

To: Ledyard Town Council, Attn: Land Use Committee

From: Ledyard Conservation Commission, *Dave Holdridge*

Date: December 16, 2021

The Ledyard Conservation Commission has voted to nominate the Tri Town Trail Greenway for designation as a Connecticut Greenway. (see attached Nomination Form addressed to the Connecticut Greenways Council) We understand that this nomination must be endorsed by the Town Council through a municipal resolution.

We believe that this Greenway meets the criteria established in the attached information from the Connecticut DEP. This designation is also consistent with the goals outlined in the Ledyard Plan of Conservation and Development and in the SCCOG Master Plan. Our nomination is happening in parallel with another nomination coming from the Town of Groton for the same connecting Tri Town Trail corridor. This Greenway will also connect with other Greenways in Groton, Ledyard and Preston to build a network of open space with public trails.

A Greenway designation places no additional restrictions on future use by the Town or by private landowners other than those already present in current Regulations. The additional benefits of a Greenway designation are that it enhances the possibility of receiving trail construction grants and facilitates the purchase of easements or open spaces from land owners.

We expect that the Land Use Committee and Roxanne will fix up the motion, but it might look something like this;

“Resolved that the Ledyard Town Council endorses the nomination of the Tri Town Trail corridor to be designated as a Connecticut Greenway.”



CT Greenways Council Nomination for Official Designation of Greenway

1. Name of Greenway: Tri Town Trail Greenway
2. Sponsoring Organization: Town of Ledyard Conservation Commission
3. Contact Name: Mike Marelli, Conservation Commission Chair; Alt: Dave Holdridge, Tri Town Trail Committee _____
4. Contact Email: memarelli@sbcglobal.net; Alt: daveholdridge@aol.com. _____
5. Contact Phone: 860-464-7905; Alt: 860-464-8414
6. Town(s) in which greenway is/are located:
Groton, Ledyard, Preston
7. Purpose of greenway (resource protection, recreation, etc)
Primary: Recreation; Secondary: Alternative Transportation
8. Does the corridor connect existing open space, trail segments, historical/cultural assets; provide alternative transportation opportunities; connect neighborhoods to schools, town centers, parks and recreation areas, transportation centers, or open spaces?
 Yes No
9. Is the segment submitted for designation a key link in an emerging greenway, either for conservation or recreation purposes?
 Yes No
If yes, please provide name and location of said greenway:
Provides linkage to the Pequot Blue Blaze Trail Greenway in Preston, Groton Cross Town Greenway; also provides future linkage to the Ledyard Great Oak Greenway and various Town of Groton and Ledyard town owned parks and trails
10. If the greenway is a municipal project, is it included in local plan of Conservation and Development? Sited on Pages 54-56 and 87 of current Ledyard, CT Plan of Conservation and Development
 Yes No
11. Has your project been endorsed by the local government through a municipal resolution or compact?
 Yes No
(If yes, please include copy – scan or digital photo)

12. If the greenway is a regional project, is it included in plans of relevant Regional Planning Agency, or Council of Governments, with endorsements by the affected municipalities; or, has an inter-municipal compact been developed between towns?

Yes No (If yes, please include copies— scan or digital photo)

(See SCCOG Master Plan document at the following link:
<http://seccog.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/TriTownTrailMasterPlan.pdf>)

13. If the greenway is a non-governmental project, is it sponsored by an organization with a proven record of land use protection/recreational use, or with proven resources needed for project success; are licensing, easements, or other agreements for use of state, municipal, or private land on file?

Yes No (If yes, please include copies— scan or digital photo)

(See attached summary of activity)

14. Please include a written description of the project including a map showing location, connections (existing or potential), and adjacent open space if applicable on a 1:24,000 scale USGS Topographic Map. Digital photos and maps (digital photos taken of hard copy maps are acceptable) are preferred.

(See attached information below)

Please return this form to: Laurie Giannotti, via email laurie.giannotti@ct.gov. The preferred method of submission is via email. Alternatively, you may mail digital reports on a CD or other electronic storage devices as appropriate. Digital photos and maps (digital photos taken of hard copy maps are acceptable) are also preferred.

