

Agenda Item Summary

To: Policy Board; Transportation Committee

From: Caitlin Palmer, Director of Regional Planning and Development

CC: Matt Hart, Executive Director

Meeting Date: January 24, 2023 (Transportation Committee: January 22, 2024)

Subject: Capitol Region East Coast Greenway Study: Simsbury Recommendations Report

Background: The purpose of this study is to identify a preferred alignment for the gap in the East Coast Greenway (ECG) through the Town of Simsbury using a collaborative process informed by coordination with Town officials, stakeholder involvement, and public engagement. This report is part of the larger Capitol Region East Coast Greenway Study that encompasses a 12-mile project area in the municipalities of Bloomfield, Hartford, and East Hartford, in addition to the gap in Simsbury to identify an alignment for the last gap in the East Coast Greenway within the region. CRCOG received 27 comments during the public comment period that were largely editorial in nature - some supportive of the alignment and others in opposition, expressing concerns previously noted at public meetings and during the study process. Based on comments received, the report will add a reference to parking concerns and ensuring viability of local businesses. All comments will be included in an Appendix with responses prepared for each by the Study team.

Benefit to Member Towns/CRCOG: Once constructed, a multi-use trail will connect Tariffville with key destinations west of the Farmington River in Simsbury. In addition, it will also make a connection eastward to the recently completed “Bloomfield-Tariffville Multi-Use Trail Connector” in Bloomfield. Once endorsed by Policy Board, CRCOG anticipates assisting the Town of Simsbury in pursuing funding from the CT Recreation Trails Grant Program (solicitation currently open) and/or other funds.

Financial/Operational Impact: N/A

Project Schedule: After receiving unanimous approval from the Simsbury Town Council in September, CRCOG is seeking endorsement of the Simsbury Recommendations Report from the Policy Board.

Recommendation: CRCOG Staff recommends approval. The Transportation Committee will provide a recommendation at their meeting on January 22, 2024.

Attachments:

- [Town of Simsbury Recommendations Report](#)
- Town of Simsbury Board of Selectmen Resolution
- Comments Received During Public Comment Period



Town of Simsbury

933 HOPMEADOW STREET

SIMSBURY, CONNECTICUT 06070

Resolution

"Endorsement of Preferred Alignment for the Tariffville Connection Trail"

WHEREAS, The Capitol Region Council of Governments (CRCOG), in cooperation with the Town of Simsbury, and Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) completed the Capitol Region East Coast Greenway Study (the "Study") that identified preferred routes for the East Coast Greenway also known as the "Tariffville Connection Trail"; and

WHEREAS, The Study included a public and stakeholder outreach component in conformance with state and federal planning process best practices; and

WHEREAS, The Town of Simsbury and the public will be afforded additional opportunities to review and comment during the design phase of the trail;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Simsbury supports the design of a multi-use trail along the Alternative Two alignment as identified in the Study with the condition that the trail be minimally invasive with respect to any habited home; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Town of Simsbury acknowledges the need for a maintenance agreement between the Town and the State to be developed prior to construction which will establish agreed upon maintenance responsibilities that will be assigned to each of the parties.

I hereby certify the foregoing to be a true and correct copy of a Resolution adopted by Board of Selectmen of the Town of Simsbury in meeting duly assembled on September 27, 2023, which Resolution has not been rescinded, amended, or modified in any way whatsoever.

Dated at Simsbury, Connecticut this 28th day of September 2023.

