

Appendix C:

# Meeting Minutes and List of Attendees

Morris Canal Greenway 25-Year Action Plan

**Morris Canal 25-Year Action Plan**  
Minutes of the Project Kick-Off Meeting  
May 26, 2011

In-Attendance:

Brian Appezzato, Warren County Planning Department  
Daniel Badgely, Langan Engineering & Environmental Services  
Nate Burns, Langan Engineering & Environmental Services  
David Dech, Warren County Planning Department  
David Detrick, Warren County Morris Canal Commission  
Jeffrey Marshall, Heritage Conservancy  
Todd Poole, 4WARD Planning  
Elizabeth Roy, Warren County Planning Department  
Michael Szura, Langan Engineering & Environmental Services  
Karen Williamson, Heritage Conservancy

Discussion Items:

1. All meeting participants were introduced and the roles/backgrounds of the various project team members were briefly reviewed.
2. The Technical Advisory Committee will consist of either the entire Warren County Morris Canal Commission or a subcommittee of this group.
3. Elizabeth Roy and David Dech will work together to coordinate all project meetings. The Warren County Morris Canal Commission presently meets on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of every month at 7:30 p.m.
4. E-mail can be used to communicate information about the project in-between meetings. The e-mail distribution list should include all of the individuals attending today's meeting. The Warren County Planning Department Staff will be responsible for contacting other individuals to solicit any additional input needed in a timely manner. Brian Appezzato will handle all inquiries about the project from the general public.
5. The Warren County Planning Department Staff is in the process of identifying the individuals who should be invited to participate in the Focus Group and Study Committee meetings.
6. The project team is collecting background information with assistance from the Warren County Planning Department.
7. Approximately 85% of the Morris Canal prism is intact, with 11 of 33 miles preserved in public ownership. The county will provide the project team with a copy of its November 2010 Acquisition Strategy.
8. The project needs to be completed by the end of April 2012 in accordance with the grant funding received by the county. The project schedule should be compressed to meet this deadline.

9. Invoices are to be submitted monthly to the county and must be accompanied by a description of the work performed during the billing period. The invoice should list the consultant team members by name along with the hours worked, hourly rate, subtotal per person, and associated expenses. The costs should be broken down by project task (not subtask).
10. The group discussed key elements of the project as summarized below:
  - Concern about a few negative voices adversely impacting the overall tone of the project.
  - The importance of understanding the economic value of the project, especially to the business community.
  - Concern about putting too much emphasis on nurturing landowner relationships in light of the long-term outlook of the project.
  - The importance of the organizational structure to be created to oversee implementation of the plan.
  - The importance of relating the project to broader transportation issues in accordance with grant funding requirements.
  - The ability to dovetail the project with the Route 57 Scenic Byway, Musconetcong Wild & Scenic River initiatives and existing/future heritage corridors.
  - The ability to take advantage of the National Canal Museum in Easton and Waterloo Village in Allamuchy Township as “bookends” for the canal project.
  - The importance of this project in serving as a rudder to keep canal preservation efforts focused as county representation changes and funding priorities fluctuate over time.
11. Todd Poole inquired as to whether any economic development studies or related data is available that he can use for his economic assessment work. The Warren County Planning Department staff indicated that no such studies exist. However, site visitation logs may be available, along with some tax records that may be helpful.
12. Elizabeth Roy will contact the Warren County Morris Canal Commission members to coordinate the first TAC meeting and a separate tour of the canal for the project team members.

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**Morris Canal 25-Year Action Plan**  
Minutes of the TAC Meeting  
June 28, 2011

In Attendance:

Dan Badgely – Langan Engineering  
Dennis Bertland – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Brett Bragin – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Don Brinker – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Nate Burns – Langan Engineering  
David Dech – Warren County Planning Department  
David Detrick – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
John Handlos – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Megan Kelly – NJTPA  
Jim Lee, Jr. – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Jim Lee, III – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Jeffrey Marshall. – Heritage Conservancy  
Todd Poole – 4Ward Planning  
Elizabeth Roy – Warren County Planning Department  
Robert Smith, P.E. – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Myra Snook – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Michael Szura – Langan Engineering  
Karen Williamson – Heritage Conservancy

Discussion Items (See also meeting agenda):

1. Dave Detrick opened the meeting and provided an overview of the WCMCC and the participants introduced themselves. Some of the Warren County Morris Canal Committee members were involved in other master planning projects and are familiar with the general planning process. Nate Burns indicated that the project involves assessing the canal from a broad and conceptual perspective or scale, not a close-up or detailed view.
2. Nate Burns provide a brief overview of the project and presented the project schedule, showing how the project tasks will be completed by the end of April 2012. The project schedule identified when the various meetings will be held at key points in the planning process. Nate suggested that meetings with the TAC be held on a monthly basis on the second Tuesday of each month to keep the planning and public input process moving forward on a consistent basis throughout the duration of the project.
3. Dennis Bertland asked the consultant team members to express their initial opinions about the challenges of developing a 25-year plan for the canal. The responses are summarized below:
  - Mike Szura – How to improve visibility of the canal and weave the canal in a coordinated fashion through a variety of municipalities.
  - Jeff Marshall – How to unify the goals and outcomes given the number of municipalities and other partners involved.
  - Nate Burns – How to integrate and manage the sheer number of natural, recreational, scenic and historic resources along the canal.
  - Jeff Marshall – How to identify the most important and compelling story(ies) of the canal.
  - Karen Williamson – How to provide alternate routes for those sections of the canal that have been obliterated or otherwise lost. How to effectively connect any alternate routes to the main canal in a physical and programmatic way.