Contact information:

Laurie Giannotti
Trails and Greenways Coordinator
Department of Energy & Environmental Protection
79 Elm Street
Hartford, CT 06106

Phone (860) 424-3578

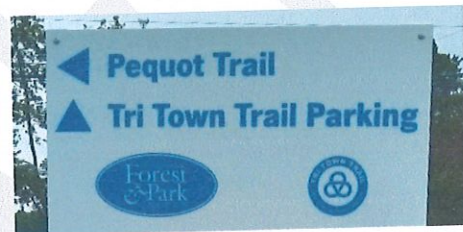
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Written Description of the Tri Town Trail Greenway

The Tri Town Trail Greenway relies exclusively on establishment of the Tri Town Trail system, as outlined in the 2009 Master Plan. The initial construction of the Northern Section of the trail comes eleven years after the [Southeast Connecticut Council of Governments \(SCCOG\) approved the trail master plan](#). The trail's development has been hindered by delays in getting the necessary permissions from Groton Utilities, obtaining easements from private land owners along the trail, and fund raising for fifteen creek and rivulet crossings all requiring some type of bridge or puncheon and associated wetland permitting.

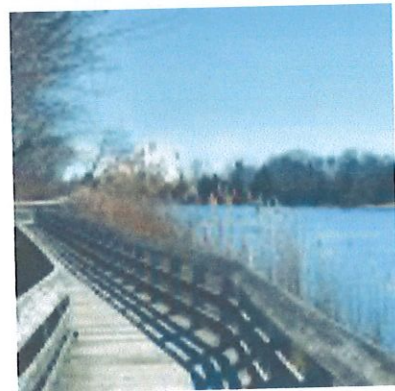
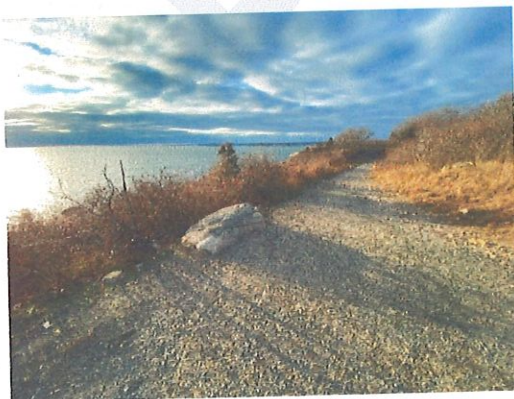
The Northern Section of the trail starts at the Preston Community Park near the intersection of CT Route 117 and 2A, and provides a trail link to the Pequot Blue Blaze Trail (see photo below). A supplemental parking lot has been established across from the park and Route 117 and provides a dedicated trail head and informational signage. This initial section is 2.3 miles in length, utilizing two conservation easements and two of the Town of Ledyard's open space. In operation since mid-2020 the trail census has recorded an average of ~250 hikers per week.

On October 3, 2021 the Tri Town Trail Northern Section held a Grand Opening event at the Preston Community Park to celebrate the completion of installing 14 bridges and puncheons that have significantly improved access and safety of the trail. The event was attended by over 500 individuals including the mayors of the three supporting towns as noted in the photo below and a widely diverse cross-section of the served communities.



Continuation of the trail southward from its current terminus on the Town of Ledyard owned Clark Farm, is pending obtaining additional easements from private land holders, which is being coordinated with Town of Ledyard as there is a local ordinance in place to provide property tax incentives, as well as an agreement with Groton Utilities for access rights. It is envisioned that reaching the CT Route 214 crossing can be accomplished within the next two years, which will double the length of this section.

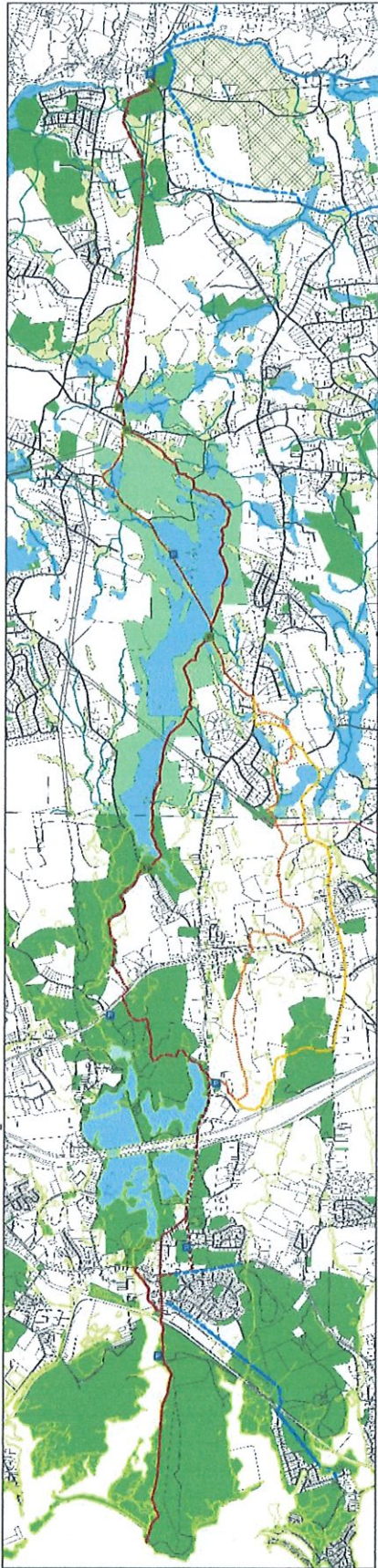
The southernmost Groton portion of the trail of nearly two miles is already well established, utilizing a portion of the existing trails at Bluff Point State Park and the Town of Groton Poquonnock River Boardwalk, which brings the trail up to US Route 1. The proposed Groton Cross Town Greenway will intersect with the Tri Town Trail Greenway at this location, with both utilizing the Boardwalk as part of their respective greenway.



