Bringing the Air Line Trail to Portland (And Middletown)

A Presentation by:

John Shafer - The Jonah Center For Earth & Art
Deanna Rhodes - The Town of Portland Planning Department
Robert Haramut - The Lower River Valley Council of Governments
The Jonah Center for Earth and Art
Fostering more sustainable relationships between people, other creatures, energy resources and the environment through collaboration, education, community action, and art.
The Old Air Line Rail Road
New York to Boston – Active: 1873-1959
The Air Line State Park Trail
East Hampton, Colchester, Hebron, Lebanon, Windham, Chaplin, Hampton, Pomfret
The Airline State Park Trail – East Hampton
Air Line Trail – Southern Section
Developed and Undeveloped Sections
Proposals currently exist to connect the trail from East Hampton to Portland, and from Depot Hill Road in Portland to Rt 66 near 17. This section is owned by CL&P who is negotiating to allow its use.
Proposed East Hampton to Portland, Stage 1

- DETERMINE PARKING NEEDS
- INSTALL INFO & DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE
- INSTALL SECURITY GATES & BOLLARDS
- AT-GRADE STREET CROSSING
- PLACE STONE DUST TRAIL SURFACE
- REGRADE RAIL BED
- ELEVATE TRAIL SURFACE ABOVE STANDING WATER
- CLEAR OVERGROWN VEGETATION
- EXISTING CULVERT UNDER FOREST STREET
- CONSTRUCT SWALES TO DISCHARGE WATER TO ELEVATE TRAIL SURFACE ABOVE STANDING WATER
- POOR TRAIL CONDITION
- PROPOSED TO BE MAINTAINED (NO IMPROVEMENTS EXISTING WATERCOURSE CROSSING)

- PLACE STONE DUST TRAIL SURFACE
- REGRADE RAIL BED
- CLEAR OVERGROWN VEGETATION & FALLEN TREES
- EXISTING OUTLET POINT
- CONSTRUCT SWALES TO DISCHARGE WATER
- ELEVATE TRAIL SURFACE ABOVE STANDING WATER
- POOR TRAIL CONDITION
- SECURITY & SIGNAGE NEEDED
- POOR TRAIL CONDITION

- PLACE STONE DUST TRAIL SURFACE
- REGRADE RAIL BED
- CONSTRUCT SWALES TO DISCHARGE WATER
- ELEVATE TRAIL SURFACE ABOVE STANDING WATER
- AVERAGE TRAIL CONDITION

- PLACE STONE DUST TRAIL SURFACE
- REGRADE RAIL BED
- ELEVATE TRAIL SURFACE ABOVE STANDING WATER
- CLEAR OVERGROWN VEGETATION
- EXISTING CULVERT UNDER FOREST STREET
- CONSTRUCT SWALES TO DISCHARGE WATER TO ELEVATE TRAIL SURFACE ABOVE STANDING WATER
- POOR TRAIL CONDITION
- MAINTAIN EXISTING SEWER MANHOLES

- PLACE STONE DUST TRAIL SURFACE
- REGRADE RAIL BED
- CLEAR FALLEN DEBRIS
- CLEAR OVERGROWN VEGETATION
- ELEVATE TRAIL SURFACE ABOVE STANDING WATER
- AVERAGE TRAIL CONDITION

- PLACE STONE DUST TRAIL SURFACE
- REGRADE RAIL BED
- CONSTRUCT SWALES TO DISCHARGE WATER
- ELEVATE TRAIL SURFACE ABOVE STANDING WATER
- AVERAGE TRAIL CONDITION

- MAINTAIN EXISTING SEWER MANHOLES

- INSTALL PIPE CROSSING TO DISCHARGE STORMWATER AT EXISTING DISCHARGE POINT
- INSTALL RIBE CROSSING TO DISCHARGE STORMWATER AT EXISTING DISCHARGE POINT
- RECONSTRUCT EXISTING STREAM CHANNEL (DISCHARGE INTO SWALE)

- AT-GRADE STREET CROSSING
- INSTALL SECURITY GATES & ROLLARDS
- INSTALL INFO & DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE
- DETERMINE PARKING NEEDS

- ELEVATE TRAIL SURFACE ABOVE STANDING WATER
- CONSTRUCT SWALES TO DISCHARGE WATER TO EXISTING OUTLET POINT
- CLEAR OVERGROWN VEGETATION & FALLEN TREES
- REGRADE RAIL BED
- PLACE STONE DUST TRAIL SURFACE
- POOR TRAIL CONDITION

- REGRADE RAIL BED
- PLACE STONE DUST TRAIL SURFACE
- GOOD TRAIL CONDITION

- GOOD TRAIL CONDITION
- MAINTAIN EXISTING SEWER MANHOLES

- GOOD TRAIL CONDITION
- MAINTAIN EXISTING SEWER MANHOLES

- PROPOSED TO BE MAINTAINED (NO IMPROVEMENTS EXISTING WATERCOURSE CROSSING)

- INSTALL SECURITY GATES & BOLLARDS
- INSTALL INFO & DIRECTIONAL SIGNAGE
- DETERMINE PARKING NEEDS

- PROPOSED TO BE MAINTAINED (NO IMPROVEMENTS EXISTING WATERCOURSE CROSSING)

- EVALUATE EXISTING STRUCTURE
- POSSIBLE REHABILITATION/REPLACEMENT
- INSTALL WOODEN GUIDE RAIL/STORE PROTECTION ADJACENT TO BRIDGE

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Portland Trail Near Rt. 17
Challenges and Possible Alternative Routes
Route 66 Near Route 17 could be used as an alternative route from the original trail, with an off-set trail section owned by CT D.O.T.
Portland Stage 2 – Problem:
Original trail now owned by private property owners
Portland Stage 2

Route of original trail along Route 66 (privately owned)
Portland Stage 2
Possible Bridge, Town & River Access
Portland & East
Hampton
Undeveloped Airline
Trail
Current Condition
7 Advantages of a trail

- **Recreation** - for Families & Everyone - Walking, Biking, Horseback Riding
- **Greater Health** – Opportunities for Natural Exercise
- **Greater Interaction with Nature**
- Promotes Greater **Human Interaction & Community**
- **Sustainable Alternative Transportation** to Cars
- **Environmentally Friendly**
- **Economic Revitalization** – such as commercial business opportunities, residential property values
- Improves Quality of Life Generally
Partners

- Local Towns – East Hampton, Portland, Middletown
- Lower River Valley Council of Governments
- CT Dept. of Energy & Environment Protection
- CT Dept. of Transportation
- US Park Service