Trish Munroe

Trish Munroe
Simsbury Town Clerk



Date / Time	Name	Public Comments
12/14/23 18:48:00	Wanda C.	<p>Please consult with FRWA Please consult with your Simsbury River Representative, Sally Rieger Please sit at the Community Farm and watch large groups of bikers on Floydville. Please note many bikers zipping up 315 in their electric bikes at the speed limit Please leave Farmington River alone. Please consult with Mother Nature. Wanda</p>
12/15/23 9:04:00	Krista S.	<p>My name is Krista Spada. I have been a resident of Governor’s Bridge Complex in Tariffville for 10 years and Simsbury even longer. I welcome bike paths and greenways to town but discourage any construction behind Governor’s Bridge through the forest abutting the Farmington River. The current trail in my backyard floods for over 6 months out of the year and freezes over for the winter. There are many bear and fox dens in this location as well as endangered fauna studied by the University of Connecticut. The current path to be paved would ruin the environment that is already crowding out most of the wildlife in this area. The proposed brown “river access” route would never not be a feasible option given the geography of the river and climate in this area. Building a bridge across the river failed in 1878 during the train wreck of Tariffville. Is the proposed purple route using land on the other side of the river so as not to require a bridge? 187 from Tariffville to East Granby to Floydville Road will lead to Simsbury on an already paved route seems the most logical option in my experience commuting this traffic daily. Bikers that want to use the road will use the road regardless of any bike path being built. Feel free to call my cell if anyone would like commentary: [phone number included]</p>
12/15/23 16:00:00	Sally R.	<p>Thanks for sending this out. I do not find the map of alternate 2 particularly informative and the wordy description with the many street names really doesn't help people, since the streets don't show very well. Two other people who are following the Simsbury bike path development plans have commented on the same issues. I wonder if CCROG has a better map to share or could produce one. I went to the CCROG website to see the map for Appendix G and found the same blank page at the link. Any help would be much appreciated. Best, Sally R., Simsbury resident.</p>
12/15/23 18:43:00	David B.	<p>My vote would be in line with the options rating on the chart: Alternative 1A would be awesome as I suspect it would be the most wooded and mostly away from roads. Alternative 3A would be my okay and maybe the easiest to do as it follows Rt 315, but 3C along the river would be a preferred alternate choice for this main option. Thanks for all the effort that has gone into this so far. David B. West Hartford</p>
12/16/23 14:03:00	Brian M.	<p>As a 43-year resident of Tariffville, I have reviewed the documents posted at https://crocog.org/town-of-simsbury-capitol-region-ecg/ which outline the proposed extension of the Capital Region East Coast Greenway through the Tariffville corridor. I concur that the most expedient route for the CRECG trail is the one delineated on the large map posted at the site. This path allows for maximum exposure to the natural landscape along the Farmington River, as well as minimal exposure to traffic on existing roadways and residential areas in the village. It also bypasses the pond and its environs in Tariffville Park proper, effectively circumnavigating a major hotspot for migratory birds in spring and fall, as well as other species of flora, fauna, and reptilian wildlife. The proposed bridge structure appears to be architecturally sound and aesthetically pleasing to the eye in the backdrop of the surrounding riverscape. I also note that this bridge would be constructed on (or very near) the site of the original Governor's RR Bridge which dates back to the 19th century, tying it to this historical landmark. One additional comment: on Map Draft page 5, a POTENTIAL ROUTE ALTERNATIVE FOR 12' WIDE TRAIL CLOSER TO THE EDGE OF THE RIVER is outlined in green. This alternative route would move the path a bit further away from the existing CONDO STRUCTURE AT 6 WHITE WATER TURN (~20' FROM TOP OF THE ADJACENT RIVERBANK). To my way of thinking, this alternative (green) route would better shield this condominium from trail traffic, which may be particularly welcomed by residents during the late autumn/winter/early spring, when visibility through the woods is heightened. Respectfully submitted, Brian M. Tariffville, CT 06081</p>