4. Karen Williamson felt that the communities along the canal may be more receptive to the master plan than expected, due to the recent successes of two other corridor projects: the Musconetcong Wild and Scenic River and the Warren Heritage Scenic Byway (Route 57).
5. Nate Burns and Jeff Marshall asked the participants the following questions:
  - a. If you could accomplish one item with the master plan, what would it be?
  - b. What one item do you see as the greatest hurdle to the success of the greenway?
  - c. How would you define a successful outcome to the master planning process?

A lively discussion generated the following variety of responses:

- Jim Lee, Jr. – How do we fund it, sell it, get public buy-in, and maintain it with an understandably ever-changing political landscape?
- Bob Smith – Does the public realize that the canal preceded the establishment of many local towns, such as Port Colden, and Port Murray?
- Jim Lee, III – Much of the canal is an archaeological resource, much of which is buried or gone.
- Jeff Marshall – How can the public embrace its canal heritage with pride and capitalize on its heritage tourism potential?
- Todd Poole – Do local schools include the study of the canal in its local history lessons? If you can expose students to the canal, they can teach their parents to appreciate it too.
- Myra Snook – Books about the canal were previously given to the local schools, but it does not appear that the topic is being taught. Teachers are constrained by having to meet the state academic standards, with little time left to teach any additional material. For example, representatives of the Andover Morris School in Phillipsburg had no idea that the route of the canal was through school property. Dave Detrick’s wife is a teacher at the Port Colden Elementary School who does teach her students about the canal. A 19<sup>th</sup> century schoolhouse adjacent to the Port Colden Elementary School has been preserved by the school district and includes a small museum.
- Brett Bragin - The WCMCC has not formally followed up with the schools to see if the books are in fact being used to teach students about the canal. Mike Szura – Other extra-curricular activities might provide children with an opportunity to learn about the canal.
- Brett Bragin/Todd Poole – Is WCMCC officially empowered to raise revenue? Not sure.
- Dennis Bertland – Many key preservation activities have been completed and the project has grown from simple acquisition of slivers of land to protect the canal to a regional greenway effort. But the resource is underutilized and canal exists in segments with different levels of integrity. How can we prevent further loss of any remaining threatened canal structures over the long haul, especially important buildings that are part of the larger canal landscape?
- Brett Bragin – It would be nice to have a continuous greenway across the county, even if the greenway does not follow the canal. [Add comment added via email] “the focus of the greenway is the canal. In areas where the canal has be destroyed or is not presently accessible (e.g. due to land ownership, etc..) the greenway will have to depart from the canal corridor, but the 25-year plan should revert back to the route of the canal IF land ownership and/or easement issues will allow it.”
- Dennis Bertland – It would be helpful to have a non-profit support group to help with fundraising and management activities and to provide a more flexible response to opportunities as they arise.
- Myra Snook – One example is that a coffee shop advertises its location along the canal.
- Dave Detrick – How do you save the canal when significant sections are still privately owned and when the public has lost awareness of this resource? How do you keep momentum when it takes so long to complete one project?

- Mike Szura – It is important to identify those projects that will increase connectivity and visibility to improve awareness.
  - Dave Detrick – New leadership in Phillipsburg has prompted interest in canal preservation for the first time, which is refreshing.
  - Jim Lee, Jr. – The acquisition book outlines which properties are priorities for preservation.
  - Dennis Bertland – How do we deal with the threat of recent solar farms installations along the canal? Wouldn't it be nice if we could use the canal to connect Hackettstown (a population center) with Allamuchy State Park?
  - John Handlos – Would also like to see a greenway trail across the entire county.
  - Dave Dech – Success is having the freeholders see, accept and approve a 25-year plan that helps the county stay focused, with guidelines for how it should proceed with preservation efforts in a consistent manner.
  - Dave Detrick – Support for the canal project can be seen in the fact that some municipalities have adopted the model canal ordinance.
  - Jim Lee, Jr. – A grant has been received to restore the stone arch entrance to the canal along the Delaware River in collaboration with Phillipsburg.
  - Dennis Bertland – Would like to see buy-in at regional and state level too with even more partners involved.
  - Myra Snook – Thinks canal is shown on some state level maps.
  - Dave Detrick – The Friends of the Morris Canal and the Canal Society of New Jersey have a plan for improvements to Saxton Falls. Recommends talking to these two groups and the New Jersey State Park representatives about these plans.
  - Jim Lee, Jr. and Todd Poole – Need to determine how best to organize/administer canal preservation efforts. Todd explains trend in public/non-profit relationships, such as Central Park in New York City.
  - Dave Detrick – Or like White Lake in Warren County, where the Nature Conservancy assists with site management while Warren County owns the land.
  - Jeff Marshall – Or like the D&L Canal Heritage Corridor with its non-profit organization.
  - Jim Lee, Jr. – Whatever we do, don't refer the canal as a park, since the term park is not well received.
  - Karen Williamson - Should keep in mind how canal preservation can complement farmland preservation, scenic byway, wild and scenic river initiatives.
  - Brett Bragin – Concerned about haphazard pattern of land development and its impact on canal preservation. What is the feeling of the people who live along the canal about trail development?
  - Dennis Bertland – Each ½ mile segment of the canal is different and comes with adjoining landowners with different mindsets. No cookie cutter approach can be used to move forward.
  - Jim Lee, III and Dennis Bertland - How can we create a brand that transcends these differences and is a unifying force?
  - Todd Poole and Jeff Marshall – Look to the Laurel Highlands and PA DCNR's Conservation Landscape Initiative as examples of branding, et al.
  - Dennis Bertland – Need to find a way to engage and collaborate with all possible partners.
  - Myra Snook – The logo for the Morris Canal greenway is a brand that is being used by Morris and Passaic Counties for its canal preservation efforts. Also the brown canal signs along the roadway are a kind of branding.
6. Representatives from the Warren County Morris Canal Committee and the Planning Department will be leading a bus tour of the Morris Canal for the consultant team members tomorrow. The tour will leave from the Phillipsburg Commerce Park at 8 a.m. and will visit highlights of the canal along its entire 33-