Further northerly extension of the trail, to connect up to the completed Ledyard section, is pending development of a Memorandum of Agreement with Groton Utilities to determine what portions of their watershed properties will be opened to the public for trail development as outlined in the Master Plan. The initial phase is to bring the trail to the Town of Groton Copp Park which as an established trail system; as the Copp Board of Overseers approved the trails within Copp family Park as part of the Tri Town Trail system. It is anticipated this section, from Route 1 to CT Route 184 will be completed within three years, and will lengthen the southern section to five miles.



The middle section of the trail, between CT Routes 184 north to 214, is the least defined, and significantly relies on access to Groton Utilities properties. Additionally, linkage to the Ledyard Great Oak Greenway, as well as already established trails on Avalonia Land Conservancy properties are being explored jointly with all parties, as preliminary detailed planning has started on this section of the trail. Establishment of this section will likely take upwards of five to seven years, based on the current rate of progress.



- Legend**
- Proposed Parking - Small
 - Existing Parking
 - Most Desirable Route
 - Existing Trail Suitable
 - New Multi-Use Paved
 - On Street Bike Lane
 - New Trail
 - Connection Trails
 - Alternate Routes
 - Alternate Route #1
 - Alternate Route #2
 - Alternate Route #3
 - Stream
 - reservoir
 - Open Space
 - Wetlands

June 30, 2009

KENT+ FROST

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Tri-Town Trail Master Plan
Bluff Point to Preston Trail Committee



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Criteria for the Designation of Connecticut Greenways

In 1995 the Connecticut General Assembly acted upon the recommendations of the Governor's Greenways Committee and passed Public Act 95-335, which institutionalized Connecticut's greenways program. A highlight of this legislation was the establishment of the Connecticut Greenways Council. One of the Council's duties is the development of criteria for the designation of greenways around the state.

The Public Act defines greenway as a "corridor of open space" that:

1. may protect natural resources, preserve scenic landscapes and historical resources or offer opportunities for recreation or non-motorized transportation;
2. may connect existing protected areas and provide access to the outdoors;
3. may be located along a defining natural feature, such as a waterway, along a man-made corridor, including an unused right of way, traditional trail routes or historic barge canals; or
4. may be a green space along a highway or around a village.

In order to meet the criteria for official designation as a greenway, open spaces and/or pathways must fit at least one aspect of this definition. The critical element, however, is connectivity. While a loop trail in a public park may fit many recreational and open space needs, if it offers no opportunities for connecting to a greater system it does not qualify as a greenway. Conversely, a short segment of open space along a ridgeline or waterway may be deemed part of a greenway if future plans include its linkage to a larger system.

The process of greenway designation will require not only the involvement of the Greenways Council. It will also mean that there is a commitment on the local level to a project's long-term success as well. Officially designated recreational greenways will receive special signs to post at trailheads and road crossings; those that serve a resource protection function may also post these signs where appropriate. All of the designated greenways will be forwarded to the Office of Policy and Management for inclusion in future revisions of the State Plan of Conservation and Development, and will also be incorporated into any greenway plans developed by the Department of Environmental Protection.

Greenways can be much more than linear open spaces. They can be the links from city to country, from village to village, from state to state. They can reconnect people to their communities, to rivers, fields, and hillsides, enhancing the sense of place that helps define the quality of life in Connecticut. It has been said that greenways connect the places we live with the places we love. It is the hope of the Connecticut Greenways Council that the designation process will help in the development, enhancement, and preservation of those places.