12/17/23 13:15:00	Gary B.	<p>I am offering the following comments and suggestions regarding the proposed multi-use trail passing through Simsbury. My comments are as a resident of Governor's Bridge.</p> <p>I know that the Town of Simsbury seem to be favoring Alternate 2 as the route they would want to choose. The route would begin at a point of the existing trail, cross the river near existing trestles from the old railroad, follow the existing old railroad bed as it passes through Governor's Bridge property and exits onto town property extending to Tariffville Park.</p> <p>First thing to note is that the old railroad right of way was partly destroyed when Governor's Bridge was built, mostly in the area of Tanager Circle. Where the new path would cross the Farmington River, it comes extremely close to several units, and as proposed, virtually spitting distance from 8 White Water Turn. It will also come very close to numbers 2, 4 & 6 White Water, close to 8, 10, 12, 14 Tanager Circle, close to 4 units on Mallard Circle and a few units at the end of White Water Turn. Although a good route for construction because it would be above the wetlands, there are a few problems with this. In addition to the close proximity to several units, it may be in violation of Governor Bridge Bylaws and State of Connecticut Statutes pertaining to Common Interest Communities, and there may also be an issue with granting right of ways, if needed. Also there would be the need to clear cut a path, and for most of this portion, there would not actually be a view of the river, which is supposedly an added visual experience.</p> <p>In 1983, when Governor's Bridge was being planned, they were required to set aside land to give to the town to be used as open space. This was an area along the edge of the east bank of the river, which I believe is approximately 25 feet wide, give or take. This area as been designated as Greenway space, and/or open space, and a basic path was created extending along the river and then cuts slightly east and enters Tariffville Park property. Since the Town of Simsbury owns this land, there is already a pathway there, and being right along the river offers a very nice view, I think it should be utilized. Yes, I do realize that there may be wetland issues, but it is open land now used by a few residents of Governor's Bridge who walk along it (except during mosquito season).</p> <p>If you must put the path through Governor's Bridge, I would like to propose the following: Start with Alternate 2 from the existing trail on Route 10. Cross the river from the existing trestle, but extend the span further north-east so that it stops on the existing town open space path along the river somewhere between the Tanager & Mallard land that back on the river, and then continue to follow the existing town path to Tariffville Park. This way, you will be on land already owned by the town, you will not be that close to any units, and there will be the view people have asked for.</p> <p>There may be problems with wetlands, but that would be a problem with a lot of the other proposals. Another possibility is follow the west bank of the river. Yes, probably wetland problems, but there are no properties along this route. I would personally like the trail not to go through Governor's Bridge.</p> <p>Regards, Gary B. Tariffville, CT</p>
12/17/23 18:31:00	Jennifer S.	<p>We have been residents of Tariffville for 17 years, eagerly awaiting the opportunity to connect from our home to downtown Simsbury and beyond. While this project didn't come to fruition when our children were young as we hoped, we believe it will be revolutionary for those who will raise their children in this community when access is open.</p> <p>We know there will be flooding, and so we're curious what materials can be used to ensure the path doesn't require continuous repair due to water damage....but otherwise we are excited to see this get underway!</p> <p>Peace, Jennifer S., Tariffville, CT</p>
12/17/23 18:31:00	Wanda C.	<p>A multiuse trail already passes through Simsbury! Nothing needs to go through Tariffville.</p>
12/20/23 10:24:00	Pamela B.	<p>I am a resident of Governors Bridge in a unit which is close to the Farmington River. Please do not bring the trail through Governors Bridge. I am a regular user of the bike trail so I know how heavy the traffic can be on the trail. To have the trail close to our houses would cause considerable disruption and distress to us as residents. From my deck I would be a constant witness to all the people going past and would lose my privacy and the beauty and peacefulness of our current living situation. This would not be fair because we wouldn't have anywhere to go, unlike the bikers, e-bikers and walkers who have a choice. I know Simsbury wants to increase the value of the town as a "bike friendly" community but, please, not to the detriment of those of us who live simple lives and pay our taxes. Again, I am begging you, please do not bring the trail through Governors Bridge.</p> <p>Sincerely Pamela B.</p>