mile length in Warren County. As desired, additional tours of specific segments of the canal may also be scheduled in the future.

**Morris Canal 25-Year Action Plan**  
Minutes of the TAC Meeting  
July 12, 2011

In Attendance:

Dennis Bertland – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Nate Burns – Langan Engineering  
David Dech – Warren County Planning Department  
David Detrick – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Mike Helbing – Warren County Board of Recreation  
Jim Lee, Jr. – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Jeffrey Marshall. – Heritage Conservancy  
Elizabeth Roy – Warren County Planning Department  
Robert Smith, P.E. – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Corey Tierney – Warren County Dept of Land Preservation  
Karen Williamson – Heritage Conservancy

Discussion Items:

1. The group reviewed the success of the June 29<sup>th</sup> full-day field trip to tour the highpoints of the Morris Canal in Warren County. The team members expressed an interest in visiting the brickyard property, since it contains an inclined plane that can be viewed in cross section. Dave Dech indicated his desire to walk with the team members to see certain sections of the canal to point out specific problem areas. The team agreed that there would be value in visiting these additional areas of the canal and will work with Elizabeth Roy to coordinate such a trip.
2. Karen Williamson explained that the first TAC meeting and the recent tour participants used several terms to describe concepts that can form the basis of a vision for the 25-Year Action Plan for the Morris Canal. These terms/concepts are:
  - **Land-Banking** – The historic preservation of the canal and canal related resources (associated buildings, scenic views, etc.) through the acquisition of land or conservation easements. Since some of the canal resources have been destroyed, there will be gaps between different segments of the canal and canal related resources that are preserved. Even if no other action is taken, the process of land-banking would at least reserve the canal as a historic resource for future use.
  - **Greenway** – A continuous network of protected open space consisting of:
    1. The segments of land containing the canal and canal related resources, where they still exist;
    2. Open space interconnecting the segments from #2b1 above, which will not contain any canal resources but may include other important resources yet to be identified; and
    3. Open space linking the land in #2b1 and #2b2 above with other significant parks and open space areas.



- **Towpath Trail** – A means for providing public recreational access to the canal, canal related resources and greenway utilizing the towpath, where present, and other trails to be identified or establish.
- **Storied Experience** – To provide opportunities for learning about the canal as part of the public recreational access. Ideally, the storytelling process would instill a greater appreciation for the canal and encourage individuals to support and/or participate in preservation efforts.

The group reviewed the existing Morris Canal Greenway vision included on the back of a brochure in relationship these concepts and found many common elements. Karen Williamson mentioned the value of having a draft vision statement for use in soliciting feedback during upcoming focus group and public meetings.

3. An example of a single sentence vision statement was reviewed, included an analysis of what each phrase in the vision meant. The group was encouraged to create a vision for the 25-Year Action Plan using a single sentence, if at all possible.
4. A brainstorming session was held to discuss the meaning of the terms/concepts described in #2 above in more detail as the first step in developing a vision for the 25-Year Action Plan for the Morris Canal. This discussion resulted in a list of key words for each of the terms/concepts as documented below:

**Resource Protection or Preservation** (use this term instead of Land-Banking)

- Preserve for now/future as a historic and natural feature
- Distinctiveness
- Character defining elements
- Canal and communities
- Enhance communities
- Cultural landscape (includes views and vistas)
- Heritage
- Physical representation
- National Engineering Landmark
- Significant
- Enhance

**Greenway**

- Linkages/Connections/Alternatives
- Especially connections to towns
- Context for canal
- Heritage Greenway
- Open Space
- Branding/Existing Logo
- Linkages can include trails, rivers, parks, D&L Heritage Corridor, historic sites, visitor destinations, points of interest, support services
- What is the path of the greenway?
- Strategic connections

- Coordinate with other preservation programs (farmland preservation, etc.)
- Transportation related – Morris Canal as early mode of transportation

