moving Forward

The next goal of the East Haven Team is to extend the completed Trail through the Bradford Preserve. Once the design and permit phases are finished, we aim to begin construction of a half-mile long main pedestrian Trail across the Preserve from the spray park, and a nearly one-mile section for bikes along the road. East Haven Land Trust and its former president Dr. Charles Schlegel have been invaluable partners in this effort, granting us permission to route the Trail via boardwalk through the Bradford Preserve.

Once completed, the East Haven route will be roughly three miles long, connecting with New Haven to the west and over the Farm River to Branford's Trail to the east.

Volunteers in Action: The Boy Scouts

The Boy Scouts have been instrumental in our success in East Haven. For several years, Boy Scout Troop 401 and Eagle Scouts have battled nettles and other irritants to clear approximately 4,500 feet of trail in East Haven and two access roads in Trail sections at D.C. Moore School, Bradford Preserve, and Farm River State Park. Many thanks to the Scouts, including Eagle Scouts Adam Burr, Justin Richardson, Michael Gambardella Jr., David Gambardella, Alex Burr and Brandon Piche; Brian Burr, Boys Scout Leader; and Scoutmaster Ned Taylor of Boy Scout Troop 401; and Boy Scout leaders of Troop 401, Mike Gambardella and Bill Richardson, both SGT Board members on the East Haven Team.



Boy Scout Troop Eagle Scout Adam Burr in front of the kiosk he constructed, with his leaders: (left to right) Boy Scout Leaders Michael Gambardella (East Haven Team SGT Board member) and Brian Burr, Adam Burr, and Scoutmaster Ned Taylor.

BRANFORD

Deal is sealed on new Trail section

Working with Shoreline Greenway Trail, the Town of Branford has agreed to tap federal funds to begin work on a half-mile Trail section alongside Totoket Road, linking the existing Tilcon section to Blackstone Avenue at Young's Pond Park in Pine Orchard.

The Branford team has made several important improvements in the existing Trail in the past year, focusing on the quarter-mile section of Trail along Tilcon Drive as well as the Tilcon Drive parking lot that leads to the delightful Stony Creek Trolley Trail. This section is now ready for final surfacing.

The team has also tackled erosion on the Pine Orchard Birch Road section and cleared the Trail on the Tabor property. And the team has done a great job reaching out to the Branford community, leading walks by school children on the Trail, staffing an info table at the Zane's annual bike sale, and volunteering at community events.

Moving Forward

In the coming year, the Branford team will focus on making progress on all Trail sections as well as establishing a Trail steward system, strengthening coordination with town officials, and expanding outreach to local organizations and schools.



Branford third graders from Mary T. Murphy Elementary School enjoy picking up litter near Chet's Pond on a walk with Shoreline Greenway Trail.

Volunteers in Action: Pete Peterson and Jack Wood

Pete Peterson and Jack Wood, Branford's Trail Development Team, have spent countless days, weeks, and years on building our Trail. Pete, a retired building contractor who was born in the Short Beach area of Branford, has hired contractors, designed kiosks for trailheads, and designed and built beautiful benches along the Trail. Jack, a retired civil engineer who worked with the Army Corps of Engineers and settled in Stony Creek in the late 1990s, is the brains behind Shoreline Greenway Trail's trademark pink granite Trail surface, which he developed working with the local Stony Creek Granite company and several engineers and testing laboratories. The duo also has taken on the job of controlling erosion caused by new home construction above this Trail, has improved the section of Trail on Tilcon Drive and the Tilcon Parking Lot, and overseen the clearing of fallen trees after Hurricane Sandy.



Branford's dedicated Trail Development Team: Pete Peterson and Jack Wood



GUILFORD

Planning underway for Guilford's first Trail section

The Shoreline Greenway Trail is delighted to report tangible progress towards building our first section of Trail in Guilford.

The Town's Board of Selectmen and Shoreline Greenway Trail Guilford Team members agreed this year to begin preparations for a nearly one-mile section of Trail funded with Federal and State grants. If approved, the segment will be built adjacent to Route One – and completely off the road – beginning at East River bridge on the Madison town line to Boston Street (beginning of Route 146).