12/20/23 13:49:00	Kirk S.	<p>I'm a Simsbury Bike member, also a EBCC member and active with Farmington Bike Up. I reviewed the Recommendations Report on the chosen bike path connector through Tariffville, and it seems like a great plan. My only comment is that I support choosing the green path in Mapsheet #4 as an alternate that moves the path closer to the river. I attended the March 30, 2023 public meeting at the Tariffville Elementary School, and there were concerns about the path being so close to the houses there. I can understand that the residents there would appreciate a buffer, to the extent that is possible. It looks like the path has already been altered to stay farther from the condo development there, and that's an improvement. (One condo resident described the path as shown then as being within "spitting distance " from their deck. I don't want to be that close to someone's deck when I'm riding on the bike path.)</p> <p>That's my only comment, other than I'm really excited to see this move forward!</p> <p>Sincerely, Kirk S. West Simsbury</p>
1/8/24 16:10:00	Jonah L.	<p>I am a student at Simsbury High School. I am also a volunteer at the Simsbury Land Trust and I am on a local cycling team in the summer as well as the crew team. I saw the proposal for the Tariffville trail that uses the old railway bed as well as a new bridge over the river, and I would like to say that I support this as a user of both the trails and the Farmington river. The use of the rail bed means that no wetlands would need to be disturbed, and the bridge would provide an opportunity for people to see the river. Currently there's no way to bike from Simsbury to Tariffville except Tariffville road which is busy and steep or using the gravel powering corridor over the mountain, so this trails would be a big help.</p>
1/9/24 9:45:00	Krista S.	<p>I am kindly writing to express deep concern for The Capital Region East Coast Greenway to steer away from developing on the proposed old railroad bed from Tariffville Park to the Farmington River behind Governor's Bridge complex.</p> <p>This area should not be developed. The riverbeds flood terribly, freezes the entire wooded area where the trail is proposed and crossing the river in this location has not bode well in the past (https://connecticuthistory.org/the-tariffville-disaster-today-in-history/) I live and work by this river and kayak by the old bridge regularly. It is not a safe location to have a structure.</p> <p>I am attaching a map of where the photo was taken (from my house, on a raised deck from White Water Turn) and a photo to show just a small section of the extensive freezing of the wooded area that extends from Tariffville park across the river to Munnisunk Brook, down the Farmington River / 315, regularly flooding Saxton Brook and the canoe parking access by Curtiss Park down through the Old Well tavern.</p> <p>Having lived her for 20+ years, the purple (Alternative 1B), red (Alternative 3A), and brown (Alternative 3B/C) proposed trails are not safe or sustainable.</p> <p>I would highly encourage, now that the path has begun on 189, to continue it up route 189 turning left onto Floydville Road. There is already a paved path, simply add a bike lane.</p>
1/10/24 8:16:00	John H.	<p>Just a quick email to voice my support for Alternative 2 regarding the Tville to Simsbury trail. I'm an avid cyclist and use this bike trail constantly. I'd very much like to see this extension made reality.</p> <p>Thanks very much for your efforts</p> <p>John H. Simsbury, CT</p>
1/10/24 12:02:00	Deborah T.	<p>I am writing to provide public comment in support of the Capital Region East Coast Greenway Study's Simsbury Recommendations Report. I commend CRCOG's thorough evaluation of the study area and numerous potential trail alignments. The screening criteria and scoring methodology were an effective means to identify the best potential trail alignment. The public outreach process was comprehensive. Your report addresses environmental issues and is sensitive to the concerns of affected neighborhoods. For these reasons, I support the report's preferred alignment (Alternate 2) for a future trail completing the gap in the East Coast Greenway through Simsbury. I am most excited about Alternate 2 because:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Use of the abandoned rail corridor west of the Farmington River would provide stunning views of wetlands with a relatively small environmental impact. •A new bike-ped bridge over the Farmington River at the site of the 1878 Tariffville rail disaster could be developed as a scenic landmark with historic and environmental (Wild and Scenic) significance on the East Coast Greenway. •Bridges are popular destinations for trail users and will create economic opportunities for Simsbury and Tariffville •It directly connects Tariffville with businesses and shops in north Simsbury including Big Y. •It is a reasonably direct route for bicyclists between the FCHT and Tariffville, making active transportation more feasible. <p>While preferred alignment (Alternate 2) presents some challenges especially in regards to the abutting neighborhood, the next phase of design and environmental analyses can inform acceptable solutions.</p> <p>In conclusion, I believe this report and the preferred alignment recommendation (Alternate 2) successfully lay the groundwork for potential design and construction of the East Coast Greenway trail segment in Tariffville.</p> <p>Respectfully, Deborah T. Simsbury, CT 06070</p>



1/12/24 10:58:00

Michael I.

I appreciate having the opportunity to provide a comment in support of a proposed shared-use trail between Tariffville and Simsbury.

I am writing to support Plan Alternative 2 as a good solution for this path segment.

I think a completed path using the Alternative 2 route would benefit both recreational path users as well as users that would commute along the route to get back and forth to work or other destinations. I know many of these commuters personally.

I'm a lifelong cyclist that commuted from Canton to Hartford for 36 years. Some days I chose to take the route through Tariffville. I have also ridden through Tariffville on recreational rides and personal errands too numerous to count. Even for an experienced cyclist, moving through the Tariffville area on a bicycle is challenging. Traffic count is high at certain times of day, and the road shoulder to ride on is minimal or non-existent. I think we'd all like to encourage more non-motorized travel. The current road situation in Tariffville makes it very discouraging for a pedestrian or cyclist, so it's likely many of the journeys we would like to see never take place.

Alternative two takes the non-motorized user away from the most dangerous portions of transit through Tariffville.