### **Towpath Trail**

- Access to allow the public to experience the canal
- Convenient access
- Walk in the footsteps of history
- Provide recreational opportunities
- Identify with the past
- Method of engaging the public, building a relationship with the public
- Joins the community together?
- A place for interaction
- Healthy lifestyle
- Knit together
- Advantages of trail loops (Rather than just walking back and forth on the canal)
- Usefulness of mile marker for physical fitness
- No motorized use. Yes to handicapped access (to greatest extent possible).
- Multi-purpose recreational use
- Yes to Passive Recreation (hiking, biking, fishing, birdwatching) No to Active Recreation (such as athletic fields)
- Historic trace

### **Storied Experience**

- Communicate the story of the canal and its impact on county development
- Elements or hubs of story such as...
  - Life, religion, people
  - Technical aspects
  - Daily family activities
  - A world-class feat
  - Uniqueness of construction
  - Personal stories, culture
  - Immigration and settlement
  - Industrial revolution
  - Modern storytellers (Jim Lee, Jr.)
  - Transportation
  - Geographic location, vertical climb
- How canal shaped cultural landscape
- Relationship to other industries
- Goods, services, businesses transported or related to canal
- Place names in communities tied to canal history
- Adjustments made to canal to compete with railroad, etc.
- Canal closing, reuse, preservation
- Education tailored to diverse audiences (visitors, residents, school children, history buffs)
- Need to make it relevant to the listener
- Express need for continued protection, attention, engagement

5. The group debated two additional concepts to be addressed by the vision: Economic Benefits and Civic Engagement. The results are summarized as follows:

#### **Economic Benefit**

- Sustain the economy through heritage tourism
- Provide “fuel” for economic activity
- Return on investment in preservation
- Economically sustainable
- Not a drain on financial resources
- Careful handling of issue
- Stormwater management tool
- Tied to how canal activities are to be managed in the future
- Stimulate the local economy
- Need for sound land use planning – preservation must be incorporated in municipal plans
- Communicate economic benefits to municipalities

#### **Civic Engagement**

- Political and community support
  - Volunteers
  - Partners
  - Land use planning
  - Economic
  - Respect for private property rights
  - Forum or framework
  - Communication and outreach
  - Continued education
  - The “Kumbaya” effect
6. The group then attempted to develop a vision statement using the results of the brainstorming session. The first draft of the statement is provided below:
    - To preserve and enhance the historic Morris Canal, a National Engineering Landmark, and the cultural landscape through which it passes...
    - To create a heritage greenway to link communities and key points of interest...
    - To create a towpath trail with convenient access for non-motorized recreational activity and provide opportunities to engage with community history...
    - To communicate the stories of the canal and its significant influence on the surrounding community and larger region...
    - To promote sustainable land use and stimulate the local economy...
    - To build partnerships and engage the public...
  7. The meeting concluded with agreement to share the draft vision with TAC members who could not attend and continue to work to refine the vision statement at the next meeting.

**Morris Canal 25-Year Action Plan**  
Minutes of the TAC Meeting  
August 9, 2011

In Attendance:

Brian Appezzato – Warren County Planning Department  
Brett Bragin – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Don Brinker – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Nate Burns – Langan Engineering  
David Dech – Warren County Planning Department  
David Detrick – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
John Handlos – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Jim Lee, III – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Jim Lee, Jr. – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Jeffrey Marshall. – Heritage Conservancy  
Elizabeth Roy – Warren County Planning Department  
Robert Smith, P.E. – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Myra Snook – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Karen Williamson – Heritage Conservancy

Discussion Items:

1. Nate Burns and Karen Williamson presented a draft vision statement based upon the brainstorming session held at the July 12, 2011 meeting. The group reviewed the draft vision statement, making several revisions that have been incorporated into an updated copy of the vision attached to these meeting minutes.
2. David Dech stated that he had sent out letters to potential Stakeholder Committee members introducing them to the project and alerting them to a future invitation to a meeting in September. The letter was sent to the following:
  - Mayors and Town Managers of all municipalities along the canal
  - Warren County Engineer, Department of Human Services, Land Preservation Administrator, Board of Recreation Commissioners Chair, Planning Board Chair, Cultural & Heritage Commission Chair, Ag Board Chair, and Morris Canal Committee Chair
  - Debbie Hirt, NJDOT Office of Community Relations
  - Megan Kelly, Program Manager, North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority, Inc.
  - John Ciaffone, President of Transoptions
  - Rich Roberts, New Jersey Transit
  - Robert Goltz, President of the Warren County Regional Chamber of Commerce
  - Sandi Cerami, Executive Director of the Washington Borough Business Improvement District
  - Eileen Swan, Executive Director of the Highlands Council
  - Eric Snyder, Sussex County Planning Director
  - Christine Marion, Morris County Planning Director
  - Michael Kaiser, Executive Director of the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission

- Gerry Scharfenberger, Director of the New Jersey Office of Planning Advocacy
- Tom Micai, Director NJDEP Land Use Regulation, Division of Planning
- Robert Barth, Canal Society of New Jersey
- Rich Osborn, NJDEP Green Acres Program
- Dan Saunders, Acting Administrator, NJDEP SHPO

The group offered several suggestions for other individuals and organizations to be considered as additional potential stakeholders – if they would not otherwise be invited to a subsequent focus group meeting:

