



## Connecticut River Byway Council

### Minutes Meeting of May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2012

*Gayle Ottmann*  
*Christine Walker*  
*Nancy Hoggson*  
*Katrina Spaulding*  
*Rebecca Brown*  
*K. Carriere*  
*Glenn English*  
*Russell Hirschler*  
*Ellen Howard*  
*Andrea Livermore*  
*Matt Mann*  
*Jeanie McIntyre*  
*Kevin McKinnon*  
*Janet Rebman*  
*Caro Thompson*  
*Brad Weeks*  
*Dean Eastman*  
*John LaBarge*  
*James Baxton*

**Board Present:** Gayle Ottmann, Christine Walker, Nancy Hoggson, Rebecca Brown, K. Carriere, Ellen Howard, Matt Mann, Robert McBride, Kevin McKinnon, Janet Rebman, John LaBarge, Rick Kendall

Others attending: Bernie Folta – Claremont, Katherine Otto – Southern Windsor RC, Peter Gregory – Two Rivers- Ottauquechee RC, Tom Kennedy Southern Windsor RC, Nat Tripp

Gayle opened the meeting at about 1:05. Welcome and introductions were made.

Minutes were approved as written from the previous meeting.

Gayle asked Peter Gregory from TRORC to give any update he may have about the application the TRORC had submitted to Federal Highways to complete a Corridor Management Plan. Peter explained that VT has submitted the application and that the project is needed to get a sense of the needs of the Byway. The last corridor management plan was completed in 1996/1998. Like the one proposed, it was completed in coordination with all 7 RPCs in VT and NH along the CT River. Not only is it a requirement as part of the federal designation of the Byway through US Federal Highways Administration, but it would provide guidance for the Byway moving forward. There is no news yet about the funding, but it is hoped that there will be some news in the next couple of months.

Gayle asked about the Itineraries project and how the Byway Council may help. Katherine Otto from Southern Windsor Regional Commission gave an overview of the project and provided a handout that showed a mark-up of one of the tours that people could take while visiting the Byway. It began in Bellows Falls VT and ended in Walpole NH and included sites such as the Greenleaf Ewell House along Cheshire Turnpike. Katherine asked for the Council's input on the program itself and potential distribution of the products. As they move along through the project they would like to get feedback from people, especially Chambers along the river about the usefulness and content. There was discussion about key contacts at each

Waypoint area to get feedback on the project. The following key contacts were arrived at to help provide feedback:

Windsor – K. Carrier, Rick Kendal and Bob Haight

Claremont – Nancy Merrill

White River Junction – Janet Rebman, Molly Martin, Paul Boucher

Haverhill – Glenn English, Mark Neilson

Lancaster – Northern Gateway Chamber

Colebrook – Kevin McKinnon

There still needs to be better connection in the northeast kingdom area (St. Johnsbury)

The Council asked that So. Windsor bring the project back to them for further review after they had received input from these people and changes had been made to the content and visual presentation. There continued to be discussion about the necessity of coming up with the 20% match in order to make the entire project work. The regional planning commission could provide in-kind assistance to the project by providing feedback on the content. Additionally, volunteers could provide match for the printing. Christine Walker stated that her organization could provide some staff time to review materials as in-kind match and would additionally contribute \$200 to the printing of the final products. Others discussed what they could contribute and will get back to Katherine or Tom at Southern Windsor about their capacity to assist. The conversation continued about the content within the itineraries and Janet suggested the rail trail in Hanover. Katherine said that it would be the end of summer before they anticipated having all the feedback for the project, so August or September would be a good time to report back to the Council.

Gayle asked John LaBarge to give an update on the ‘app’ project for the Vermont Byways and asked if the itinerary project could be incorporated into the ‘app’ project. John said that some students under the direction of Doug Albee at Champlain College were developing the ‘app’s. John said that he was also looking into cultural heritage books that Charlotte NC had completed that he thought would work really well here too. Everyone agreed that this would be a good agenda item to follow up on at the next meeting. The concept of visual presentation promoted many to request that if there are pictures of the Byway that could be used for the Itineraries project that they should forward those to Katherine Otto at Southern Windsor. Nat said that someone should get in touch with Adair Mulligan as she has many photos of the Byway that could be used for all sorts of promotional opportunities. Gayle agreed to give Adair a call.