I would highly encourage the Capital Region East Coast Greenway Study to promote and support the completion of route Alternative 2 as a major enhancement to non-motorized travel through the area.

Very Truly Yours,

Michael I.

Canton, CT 06019

1/12/24 11:21:00

John L.

I am writing to support the Capital Region East Coast Greenway Study's Recommendations Report for the Town of Simsbury. I have reviewed the December 2023 Draft Report and am impressed with the thorough and comprehensive analysis of the various trail alignment alternatives.

The importance of completing this connection of the East Coast Greenway (ECG) between Tariffville and downtown Simsbury cannot be overemphasized. While it is a key link in completing the ECG through Connecticut, I would like to focus on three local aspects.

First, the need for a walkable and bikeable connection between Tariffville and the rest of Simsbury is crucial. Currently, the only connection is the narrow and dangerous Route 315 and, for most people, makes traveling between Tariffville and downtown Simsbury a "car-only" trip. Completing this connection will not only improve the quality of life of town residents, but it will enhance the accessibility of businesses on the north end of Simsbury to Tariffville residents, and vice versa.

Second, this ECG connection will improve the ability of Simsbury residents to commute by bicycle into Bloomfield, Windsor, Hartford, and other locations east of Simsbury. I have occasionally commuted by bicycle between Simsbury and Bloomfield, and it is a dangerous commute. This connection is desperately needed for commuters.

Third, while I am a thirty-three-year resident of Simsbury, I lived in Bloomfield for six years prior to that. I have always been dismayed at the poor connectivity between our neighboring towns. As I mentioned above, the current road connections are dangerous for cyclists and useless for walkers. In fact, the only way to walk between the towns is via rugged hiking trails over Talcott Mountain. Completing the connection from Tariffville into downtown Simsbury will enhance the connectivity between our towns. Bloomfield residents will have an easy off-road trip into Simsbury and access to the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail. Likewise, Simsbury residents can easily travel into Bloomfield to enjoy their recreational facilities and businesses. Simsbury and Bloomfield are close neighbors but blocked from each other by natural barriers and hostile highways. This connection would provide the first safe and practical non-automotive route between our towns.

Regarding CROG's evaluation of the study area, I would also like to add my support for the preferred alignment of Alternative 2. I had envisioned this as the best route long before I heard it proposed at the March 2023 public meeting in Tariffville. First, it is the shortest and most direct route, providing the most benefit to the residents of Tariffville, but also to the residents of Bloomfield, as I outlined above. Second, it appears to have the least environmental impact of the various alternatives. Third, the route presents a wonderful opportunity to develop landmarks to educate trail users about the history of the Connecticut Western Railroad and the tragic 1878 rail disaster. Fourth, the route will allow trail users to view the Farmington River and surrounding wetlands with, hopefully, minimal environmental impact. Simsbury currently has very few places with public access to the Farmington River. Fifth, as pointed out in the draft report, the bridge can be built to allow emergency vehicles to travel in and out of Tariffville when Route 315 is flooded (as it is as I write this). And finally, the bridge envisioned for Alternative 2 could, I believe, become a tourist destination that might rival the popularity of the nearby Drake Hill Flower Bridge.

To conclude, I reiterate my support for the current recommended alignment of the ECG connector and for the necessary studies to move ahead as quickly as possible.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide my views on this important project.

Respectfully yours,

John L.

West Simsbury, CT 06092

The Farmington river is the highest I have seen it in 24 years. It's approximately three times as wide today as it usually is. It's a good thing there's no path being built a few feet off my deck, or it would've been ripped off in the heavy flow of water the past few days. And we're getting more water in the form of rain tonight according to the weather. May go up even higher. I'll take pictures.

1/12/24 19:39:00

Jeanne P.



I am writing on behalf of the Simsbury Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee to provide public comment in support of the Capital Region East Coast Greenway Study's Town of Simsbury Recommendations Report. Our group has closely followed the progress of the ECG Study through your website, public meetings, and this report due to the importance of this project to our community. Completing a multi-use trail between Tariffville and the Farmington Canal Heritage Trail is a high priority recommendation in the 2018 Simsbury Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan because it will 1) provide a vital non-motorized connection between the village of Tariffville and Simsbury town center, and 2) close a critical gap in the East Coast Greenway, expanding trail connectivity with Bloomfield and economic centers to the east.