- State Legislators
  - Local Police Departments
  - Society for Industrial Archaeology – Roebling Chapter
  - Archaeological Society of New Jersey
  - Preservation New Jersey
  - Musconetcong Watershed Association
  - Skylands Tourism or Magazine
  - Audubon Society
  - Geocaching and bicycle/hiking organizations (such as the NY/NJ Trails Council)
  - Sierra Club
  - Boy Scouts
  - Potential funding agencies (such as the NJ Historic Trust, Dodge Foundation, etc.)
3. Elizabeth Roy presented a draft list of sites to visit on another tour of the Morris Canal, with a focus on problem areas. The group reviewed and revised the list based upon suggestions from the meeting participants (see attachment). Given the thick growth of vegetation currently associated with many of these sites, the tour will be held later in the fall at a time to be determined when conditions are more suitable for seeing the canal in these areas.
  4. Nate Burns indicated that the agenda for the next meeting of the TAC will include the start of a discussion of project action areas and goals based upon the different elements of the vision statement.
  5. The next meeting of the TAC will be on September 13<sup>th</sup>, time and location yet to be determined.

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Draft list of locations that the Committee feels warrants further discussion and/or a site visit (next tour):

1. Hackettstown area: Route 46 to Route 517 to Bilby Road access/connection
2. Stewarts Hunt subdivision/easement in Stewartsville [connections closely relate to those of items #4 and 5]
3. Road walk along Rockport Road (Mansfield Twp.)
4. Route 22 [crossing area]
5. Strykers Road drainage issue [+ canal restoration] 4 & 5 [removal of obstacles to connecting Planes 9 and 10]
6. Brickyard property (Mansfield Twp.)
7. 'John Handlos' property' – Port Colden, Plane 6 (Mansfield Twp.) [Port Colden to Port Murray. Prop w/ Plane 6, Basin and Tenders house and associated access road]
8. 'Mosquito Commission' canal sites
9. Purcel's Agway, Phillipsburg
10. Phillipsburg, along the RR [greens bridge to arch area]

Note: text in red are additions or comments added at the 08-09-11 TAC Meeting

**Vision for the 25-Year Action Plan for the Morris Canal**  
**DRAFT 8-09-11**

To preserve and enhance the historic Morris Canal, a national engineering treasure,  
and the cultural landscape through which it passes in a manner that:

- Highlights its distinctive characteristics and the ingenuity used in its construction to distinguish it from other historic resources and canals;
- Tells the story of life along the canal, its influence on past events and its relevance to today's society to support public education and foster community pride;
- Interconnects communities and links points of interest by serving as a continuous greenway of open space across the county;
- Provides convenient access to a towpath trail for non-motorized passive recreational use as an integral part of a unique educational, travel and fitness experience;
- Stimulates the local economy through heritage tourism;
- Leverages the value of the canal to support sound land use planning decisions; and
- Increases public and private support for and involvement in canal preservation efforts.

**Morris Canal 25-Year Action Plan**  
Minutes of the TAC Meeting  
September 13, 2011

In Attendance:

Brian Appezzato – Warren County Planning Department  
David Dech – Warren County Planning Department  
David Detrick – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Jim Lee, III – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Jim Lee, Jr. – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Scott Rowe – NJ TPA  
Elizabeth Roy – Warren County Planning Department  
Myra Snook – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Mike Szura – Langan Engineering  
Karen Williamson – Heritage Conservancy

Discussion Items:

1. Karen Williamson provided a brief summary of the project status.
2. Mike Szura led the group in a discussion of the opportunities and constraints to be addressed by the master plan in keeping with the vision for the project. The results of this brainstorming session are attached to these minutes.
3. Scott Rowe mentioned that NJ TPA may soon be working with stakeholders to develop a similar action plan for the Jersey City/Passaic County end of the Morris Canal. NJ TPA is also considering establishing a Morris Canal Working Group that would include representatives of communities along the entire length of the canal and would meet on a quarterly basis to discuss canal issues/activities.
4. The group also discussed that NJDEP permit regulations, which must often be followed in order to make improvements to the canal, are not always sensitive to and compatible with preservation goals of the Morris Canal (or any other canal in New Jersey for that matter).
5. The next meeting of the TAC will be on October 11<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m. in the Rutgers Room at the Wayne Dumont Jr. Administration Building. The meeting will include a continuation of the opportunities and constraints discussion and a review of the results of the September 29<sup>th</sup> meeting with stakeholders.

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Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1569 Doylestown, PA 18901

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**Meeting:** Morris Canal Greenway Masterplan  
Stakeholder Meeting  
Warren County, New Jersey  
Langan Project No.: 200034701

**Date / Location:** Meeting Date: 29 September 2011  
7:00 pm  
Washington Township Municipal Building  
211 Route 31 North  
Washington, NJ

**Prepared By:** Nate Burns

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- Project Introduction
  - Project Team Background
  - Project Scope and Process
  - Review of Project Schedule
- Review of Vision Statement
- Opportunities, Constraints and Goals
- Stakeholder Discussion and Questions
  - *What benefits to you or your organization/community would you hope to gain from the continued improvements to the Morris Canal Greenway?*
  - *How do you or your organization/community currently interface with the Morris Canal Greenway, and its assets?*
  - *In what ways would you or your organization/community be able support the goals of the Greenway?*
  - *Are there any items, opportunities or issues surrounding the Greenway which you feel that this plan should absolutely address?*
- Open Q and A

