

Countywide Trails Initiative Minutes

Tuesday, December 3, 2024, 4:00 pm

50 W. High Street, Ballston Spa, NY 12020

Chairman's Remarks

Welcome, introductions.

Old Business

Mission/Metrics: Will post mission statement on PLAN website with minutes.

Metrics – what data should be acquired to a) realize the committee's goals, b) allow comparison to other regions, c) gauge the success of the committee and provide strategic guidance.

Ed Snyder from GPI (Greenman Peterson Inc): Funding agencies want mission and vision statements for individual trails in applications. Feel free to copy and paste from CWT mission if helpful. Funding agencies also want metrics also for specific trails: What the trail is trying to accomplish and where does it connect (and how). Who uses it and how often.

GIS mapping: PLAN and Country Planning will meet early in 2025 to develop a plan to move forward. Goal is to get all county trails in GIS format, and establish a protocol for towns and non-profits to create GIS format trail data. Hosting and metadata issues remain.

New Business

Champlain Canalway Trail (CCT): Report from Champlain Canalway Trail Working Group (CCTWG) (Dave Woodin). <https://champlaincanalwaytrail.org/> and map (<https://empiretrail.ny.gov/map>). CCTWG is an advocate for completion and expanded use of the CCT. Full summary provided below (Appendix 2).

CCT:

- 62 miles from Waterford to Whitehall
- About 30 miles of it is off-trail: paved and/or stone dust
- Priority: Off-Road Trail Development

Key CCTWG 2025 Goals

- Seek Saratoga County support for off-road trail in Halfmoon, Stillwater & Schuylerville
- Unify the affected municipalities with a Supervisor's luncheon/meeting.
- Foster relationships with Glens Falls Canal Feeder Alliance, PTNY, ECNHC, etc.
- Seek volunteers

Generally, progress is slow; trail development is up to individual townships, and volunteers are scarce. CCT was an add-on to the Empire State Trail that was declared complete. No more dedicated funding streams. Both NYS Parks and DOT have fragmented interests. Pamela Landi (Washington county planner) has forwarded updated maps to NYPT to update the EST (Empire State Trail) maps (which does not show all complete sections). Contact Mary Ward (marywardquilts@yahoo.com) for additional information.

Saratoga County: A gap analysis was completed in 2022 by Tracey M. Clothier of LA group using funding from the Saratoga County trails grant program. It recommended implementation of low cost road markings and signage for on road segments. It identified limited funding for more expensive off road segments. The northern Halfmoon section is county's 2nd priority after completion of Zim Smith to Saratoga Springs.

<https://champlaincanalwaytrail.org/hot-off-the-press-saratoga-county-champlain-canalway-trail-gap-analysis-march-2022/>

NYS DOT: Our DOT representatives (Audrey and Matthew) discussed their effort to define options and DOT role for a Saratoga Springs – Wilton multiuse path connection crossing I-87 (Figure 2). They are currently collecting local and regional studies and assessing current conditions (e.g. upcoming DOT projects). Please send Matt any studies, maps, board resolutions pertaining to this crossing. See Appendix 1.

A new mountain bike facility for kids is being constructed off Weibel Avenue in Saratoga Springs – another reason for a Northway trail crossing.

CWT 2009 DOT trail interaction map – a county map showing where planned trails and highways cross paths. Contact Scott Miller for copies and suggestions for updates. An updated map might be a CWT deliverable in 2025.

Halfmoon: See Canalway above. Also, there is activity surrounding possibly connecting Zim Smith to Mechanicville High School. See Figure 1.

Ballston-Clifton Park-Glenville. Saratoga County, Schenectady County and respective towns held a conference call (10/2024) and agreed that the next step is to pursue an engineering feasibility study evaluating alternative trail links. The search for funds has begun. Estimates for engineering feasibility study range from \$30000 to \$50000, with possible completion in 2025. A soft goal of trail completion by 2035 has been set. See previous minutes (2024/9/9) for maps.

Other:

Broached subject of a conceptual county regional trail map as a CWT project.

Brookhaven ski trails are open and groomed.