We support the Recommendation Report's preferred alignment (Alternative 2) for a future trail completing the gap in the East Coast Greenway through Simsbury. The report will serve as a valuable guide for the future design of this important regional non-motorized transportation route.

Thank you for your consideration.

Deborah T., Co-Chair

Simsbury Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee

1/13/24 0:30:00

Deborah T.

All the wasted time discussing which option has delayed building this trail long enough. All along there was only one feasible route and that is along the old rail bed from Hoskins Station to Tariffville. Your not building the eighth wonder of the world. I watched the video of the meeting and to be honest all I saw was a group spinning their wheels. Made no sense to build next to the condos or past Curtis Park. Due to age, least that's what I call it, I am unable to travel the trails as I used to, having made the complete circle 3 or 4 times. Rode in Calhoun's cancer ride twice. Incidentally, why has no one continued the idea? Have lived in the valley since 1952, currently in Granby. I would hope someday to ride or walk the connector from Hoskins Station to Tariffville but unless construction starts soon I may not be able to. GET A MOVE ON!

1/13/24 6:42:00

Fred H.

I am an active, disabled trike rider on any bike path I can get to and am very excited about the possibility of being able to get over to Tariffville with my trike. I find it interesting that people are opposed to the route. Personally, having a path near my house would be a real asset and in thinking about downsizing it is a real priority as a rider. Please vote to have this happen. Annie Wallack -38 year Simsbury resident

1/13/24 11:45:00

Ann W.

1/13/24 11:53:00

Chuck B.

I am writing to support the Capital Region East Coast Greenway Study's Recommendations Report for the Town of Simsbury. I have reviewed the December 2023 Draft Report, in context with multiple conversations with community members who currently enjoy the existing multi-use trails, extensive open space, and other outdoor resources that make Simsbury an enriching environment.

I moved to Simsbury from southern CT in 2008 due to employment, and picked Simsbury specifically for its embrace of progressive transportation options and overall open space preservation. I was a daily bike commuter to Windsor, which took me through Tariffville via route 315. Consequently, I can attest to the challenges and hazards of riding this corridor on public roads, which the proposed connector would alleviate. I was thrilled to attend the opening of the latest extension joining Bloomfield and Tariffville. I anticipate that overall commuting ridership will increase markedly if the proposed connector is implemented.

Beyond enabling an increase in alternate transportation to work, the connector will greatly improve the connectivity for residents of Tariffville to the rest of Simsbury. The majority of positive comments I've received from folks in that section of town relate to being able to access businesses like Big Y without driving several miles to the nearest bridge over the Farmington River. I also lead weekly road cycling rides in the area, so I'm aware of multiple clubs, plus the overall cycling volume on the existing trail(s). I'm confident that both Bloomfield and Simsbury will benefit from increased cycling traffic from the ECG, growing economic return to local restaurants and other businesses.

As with any transportation project, there will be a variety of opinions and reactions from constituents affected by changes to the corridor. Based on my attendance at public meetings, and the general discussion throughout town, it's evident that a small subset of homeowners adjacent to the recommended route (Alternative 2) hold strong negative feelings, and have organized vocal opposition that is disproportionate to their actual number. Given the broader community and regional interests, I feel it's important to address their legitimate concerns, while evaluating their appropriate proportional influence in the bigger picture. It's encouraging that there is a diversity of opinion within that neighborhood, and there's substantial interest to navigate toward workable solutions during the subsequent design phase.

Let me close by thanking you and the ECG and CRCOG teams for your diligence and commitment to alternative transportation infrastructure in general, and the connectivity between Hartford and outlying communities in particular. The Tariffville connector is a vital component of the network, which will accrue multiple benefits across all the surrounding communities.