Morris Canal 25-Year Action Plan  
Minutes of Stakeholder Meeting #1  
September 29, 2011

In Attendance:

Brian Appezzatto – Warren County Planning Department  
Amy Nittolo – Congressman Garrett’s Office  
Nate Burns – Langan Engineering  
Dan Callas – Transoptions  
Everett Chamberlain – Warren County Freeholder and Agriculture  
Judy Chamberlain – Farm Owner and Retired Teacher  
Glenn Cogle – Independence Township Committee  
Dave Dech – Warren County Planning Department  
Dave Detrick – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Darryl Detrick – Washington Township  
Tom Drake – Skylands Visitor Magazine  
Charlie Fineran – Allamuchy Township  
Mike Helbing – NYNJ Trails Conference  
Naomi Hsu – Jersey City Planning  
Steve Jandoli – NJDEP Green Acres  
Justin Jewell – Washington Borough  
James Lee, Jr. – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Megan Kelly – NJ TPA  
Christine Marion – Morris County planning  
Jeff Marshall – Heritage Conservancy  
Grace Messinger – North Jersey Resource Conservation and Development  
Brian Morrell – Canal Society of New Jersey  
Todd Poole – 4Ward Planning  
Elizabeth Roy – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Jason Sarnoski – Warren County Freeholder  
Joel Schnetzer – Warren County Agriculture Development Board  
Gerry Scharfenberger – Office for Planning Advocacy, NJ Dept. of State  
Corey Tierney – Warren County Land Preservation  
Maryjude Haddock-Weiler – New Jersey Highlands Council  
Karen Williamson – Heritage Conservancy

Discussion Items:

1. Dave Dech briefly explained the background of the project and introduced the consultant team. Each consultant team member made a few remarks regarding their professional experience.
2. Nate Burns, Karen Williamson and Todd Poole gave a PowerPoint presentation that provided an overview of the project and project schedule, and explanation of the visioning process and recurring themes, an outline of several opportunities and constraints, and a review of key fiscal analysis findings. (See attached PowerPoint presentation).

3. Four questions were then used to facilitate a dialogue with meeting attendees to solicit feedback on what they would like the project to accomplish. The following is a summary of the comments made by meeting attendees:
- a. Charlie Fineran said that many people do not know what resources exist and that efforts should be made to engage seniors, schools and other groups to visit the canal. In the case of schools, educational activities relating to the canal should not simply be considered a special trip but should be thoroughly integrated into the curriculum as a regular experience.
  - b. Nate Burns acknowledged that better public relations would improve local knowledge of the canal.
  - c. Charlie Fineran felt that the canal should be a multi-purpose facility where people can not only learn about the canal but also go fishing, take walks, shoot photography, etc.
  - d. Mike Helbing said that recreation, education, functionality and economics are important aspects of the project. He expressed concern that the project not get bogged down in planning to the extent that nothing else gets done. He felt it was important to get people to use the canal towpath as a trail as soon as possible and then worry about teaching people about the canal resources later using interpretive signs and other forms of "ambush education." He defined functionality as having the ability to walk along the towpath to get to school or work instead of having to ride the bus or drive.
  - e. Grace Messinger said any educational programs should help schools meet the core curriculum standards and should include a variety of educational topics, not just history. She also felt it was important to connect the Morris Canal to the Delaware and Lehigh Canal trail systems in Easton.
  - f. Justin Jewell said the Morris Canal has the potential to link communities and businesses together just like the Erie Canal. His father has collected artifacts related to the canal for many years.
  - g. Charlie Fineran suggested that Warren County coordinate its activities with other communities across New Jersey working to preserve and restore the Morris Canal.
  - h. Todd Poole said it is important that the State Tourism Office be involved in promoting the Morris Canal in coordination with other tourism initiatives.
  - i. Give the current economic situation, Todd Poole said people will probably take more trips closer to home. Warren County has an opportunity to "get ahead of the curve" by capitalizing on this change in travel patterns to promote the canal as a travel destination.
  - j. Nate Burns agreed that the heritage tourism benefit would increase in direct relationship to the extent of Morris Canal preservation and restoration efforts across the state.
  - k. Dave Detrick indicated that efforts to preserve and restore the Morris Canal, especially in Morris, Essex and Passaic Counties, have mushroomed since 1981 when the first brown sign markers were installed.
  - l. Megan Kelly stated that the NJTPA intends to establish a working group of agencies interested in preserving the Morris Canal and that anyone interested in participating in the group should contact her. NJTPA is currently identifying what the goals and objectives of the working group should be.

