



# CAPITOL REGION EAST COAST GREENWAY STUDY

SIMSBURY — BLOOMFIELD — HARTFORD — EAST HARTFORD

## ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING #5 MINUTES

October 25, 2023 | 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Virtual Meeting - This meeting was recorded.

**DRAFT UNTIL APPROVED**

### Attendance

Name	Organization
Michael Cipriano	CRCOG
Caitlin Palmer	CRCOG
Parker Sorenson	FHI Studio
Rory Jacobson	FHI Studio
Laura Nagle	FHI Studio
Phil Goff	VHB
Mark Jewell	VHB
Grace Yi	City of Hartford
Owen Deutsch	City of Hartford
Kevin Gough	Town of Bloomfield
Jonathan Thiesse	Town of Bloomfield
Doug Wilson	Town of East Hartford
Sean Dwyer	Town of East Hartford
Adam Kessler	Town of Simsbury
Grayson Wright	CTDOT Policy and Planning
Ed Sabourin	CTDOT Project Development Unit
Andrew Correia	CTDOT Project Development Unit
Fred Kulakowski	CTDOT Traffic Engineering
Jordan Vogt	CTDOT Traffic Engineering
Jay Young	CTDOT Office of Rail
Jane Dunbar	CTDOT
Kimberly Bradley	CT DEEP
Bruce Donald	East Coast Greenway Alliance / CT Greenways Council

The record below includes a brief description of each agenda item as well as the timestamp for the beginning of that discussion. The audio recording for this meeting is available at [www.crcoq.org](http://www.crcoq.org)



## 1. Project Updates (1:02)

Parker Sorenson opened the meeting and reviewed that the project is in Phase 3, shortlist alternatives and refinement of preferred alignment. The shortlist alignments of Bloomfield and East Hartford were reviewed during Advisory Committee Meeting #4. Three more Advisory Committee meetings will be scheduled in the winter and early spring.

## 2. Public Outreach (2:03)

Parker provided an overview of public outreach events, email list signups, and public comments received so far. Three additional pop-ups were held in September. Additionally, the Study's second newsletter was circulated in October summarizing the screening evaluation and draft screening results. The newsletter is available on CRCOG's website. The interactive mapping tool on the Study's webpage has also been updated to include the full screening results. In the winter, three more pop-ups will be scheduled, as well as 1-on-1 stakeholder meetings, final public meetings, and town council meetings/approval. Additional visualizations and details of the shortlisted alignments, in-person site visits, and a summary of report recommendations will be developed.

## 3. Simsbury Update (5:50)

The Study Team presented the Simsbury screening results to the Selectboard on September 27, 2023. Alternative 2 is the highest screening alternative. The full presentation is available on the Simsbury town website with further details. The Selectboard unanimously endorsed Alternative 2. The remaining tasks include refinement of the preferred alternative and the final report. Phil Goff thanked Adam Kessler and Tom Roy for their work. Bruce Donald thanked VHB for their outreach effort.

## 4. East Hartford Shortlist Updates (10:02)

Parker reviewed the shortlist analysis areas in Bloomfield North, Hartford – Bloomfield, and East Hartford. The East Hartford shortlist resulted in C7 alternative along Silver Lane Corridor and S4 alternative along Brewer Street Corridor. Two meetings with Town leadership were held in September and October. FHI Studio lead a site walk with the Town and CRCOG.

Potential elements for the C7 alternative include grade separation across Roberts Street via culvert or bridge; a trail/boardwalk along Exit 58; a trail between Silver Lane and the HOV on-ramp; a trail along the reconfigured or potentially eliminated Exit 91 westbound on-ramp; and grade separation across Main Street via bridge. Parker provided images of the areas along Roberts Street, Exit 58, and the HOV ramp from the site walk. Parker presented initial concept plans for grade separation at Roberts Street, trail along Exit 91, and grade separation at Main Street. To the west, two connections to East River Drive were presented. Option 1 entails upgrading the Hockanum River Trail to connect East River Drive to Riverfront trails on the north side of the river. Option 2 proposes a connection to Founders Bridge via East River Drive.

Potential elements for the S4 alternative include two trail bridges over Pewterpot Brook and an upgraded 4-ft side path to 10-ft side path on the south side of Brewer Street. Doug Wilson asked if the bridge over Pewterpot would modify the bridge currently being built over Brewer Street. Parker clarified that the bridge over Pewterpot is envisioned to be within the Pratt & Whiteny parcel.

Caitlin Palmer added that the Study Team is seeking feedback from the Advisory Committee members on which shortlist option should be the preferred alternative. Caitlin asked if there are additional elements that should be considered as part of the shortlist process.

Bruce noted that the C7 alternative seems preferable and asked what the permitting process would look like for a bridge/culvert across Robert Street. Bruce commented that the S4 alternative seems like a simpler permitting



process. Parker clarified that the culvert under Robert Street is not close to wetlands, and the Study Team has been coordinating with FHI Studio's wetland scientists about what is permissible. Caitlin responded that the S4 alternative may be a longer permitting process than the C7 alternative due to right-of-way (ROW) challenges. Caitlin added that the culvert across Robert Street can also connect to the primary crossing in case of flooding.

Doug commented that the C7 alternative Lane is preferable. While the segment of the S4 alternative within Pratt & Whitney is desirable to connect the communities across the property, Brewer Street feels dangerous and presents ROW challenges. Doug suggested that the connection to Founders Bridge be made via Pitkin Street and not within Great River Park.

## 5. Bloomfield Shortlist Updates (35:11)

Parker reported that the Matianuck Natural Area Preserve between Keney Park and Route 218 has been removed due to the environmental sensitivities and coordination with CT DEEP. Alternative alignments around the area have been added. These alignments would connect to the Connecticut River Corridor and Keney Park Corridor alternatives to the east.

## 6. Griffin Line Update (38:48)

Parker provided an overview of the Griffin Line alignment progress. Coordination has been ongoing with the City of Hartford, Town of Bloomfield, CTDOT Office of Rail, and iQuilt. A site visit is planned for November 21, 2023. The Study Team has been completing an existing conditions review through the corridor. The Study Team anticipates that the shortlist will include the best Griffin Line option and the next best alternative.

Owen Deutsch asked when the report is expected to be completed. Parker responded that coordination is ongoing, and the goal is by the end of the year.

## 7. Next Steps (41:16)

Parker noted the next two Advisory Committee meetings are scheduled on Wednesday, December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023 and Wednesday, January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024. The March meeting date is to be determined.

## 8. Public Comment (41:39)

No one chose to speak. Caitlin requested if Advisory Committee members may refer Town leadership and other stakeholders who may be interested in 1-on-1 coordination meetings to refine the preferred alignment.

**Meeting ended at 43:58**