The response to the proposed Trail from Guilford town leaders and the public has been very positive. We are grateful to First Selectman Joe Mazza for his support and to Guilford Town Engineer Jim Portley, who has worked closely with Guilford Team Leader Milton Charlton on the design of the plan. Milton has also reached out to virtually all of the eighteen private landowners in the Trail area, and all have expressed support of the Trail.



Guilford's 'First Saturday' bike ride last summer along historic Boston Street included a visit to Civil War cannon in Alderbrook Cemetery.

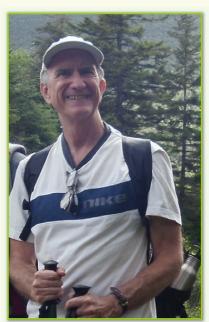
Moving Forward

A public hearing will be held to gather public input on this proposal, and we hope construction will begin within a year.

Volunteer in Action: Milton Carlton

Shoreline Greenway Trail is fortunate to have Milton Carlton at the helm of our Guilford Team.

Milton is putting his impressive diplomacy skills, honed by many years as a diplomat for the US State Department, to work right here on the Shoreline. "Milton's negotiating skills have served Shoreline **Greenway Trail** extraordinarily well. He negotiated with every landowner along the route of the proposed trail in Guilford; not a single one objected," said chair Chip Angle.



Milton Charlton, Guilford's SGT Team Leader

New Volunteer 'Green Mail Team' Formed

We may not ask our Mail Team to brave the elements but they are as dedicated as the people who take that oath! Their tasks are crucial to the workings of the Shoreline Greenway Trail. Eunice Mahler and Betty Ann Levitin pick up the mail, sort it, and send all donations to Regina Benjerowicz, our Financial Administrator. Barbara Derrico and Gisella Weissbach-Licht enter member data into our database, Sue Stacey ensures that each donor gets a thank you card from the Shoreline Greenway Trail, and Glenn Gaffield oversees our database. Thank you Green Mail Team, and SGT Outreach Team member Jo Zaehringer who helped organize the Green Mail Team with Branford cochair, Judy Miller.

MADISON

Beautiful boardwalk nears completion

The big news in Madison is the construction of a fantastic raised walkway across the marsh at Hammonasset Park. The view across the marsh from the walkway is spectacular.

This major undertaking was the work of a dedicated team of volunteers, made possible by grants from the Long Island Sound License Plate Fund, the Dorr Foundation in honor of Madison's Shirley Punzelt, and the Community Foundation for Greater New Haven, as well as by donations from hundreds of individuals. However, before construction could even begin, Madison Team Leader Virginia Raff and other volunteers labored for four years obtaining the necessary permits, approvals, reviews, and certifications to ensure that the project was structurally sound and environmentally sustainable.



Enjoying the new boardwalk at Hammonasset Beach State Park

Last Spring, the Madison team completed a one-third mile section behind the campgrounds, applying the beautiful Stony Creek granite topping to the previously installed crushed stone base. And this Spring, they have made great progress replacing the temporary stairways on either side of the walkway with handicap and bike accessible ramps. The team has also begun clearing the short piece of trail that will connect the one-third mile of finished Trail (that runs along the campground) to the nearly one-half mile of partially finished Trail that runs along the beautiful peninsula.

Additional funding from the Dorr Foundation and a major new grant from Recreational Trails Program have made this segment of the project possible.

A parking lot and connecting the two trail sections

We expect to break ground on a Trailhead parking lot at the eastern end of the park, designed by Madison town engineer Mike Ott in his spare time, and to begin work on the Trail section leading from the parking lot to the walkway ramp. Eagle Scout candidate Eric Marsh has volunteered to create a sitting area overlooking the marsh adjacent to the walkway. The Garden Club of Madison provided funding to landscape another scenic area.

Moving Forward

The Town of Madison is moving forward with a design for an off-road section of Trail along US Route One between Lover's Lane and Scotland Avenue. This section, funded by federal and state grants, will eventually connect with the Hammonasset section, providing walkers and riders with safe access to Hammonasset from downtown Madison.