Attendees:

Audrey Burneson	NYS DOT - Trail contact: region 2	Audrey.Burneson@dot.ny.gov
Bill Clarke	Corinth	laughingbrookfarm@hotmail.com
Bill Cook	Saratoga Cnty ass of snowmobile	saratogacook@gmail.com
Phillip Corney	NYS OPRHP Sar\Cap Region	Philip.Corney@parks.ny.gov
Rob Davies	Saratoga PLAN exec director	robertd@saratogaplan.org
Matthew DeSimone	NYS DOT, region 2, trail coordinator	matthew.desimone@dot.ny.gov
Paul Dietershagen	ADK Mt. Club, Saratoga - Glens Falls Chapter	d2hagen@yahoo.com
Bill Herman	Half Moon, Halfmoon trail com., PLAN board, CWT chairman	wherman1@nycap.rr.com
Anna Laloe	Saratoga Trails Alliance	annaelizabethlaloe@gmail.com
Kim Lambert	Saratoga county planning	Klambert@saratogacountyny.gov
Matthew Miczek	WWPP board of directors	miczekm@verizon.net
Scott Miller	Clifton Park, CWT secretary, PLAN advisory Council	millerrs@mindspring.com
Bella Osborn	WWPP	bella@wiltonpreserve.org
Magnolia Roosa	Plan Stewardship coordinator	magnolia@saratogaplan.org
Jim Ruhl	Clifton Park Trails	Jrruhl43@gmail.com
Ed Snyder	Greenman Pederson, Inc	esnyder@gpinet.com
Sallie Way	Friends of Saratoga Horse Trail	salway@nycap.rr.com
Jeff Williams	Saratoga county Planning	jwilliams@saratogacountyny.gov
Dave Woodin	Waterford; director of planning, Champlain Canalway liaison	woodind@town.waterford.ny.us
Magnolia Roosa	Plan Stewardship coordinator	magnolia@saratogaplan.org

Appendix 1: List of reports that DOT has related to Saratoga Springs – Wilton I-87 crossing

1. Town of Wilton Open Space, Recreation and Pathways Plan 2021 Update [Open Space, Recreation and Pathways Plan - Town of Wilton](#)
2. Town of Wilton Comprehensive Plan 2015 [Comprehensive Plan - Town of Wilton , 2015-Town-of-Wilton-Comprehensive-Plan-Final.pdf](#)
3. 2006 Saratoga County Green Infrastructure Plan [Cover.indd](#)
4. Saratoga Complete Streets Plan 2016 & Updates [Complete Streets Plan | Saratoga Springs, NY , saratoga-springs.org/DocumentCenter/View/14468/2022-Complete-Streets-Map-Updates-?bidId=](#)
5. City of Saratoga Springs 2015 Comprehensive Plan [saratoga-springs.org/DocumentCenter/View/3928/2015-Comprehensive-Plan](#)
6. Saratoga Springs Open Space Plan Update 2023 (DRAFT) [Saratoga-Springs-Open-Space-Plan-2023-03-30_withApp](#)
7. Saratoga Springs Greenbelt Trail Feasibility Study [saratoga-springs.org/DocumentCenter/View/5198/Saratoga-Springs-Greenbelt-Trail-Feasibility-Plan?bidId=](#)
8. Saratoga Greenbelt – Wilton Connector Trail (2022) [DRAFT-Saratoga-Wilton-Connector-Trail-Report-2022](#)

Contact with additional information

Matthew S DeSimone

Transportation Analyst & Sustainability Coordinator

**NYS Department of Transportation: Region 1
Planning and Program Management**

50 Wolf Rd, Suite 1S 50, Albany, NY 12232

Appendix 2: Champlain Canalway Trail

1. 62 miles from Waterford to Whitehall
2. About 30 miles of it is off-trail: paved and/or stone dust
3. Priority Future Off-Trail Development: Halfmoon, Stillwater, Schuylerville & Fort Ann to Whitehall

2019 Action Plan

The 2019 Action Plan represents the vision of the Champlain Canalway Trail Working Group, a volunteer partnership that includes local and regional canal and trail groups, public agencies, and park and preservation organizations. The Working Group seeks to establish the Champlain Canalway Trail, a continuous public multi-use trail from Waterford to Whitehall. The Action Plan is designed to unify the region's outstanding historic, cultural, natural and recreational assets and establish a world-class destination for residents and visitors.

CCTWG first convened in 2008 to find ways to complete the Champlain Canalway Trail. The initial conveners included Lakes to Locks Passage Scenic Byway and the Town of Halfmoon who received assistance from the National Park Service Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA). The Working Group met with local communities and compiled ideas from dozens of maps and planning reports.

The 2019 Action Plan was sponsored and administrated by the Town of Stillwater and funded by a grant from the Hudson River Valley Greenway Community Grant Program. The Working Group updated the existing conditions and developed a list of issues and opportunities along the proposed trail route. Trail segments were organized by individual community and, taken all together, the segments present a complete vision for the trail.