- m. Daryl Detrick offered several suggestions from his perspective as both a teacher and a Washington Township Recreation Commission member. He said it would be helpful to create lesson plans for teachers to use and to invite the teachers to tour the canal as part of an in-service day. He said that lesson plans could be created for history and engineering concepts in addition to a variety of other topics that could be the focus of a ½- or full-year classroom program. He would appreciate it if the towpath could be extended in both directions from Meadow Breeze Park. He said students have volunteered to create a website for the James Campbell House and that he would be happy to help the consultant team connect with the owners of this historic property. He also wondered whether the canal could become part of the Highlands Trail.
- n. Mike Helbing agreed that the canal could be part of the “America to 1865” educational topic in schools.
- o. Since water resources were used to power the canal, Grace Messinger said there are watershed management issues associated with the canal, including water quality, water quantity and erosion concerns.
- p. Nate Burns felt it was important to “sell” the canal to the largest audience possible.
- q. Gerry Scharfenberger was curious as to how many miles of the canal in Warren County are intact (80%) versus obliterated (20%). He indicated that the Governor’s administration is supportive of heritage tourism initiatives.
- r. Christine Marion stated that Morris County is willing to coordinate its Morris Canal preservation and restoration activities with Warren County. Trails are the focus. She felt that projects like this would be great opportunities for bed and breakfast establishments, wineries, agritourism, and microbreweries. However, many communities do not support the conversion of historic buildings to bed and breakfast establishments.
- s. Jeff Marshall said that there will be opposition to many kinds of beneficial activities like bed and breakfast establishments. He recommended acknowledging that reality of that opposition and move on to make decisions that are for the greater good.
- t. Todd Poole explained the concept of “cluster development” where one activity, such as a towpath trail, is linked economically to all sorts of businesses that directly relate to a trail or are suppliers to businesses directly linked to a trail. These linkages can occur across business and industrial sectors. Many people can share in the overall quality of life created by a trail.
- u. Charlie Fineran remarked that the Morris Canal parallels I-80 for several miles. Yet people driving on the Interstate have no idea the canal is there. Is there a way that a portion of the Interstate can be renamed to recognize the canal in this area?
- v. A comment was made that it might one day be possible to travel from Jersey City to Philadelphia along the Morris Canal.
- w. A question was raised as to how the canal will be preserved – i.e., through conservation easements, land acquisition, etc. Dave Dech responded by saying that it would not be realistic to expect that the entire canal will be preserved and that the methods to be used will vary depending upon alternate routes investigated during the course of the project. Jeff Marshall and Todd Poole explained the difficulties in trying to predict the costs, timing and techniques of preservation since each negotiation is a unique process due to the personal goals of the landowner involved.

- x. Nate Burns stated that alternative routes for the trail where the canal is obliterated may include paths within or adjacent to existing road rights-of-way. The key will be to make the most of any funds that become available for canal preservation/restoration and trail development.
- y. Another question was raised as to who will be responsible for maintaining the canal and trail? Nate Burns explained that maintenance responsibilities will also vary, depending upon whether specific section of the canal is owned by the state, county, township or other entity and what arrangements are made by that entity for maintenance (contractors, volunteers, county youth corps, etc.).
- z. Todd Poole indicated that the action plan will look at various revenue sources available for the project.
- aa. Charlie Fineran stated that the entire canal does not need to be preserved to be enjoyed. Urban hiking experiences can be enjoyable, as promoted by the NY NJ Trails Conference.
- bb. Daryl Detrick asked what parts of the canal are accessible. Dave Detrick stated that 11 of the 33 miles of canal are in public ownership, that some portions of the canal are not maintained and accessible while other sections are accessible to the public. A 5-mile stretch in Allamuchy State Park and a 3-mile section from Port Colden to Port Murray are open.
- cc. Mike Helbing stated that specifications for a new bridge have been delivered to the state park today to be used to repair a section of the trail.
- dd. Brian Morrell indicated that the section of the canal in Allamuchy State Park is the focus of the Canal Society of New Jersey in Warren County. The New Jersey Historic Trust recently funded a major feasibility study for the restoration of Locks 4 and 5. The Canal Society of New Jersey has a partnership with the state park to manage Saxton Lake with the hopes of reactivating a canal boat ride in the lake between these locks. The society is also actively involved in reinvigorating Waterloo Village – which used to get 150K visitors a year – as part of a 5-year partnership with the state park. The society is also involved with efforts in Morris (with 50% to 60% of canal in public ownership) and Passaic Counties to preserve and restore the canal. Funds from the Green Acres Program and Morris County Trust Fund have been used to finance projects in these counties. Perhaps volunteers can be used to maintain the canal. A portion of the Highlands Trail coincides with the canal.
- ee. Glenn Cogle stated that Independence Township has concerns about how this municipality should handle land development projects that might affect the canal. How can the municipality facilitate the acquisition of the canal for preservation purposes so that it can be used by the public? Corey Tierney and Dave Dech asked that they be notified of any land development projects that would affect the canal and that they are ready, willing and able to assist communities with canal preservation efforts. Some land developments will come to their attention as part of the official subdivision and land development review process.
- ff. Charlie Fineran asked about tax relief granted to landowners who open up their property to public access. Steve Jandoli said that 40K acres across the state have been enrolled in this tax relief program. If landowners allow public access, then the municipal tax assessor certifies that the property is exempt from taxes for a period of 3 years, after which time the property must be evaluated for compliance prior to renewal of the tax relief.