Volunteers in Action: The Madison Team

The marsh walkway epitomizes the volunteer team spirit behind our organization. A team of highly skilled volunteers put in over 500 hours, with a few crew members laboring for eight hours a day, seven days a week. The team includes a paper salesman, a football coach/contractor, a banker, an electrical engineer, an attorney, a small business owner, a pharmaceutical scientist, and a heating and air conditioning expert.



A few members of our stellar volunteer team building the boardwalk in Hammonasset: (left to right) Ted Raff, John Paulson, Dave Kelley, and Trailmeister Perry Rianhard. Not pictured but just as valuable: George Haines, Ken Punzelt, Yasu Ueda, David Dwyer and Jack Wood.

2012 EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

SGT Dedicated its First Trailside Bench

In memory of Richard Tietjen, Jr.

Last summer, the Shoreline Greenway Trail Board of Directors dedicated our first Trailside bench in honor of Richard Tietjen, Jr., who passed away in 2009. Richard was a passionate outdoorsman and a dedicated founding member of the Shoreline Greenway Trail who used his computer expertise to establish and manage our organization's first website and first database.

Richard's parents, Richard Tietjen, Sr. and Louise Tietjen of Old Saybrook, generously established a Shoreline Greenway Trail bench fund for their son, which drew many contributions from family and friends as well as a matching grant from the Doris Duke Foundation. The wooden bench, which sits at the Trailhead on Tilcon Road overlooking the marsh, was designed and built by Shoreline Greenway Trail Board member Pete Peterson.



Richard Tietjen, Sr. and Louise Tietjen at the dedication of a Trailside bench honoring their son Richard.

Shoreline Greenway Trail Celebrated Ten Years!

At our May annual meeting last year, we celebrated our 10th anniversary with a presentation by award-winning author Mary Collins. She inspired us by sharing her experiences while writing her book *American Idle – A Journey Through Our Sedentary Culture* and related her goal of promoting active living to our vision for the Trail. Mary generously donated a portion of the sale of her books to the Shoreline Greenway Trail.



Branford Team wearing their "Outstanding Volunteer" caps, including Co-Chairs Chet Blomquist and Judy Miller (fourth and fifth from left).

The SGT Branford Team, under the leadership of Chet Blomquist and Judy Miller, was recognized for their dedicated volunteer work at the event with the presentation of a Team plaque, and "SGT Outstanding Volunteer" baseball caps. In addition, we honored Branford First Selectman Anthony "Unk" DaRos, who pledged his continued support for the Trail. The evening ended with a raffle of SGT board member Chet Blomquist's beautiful handcrafted walking sticks.



2012 EVENT HIGHLIGHTS (Continued)

"Run the Gauntlet" event benefited Shoreline Greenway Trail

We thank Trailblazer for naming Shoreline Greenway Trail as the sole recipient organization for their fundraiser, the first annual "Run the Gauntlet" 5K obstacle race held last September 30th at Hammonasset State Park with 500 participants, and we thank these generous sponsors:

Presenting Sponsor: North Face *Platinum Sponsor:* **New Balance**

Gold Sponsor: Yale New Haven Hospital Silver Sponsor: Connecticut Orthopaedic

Specialists & OrthoNOW, Guilford Savings Bank,

Race Friends: A & L Tree Experts, Fischer

Excavating Inc, Guilford Greene Gallery, Red Hook, SmartWool, Star Fish Market, William Pitt Sotheby's

> to get to the finish line ahead of roughly 200 other racers and of

> John, a spry 67-

in third in his age group. We'll be looking for other intrepid souls

and John on

our team in the

next race this

International Real Estate

Representing 'Team SGT' were our very own Chip Angle from Guilford and John Paulson from Madison, who braved the challenging course, running for miles on sand and through waist-high water, and crawling under nets and construction blankets, through tubes, over hay bales and scaling a five-foot wall. We couldn't be prouder of Chip, who placed first in the 70 and older



Chip Angle and John Paulson celebrate after completing the "Run the Gauntlet" Race last September.