Champlain Canalway Trail Working Group (CCTWG)

The Champlain Canalway Trail Working Group (CCTWG) is a volunteer, ad hoc partnership that includes local and regional canal and trail groups, public agencies, and park and preservation organizations. The Working Group benefits from the existing network of the Canalway Trail Association of New York, a statewide, all-volunteer organization of trail owners and managers formed to assist localities to develop, manage, and maintain the Canalway Trail.

Champlain Canalway Working Group's focus since its inception has been the planning and implementation of the Champlain Canalway Trail. As the trail segments are moving to completion the group mission continues with the promotion, programming and stewardship of the trail.

CCTWG 2025 Goals

1. Saratoga County - Seek support for off-road trail in Halfmoon, Stillwater & Schuylerville
2. Washington County - Seek support for an off-road trail from Fort Ann to Whitehall
3. Host bike rides on the trail and helmet giveaways
4. Unify the affected municipalities with a Supervisor's luncheon/meeting.
5. Foster relationships with Glens Falls Canal Feeder Alliance, PTNY, ECNC, etc.
6. Seek volunteers
7. Produce maps of the trail
8. Improve the website

9. Continue to apply for grants. 2023 & 2024 ECNHC grant recipient for bike rodeos at Waterford Canalfest, Fort Edward, & Hudson Falls.

CCTWG contacts

General contact:

<https://champlaincanalwaytrail.org/contact-us/>

Mary Ward, marywardquilts@yahoo.com

Dave Woodin, woodind@town.waterford.ny.us

Figure 1: Possible Zim Smith connector

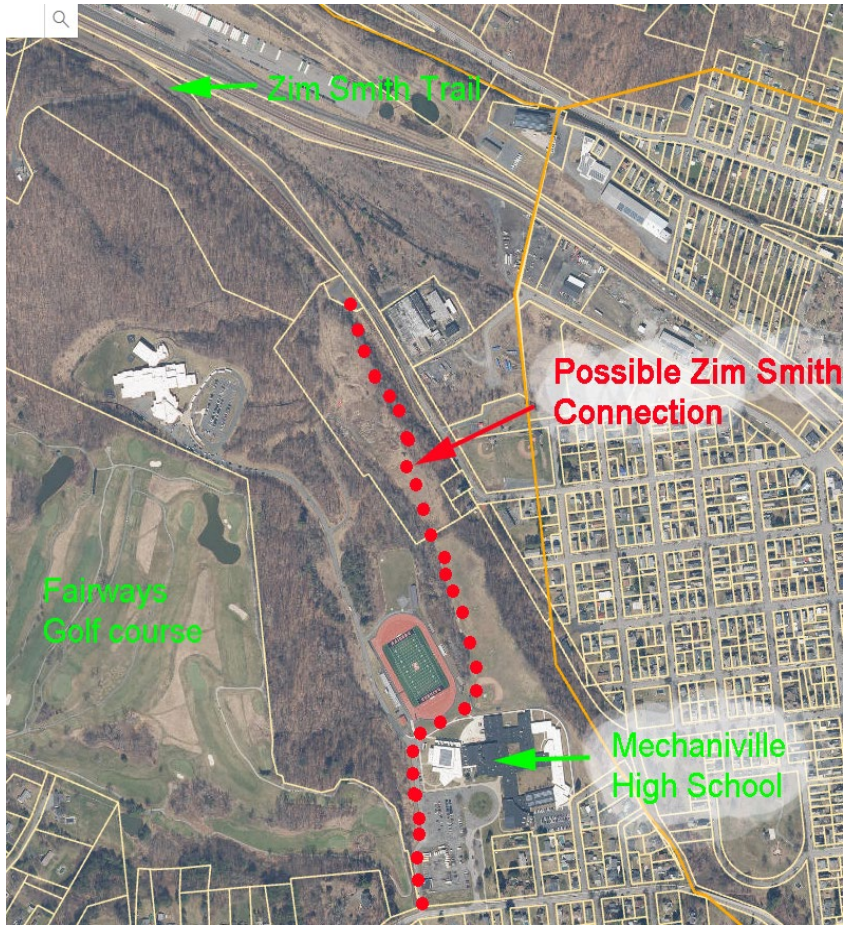


Figure 2: DOT study area for Wilton - Saratoga Springs Northway crossings