Janet Rebman followed the conversation up by providing some information about the State of NH’s current efforts to brand the state and asked what opportunities there may be in coordinating with this. The ads have been very prominent on TV playing off the “Live Free or Die” motto, saying “Live Free and ....” fill in the blank with “play”, “vacation” etc. it has been very effective to date. It was brought up again that the Byway Council should connect with the tourism departments of each state. After much discussion it was agreed that the Council need more strategic thinking before it engaged these entities as they needed to understand where the organization was going before soliciting support through programs. John stated that there should be a similar organization to the Vermont Byway Association in NH that could help keep focus on the work of the Byways. Nancy expressed interest in approaching legislature for funding, others did not think it was the political climate for that approach. In the end the Executive Committee was charged with getting together and outlining a game plan with a timeline.

Gayle asked the Council about their interest in conducting a tour of the Byway to generate interests and expressed the NH Executive Councilor Ray Burton was very supportive and interested in the idea and had expressed interest in a date in August. After much conversation it was agreed that similar to the previous conversation that the organization does not currently have the capacity or the direction to pull this off in a way that would create positive momentum for the organization. However, it was agreed that the meetings should move around from region to region and that a small hour long tour could maybe take place at the beginning or end of the meeting to familiarize people with the assets of that region and that September and October were good times for these. Glenn said that he could help set up a meeting with Councilor Burton to explain where the Byway was currently at. Rick offered to make one of the fall meetings happen at St. Gaudens, and all agreed that would be great.

Gayle turned the meeting to more judiciary responsibilities and asked the Council to approve Nancy Hoggson to open an account at the Mascoma Savings Bank. The Council's bank account has been in St. Johnsbury as Nat Tripp lives there and has been responsible for the accounts in the past. Now that Nat has retired from the Council opening an account in a more central place makes sense. After the new account is opened, Nat will close the account in St. J. A motion was made Glenn and seconded by Gayle to have Nancy open the account. It was also approved that all officers shall be signatories of that account. That currently includes, Nancy Hoggson, Christine Walker and Gayle Ottmann. Next the Council addressed the absence of a chair given that Nat Tripp has left the Council. After brief discussion a slate of officers was created: Gayle Ottmann, Chair, Glenn English Vice Chair, Nancy Hoggson Treasurer and Christine Walker Secretary. K. motioned to approve the slate and Janet seconded, all approved the slate. The issue about the new bank account was brought back up and it was unanimously approved that Glenn English be added to the authorized signatories of the new account at Mascoma Savings Bank.

The Annual Meeting was discussed next. After discussion K., Janet and Robert agreed to coordinate the annual meeting and would be in touch and communication with the officers about plans.

Lastly, old business, Peter Gregory let the Council know that the sign installation has been moving along and that there was an issue in St. Johnsbury but other than that the signs were going up throughout the Byway. Glenn added that Haverhill Corner had an issue but that it had been resolved.

Lastly, there was a fitting wonderful acknowledgement of the work and dedication to the Byway Council by Nat Tripp. There was a proclamation from both the State of NH and VT to Nat thanking him for his years of service and among other things the following was read:

*Nat Tripp has lived on a Vermont hill farm for over thirty years where he raises sheep and vegetables. At various times he has worked in film and television writing and producing for Public Television, corporate clients and advertising agencies. Over many years Nat has worked with scientists, bureaucrats, politicians, lobbyists, property holders and advocacy groups to balance federal, state, corporate and individual interests; most recently articulated in his book **Confluence** A River, The Environment, Politics, and the Fate of All Humanity (2005). His diverse background has expanded his passion of the unique character of the Connecticut River watershed. Nat has traveled by paddle New*

*England's largest and longest river and has been instrumental over the past 20 years in shaping its course and bringing importance to the natural resource values and tourism opportunities of the Connecticut River. Nat is past present of both the Connecticut River Joint Commissions and the Connecticut River Byway Council. Through these leadership roles Nat has inspired others, and cultivated stewardship and lasting value for the unique natural assets of the watershed while celebrating the heritage of the river's productive energy and community building influence to New Hampshire's economy. Nat's ability to connect diverse interests has contributed to defining the Connecticut River as one of New England's greatest treasures.*

Every member of the Byway Council thanked Nat and acknowledged that the organization would in all likelihood not have survived without his leadership.

Respectfully submitted, Christine Walker

unapproved