Hundreds participated in 'First Saturday' walks and bike rides

Shoreline Greenway Trail's 'First Saturday Walks' - and a Bike Ride - drew hundreds of participants throughout the year, including at our first annual Holiday Walk on December 26. This popular monthly event is a great way to enjoy the Trail, learn about new happenings in the Trail's development, explore other trails, sometimes by bike, and meet new friends.



Friends enjoyed a 'First Saturday' Bike Ride along newly finished SGT Trail at Hammonasset

NOW "LIKE US" ON FACEBOOK!

Our new Facebook page is a great way for supporters and friends to share photos, comments and ideas, and get updates about the Trail. Searchword: "Shoreline Greenway Trail"



2012 Shoreline Greenway Trail Donors

We thank you, our many community donors, whose generosity continues to enable us to build our vision!

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Giving Levels

Trailblazer \$500+ Leader \$100-\$499 \$50-\$99 Guide Under \$50 Other Contributors

UPCOMING EVENTS IN 2013 – SAVE THE DATES!

For more information about all these upcoming events, check our website: www.shorelinegreenwaytrail.org

SATURDAY, JUNE 1

10:00AM: SGT First Saturday Walk and Trolley Ride Celebrating CT Trails Day

Join us for a new and different adventure! The Branford and East Haven Shoreline Greenway Trail Teams and the Shore Line Trolley Museum are cosponsoring a walk and free trolley ride. We will gather at 10 am at the Shore Line Trolley Museum for a brief tour of the museum, which houses 100 vintage transit vehicles, then board a trolley for a trip along their scenic track. We disembark at a platform to walk to the Farm River to see where SGT is planning to build a bridge to link our Trail across the East Haven-Branford border. We will visit the remains of an old crushing plant on our return to the museum. This is a wonderful opportunity to explore the trolley museum and other historic attractions on the Shoreline that will be linked by the Shoreline Greenway Trail.

12:30PM: Annual Meeting and Volunteer Recognition Celebration

Just 3 blocks from the Trolley Museum, at the Meeting Hall of the East Haven Christ & Epiphany Episcopal Church, located at 39 Park Place. Light snacks will be served.



The Great Horned Owls are once again nesting at Hammonasset, thanks to the efforts of A Place Called Hope. The nest sits in a platform 75 feet up in one of the pines just off the off the Trail in the campground area.

SATURDAYS - JUNE 1, JULY 6, AUGUST 3

SGT Summer 2013 'First Saturday' Hikes and Bikes

Join our guided walks and bike rides showcasing current and proposed Trail sections. Info on our website and our Facebook page.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 26

5:30PM: International Festival of Arts & Ideas Shoreline Bike Ride

Led by Elm City Cycles and SGT member Paul Proulx. Two-hour ride. Start at New Haven Green or join the ride at Lighthouse Point, see the Carousel and beaches and learn more about the non-motorized, recreational biking and walking trail being built from Lighthouse Point to Hammonasset Beach in Madison. We will ride an open section of the trail in East Haven and celebrate with ice cream at Sand Pipers on the East Haven shore to kick-off ECC's summer Wednesday night Ice Cream Social rides. Check www.artidea.org/event for more information.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 22

10:00AM: Dedication of SGT Boardwalk at Hammonassett State Park and Shoreline Bike Ride with DEEP Sojourn Team to celebrate the Centennial of CT State Parks

SGT will host the Sojourn Team along the 20-mile shoreline section of their 169 mile ride to Greenwich, with a guided bike ride from Hammonasset State Park to Farm River State Park mostly along Route 146. SGT members are invited to join the bike ride in your town along the way! Stay tuned for more information, and to volunteer for the event.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

Second Annual "Run The Gauntlet" Obstacle Course at Hammonassett State Park

Trailblazer will once again sponsor this fun and challenging event to benefit Shoreline Greenway Trail.

Register today either online at www.jbsports.com (click Events) or at Trailblazer stores.

G.

Many thanks to our Outreach Team Volunteers Jane Grisham and Lydia Williams for producing this Annual Report.