Respectfully submitted,
 Chuck B.
 Weatogue, CT 06089

1/13/24 13:36:00

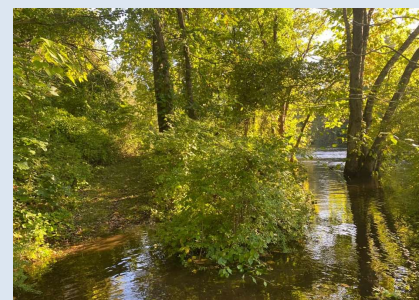
Susan

I am a resident of Governor's Bridge. Here are my comments about the proposed trail:

1. 20 ft from any residential dwelling is much too close.
2. Are you aware of the extent of the flooding this year? I know every year isn't an El Nino year but, considering more precipitation is predicted as the climate warms, it is possible flooding will happen more often. See attached photos. (the images below are labeled)
3. If a multi-use trail is built in this location I imagine that, with the flooding, a portion of the trail would have to be boardwalk that can withstand flooding. To keep the trail away from the residences it would have to be in the forest. The forest the trail would pass through has state and federal listed species and critical habitat with vernal pools. Due to the necessity of having to build the trail on a boardwalk I imagine that the width of forest area that would be cleared would be wider than 12ft. I am not happy about this and I hope that in the biodiversity studies are thorough and completed several times over several years to observe yearly variation in flora and fauna.
4. As a resident of Governor's Bridge, I know that permission will have to be granted for surveys on our property but I am requesting that the HOA is kept updated about all progress being made during this phase of planning for the trail.
5. Please keep the NPS, Lower Farmington and Salmon Brook Wild and Scenic Committee, and Farmington River Watershed Association updated regularly also.

Sincerely,
 Susan

10-1-23 looking to bridge abutment from trail / 12-19-23 behind 6 WW / 1-11-24 6 WW - looking south / 10-10-23 behind 6 WW 1 / 10-10-23 behind 6 WW 2



1/15/24 17:41:00 Chancel M.

I am writing to you in concern for my neighborhood. I live across from the old post office and have had the new bike path being installed in my backyard. My concerns are for parking and added traffic to the area. We have already had multiple accidents in Main street this past year. I love the idea of the bike path I am more concerned with the construction being proposed for the old post office. My feelings is this location needs more parking, and with the bike path taking away a lot of parking spaces behind the Cracker barrel Pub, I would suggest making the old post office a public parking area- this would allow for more patrons to the area and allow people to park to utilize the up and coming bike path.

Please if you could add me and David V. to any upcoming meeting that concern the old post office I would greatly appreciate it, I want to stay involved with that development since it's right across the street from me and the parking situation is already horrible.

Sincerely
Chancel M.

1/15/24 19:48:00 Jim K.

I write in strong support of the proposed Alternative 2 for completing the East Coast Greenway through Simsbury to Tariffville. I live in Simsbury and bicycle in the area regularly--in fact, I rode on the newly completed Tariffville to Bloomfield section just yesterday. It will be much more pleasant to be able to ride on a trail into Tariffville rather than dealing with traffic either on 315 going up the hill or on 189 after coming across by the airport. My kids are occasional bikers and I would not be comfortable taking them either on 315 or 189.

While in my ideal world, there would be a connection from Simsbury to Curtiss Park to Tariffville allowing Tariffville residents safe trail passage to Curtiss Park, I understand that the topography makes it impractical to run directly along 315. I strongly support Alternative 2 as a practical and desirable option to continue expanding networks of safe bike routes.

Best wishes,
Jim K.
Weatogue, CT 06089

1/15/24 20:56:00 Katherine C.

I am a resident of the Governor's Bridge condo community in Tariffville and a member of our Governor's Bridge Bike Path Committee, comprised of concerned residents. I'm writing to you in regard to the East Coast Greenway project. I would like to express my significant concerns with the proposed route of the next segment of the East Coast Greenway project. The route intersects the land of our condo community, and significantly impacts me as an end unit condo on Mallard Circle overlooking the river – I think I'm actually the closest home to that route looking at the maps.

My concerns are outlined below:

1. First, the planning process undertaken by CROG and the Town of Simsbury has not been respectful of the Governor's Bridge community or its residents. The first meeting that our HOA board had with the town was July 10, 2023. We were pressured to have a residents meeting in the summer, with little notice, during the busiest time of year for vacations/travel and least likely to get engagement from our community, on a topic that was not clearly identified. We declined to have that meeting, as the town could not give us specifics about the exact route (with measurements) the bike path would take through our community, what rights of way/easements they were requesting, and any monetary compensation for our community granting those significant parcels of land to the town. Without this key information, we couldn't even let residents know what was being proposed for them to have an opinion on, let alone have enough time to confer with a lawyer and investigate the environmental and flood impacts to our community. Now this latest public comment period was only a month long, over the holidays and end of 2023/2024, a very busy time for most people and organizations who would want to comment. That feels like an intentional decision on CROG's part. For a decision this significant to our community and property values, this process has not been clear or respectful, which is very concerning.
2. My second concern is around the proposed placement of the bike path. I just recently purchased my condo in June 2022, and I specifically purchased this end unit due to the privacy, seclusion and views of the gorgeous Farmington River and associated wildlife. This bike path will completely obliterate that. My unit is particularly close to the river and based on the maps shown, the route would come very close to my house. My deck is also ground level, not raised up like some of the other units, who would be overlooking the path from above. This bike path would turn my beautiful views of the river and wildlife into a view of pavement, concrete and an ugly fence, not to mention tank my property value. The specification in the CROG document of 20' from any habited home is ludicrous. 20 feet is approximately the length of 4 park benches. And it's not 20' from a property line, it's 20' from the literal HOME!
3. Third, I am very concerned about environmental and flood impacts with this route. There is not some big open space by the river in our community where this bike path can be dropped in – there is a significant swath of forest with mature trees and animal habitats in this area. The CROG presentation includes an image of the old railroad berm that they want to build on, showing a wide gravel path. I've walked this trail many times - the berm only looks like that in one little segment near Tariffville park – the rest has been reclaimed by the forest and to build this bike path, all of that would be clearcut and leveled, destroying ecosystems and disrupting wildlife.
4. Lastly, this path is not a necessity. It's not for a road, it's not a health and safety issue, it's not for gas or electricity lines, it's a bike path! Destroying the environment, removing green spaces, and ruining residents' peace and serenity for a bike path, that will likely not even get much use.

I strongly oppose the placement of this route and am very disappointed in how this project is being managed.

Thank you,
Katie C.
Governor's Bridge Condo Community

1/15/24 21:04:00

Sarah L.

I am a resident of Tariffville, in the Governor's Bridge community, and I am looking forward to the bike path being accessible from my backyard. This will promote bike commuting to downtown and to the local stores. My only concerns are about the potential for flooding, as the proposed route spent some time near to or underwater this year with the high rainfall we had. I hope that the solution for this flooding does not have a large ecological impact. I would encourage that the ECG team implement a bike path parking location near Tariffville Park so that the limited parking in Governor's Bridge is not taken up by bike path users.
Thank you,
Sarah L.

1/15/24 23:58:00

Kim R.

We do not want the bike path coming through our property. As you're well aware your proposed path is completely under water currently. Since you have suggested it come through our property we have been having random bike riders coming through the property cutting down in front of home owners front yards riding down our lawns and having no respect for the residents that live here..
thank you
Kim
Resident Governor Bridge

RESOLUTION FOR ENDORSEMENT OF THE CAPITOL REGION EAST COAST GREENWAY STUDY: SIMSBURY RECOMMENDATIONS REPORT

WHEREAS, the Capitol Region Council of Governments worked with the Connecticut Department of Transportation (CTDOT) to undertake an “East Coast Greenway Gap Closure Study” to identify preferred alignments for the remaining 12-mile gap through the Capitol Region; and

WHEREAS, a study Advisory Committee comprised of representatives of CTDOT, CTDEEP, East Coast Greenway Alliance/CT Greenways Council, National Park Service, Riverfront Recapture, Town of East Hartford, City of Hartford, Town of Bloomfield, Town of Simsbury, and other regional stakeholders met throughout the study effort to provide input; and

WHEREAS, the public was engaged through educational materials by way of a study website and newsletters and input opportunities including an interactive map, ability to submit comments through the website, and a public meeting; and

WHEREAS, a preferred alignment was unanimously approved by the Simsbury Board of Selectmen on September 27, 2023; and

WHEREAS, the Capitol Region Council of Governments Transportation Committee has reviewed the study, has found its recommendations to be reasonable, and has endorsed the effort;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Capitol Region Council of Governments does hereby endorse the East Coast Greenway Study: Simsbury Recommendations Report. Upon incorporation of final appendix documents and adding a reference to parking concerns and local businesses based on a public comment received, these study documents may be marked Final and dated January 2024, and study recommendations may henceforth be incorporated into CRCOG’s planning documents.

CERTIFICATE

I certify the above is a true copy of a resolution adopted by the Policy Board at its meeting held on January 24, 2024.

BY: _____ DATE: _____
Jason Bowsza, Secretary