- gg. Steve Jandoli stated that the Green Acres Program would fund preservation and restoration of the canal “in a heartbeat.” He suggested that the canal project be coordinated with the Route 57 scenic byway. He agreed that the population density of the state requires that preserved lands, like the canal, should serve many functions. He cautioned that any funding be used wisely to meet the action plan goals.
- hh. Brian Morrell gave an example of a Victorian house that was successfully converted to a bed and breakfast. Lambertville has also benefited economically from the preservation and restoration of the Delaware and Raritan Canal, as can be seen in the removal of fences and the installation of gates on properties adjacent to the canal.
- ii. Dave Detrick noted that the Morris Canal has the greatest elevation change in the world. More than 200 people from 8 countries visited Plane 9 W during a recent canal conference.
- jj. Jeff Marshall remarked about the distinctiveness of the canal and the potential for this historic thread to provide recreational experiences and community linkages.
- kk. Daryl Detrick felt it is important that the project engage teenagers and other young people.
- ll. Given the recent excess rain and extensive flooding, Christine Marion said that preservation and restoration of the canal could be creatively used to serve a flood mitigation and stormwater management function that would draw additional support for the project.
- mm. Mike Helbing urged the group to consider opening sections of the canal to public access now.
- nn. Nate Burns indicated that the action plan will include information on what preservation and restoration tasks can be completed quickly in order to facilitate public access.
- oo. Karen Williamson explained the importance of matching actual canal/trail conditions to the public’s expectation of a canal/trail experience, so that the public is not disappointed. She cautioned about opening the canal/trail to public access before it is “visitor ready.” Dave Dech and Steve Jandoli stressed the importance of “not getting ahead of yourself” but opening the canal/trail to public access prematurely. Steve Jandoli recommended that the action plan ensure consistency in site design and themes.
- pp. Jim Lee, Jr. expressed concerns that there were not many municipal representatives at the meeting and that their support was important to the project. Nate Burns said that there will be other opportunities to obtain municipal feedback during the course of the project.
- qq. Nate Burns and Dave Dech stated that the next stakeholder’s meeting will be in early December according to the project schedule.

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**Meeting:** Morris Canal Greenway Master Plan  
Technical Advisory Committee Meeting #5  
Warren County, New Jersey  
Langan Project No.: 200034701

**Date / Location:** Meeting Date: 11 October 2011  
7:00 pm  
Rutgers Room  
Wayne Dumont Jr. Administration Building  
165 County Rout 519 South  
Belvidere, NJ 07823-1949

**Prepared By:** Nate Burns

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## **Opportunities and Constraints Discussion** (Continued)

The agenda for this meeting will be the continued discussion about specific opportunities and constraints associated with each phrase of the Vision Statement. For reference the introduction of these topics from the previous meeting has been included here. Also included are the draft results of the topics covered at last meeting for additional discussion.

An opportunity would be an item which we can capitalize on or which will directly contribute to implementing a phrase of the Vision Statement. A constraint would be the opposite, or something which is an impediment to the intent of a phrase of the Vision. It is likely that many opportunities and constraints will contribute or stand in the way of more than one part of the Vision. In these cases, pick the phrase which you feel is most closely related to the opportunity and constraint.

For example, consider the statement from the vision: 'Provides convenient access to a towpath trail for non-motorized passive recreational use as an integral part of a unique educational, travel and fitness experience.' A constraint associated with this may be the physical barrier created by Route 22. It is important to try and be specific with these items.

Not all of the opportunities and constraints you think of need to be physical improvements. An example of this could be found in the statement: 'Leverages the value of the canal to support sound land use planning decisions.' A possible opportunity here could be to continue to build on the support for adoption of the canal preservation ordinance.

# Meeting Agenda

Technical Advisory Committee Meeting #5

Warren County, New Jersey

Langan Project No.: 200034701

- Page 2 of 3

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There should be plenty of both opportunities and constraints for each phrase of the vision. Attached to this agenda are a number of pages with each phrase of the vision at the top. If you wish, you can use these to write down your thoughts for each phrase prior to the meeting. The more opportunities and constraints we can identify the better.

**To preserve and enhance the historic Morris Canal, a national engineering treasure, and the cultural landscape through which it passes in a manner that...stimulates the local economy through heritage tourism.**

**To preserve and enhance the historic Morris Canal, a national engineering treasure, and the cultural landscape through which it passes in a manner that...leverages the value of the canal to support sound land use planning decisions.**



# Meeting Agenda

Technical Advisory Committee Meeting #5

Warren County, New Jersey

Langan Project No.: 200034701

- Page 3 of 3

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**To preserve and enhance the historic Morris Canal, a national engineering treasure, and the cultural landscape through which it passes in a manner that...increases public and private support for and involvement in canal preservation efforts.**

# Morris Canal 25-Year Action Plan

## Opportunities + Constraints Discussion Results

### September 13, 2011 TAC Meeting

To preserve and enhance the historic Morris Canal, a national engineering treasure, and the cultural landscape through which it passes in a manner that... **highlights its distinctive characteristics and the ingenuity used in its construction to distinguish it from other historic resources and canals**

#### OPPORTUNITIES

- Seven locks and seven inclined planes
- Less urbanization = more historical remnants stay intact and can therefore be interpreted and viewed.
- Bread Lock Park, Saxton Falls
- Significant people/ regular people
  - Designers (Professor Renwick)
  - African-American Captain
  - Itinerant preachers, Basin baptism
  - Oral history information associated with Tales of the Boatmen
- Connect culture/customs of the past with our own of the present
  - Ex., no Sunday travel
  - Recreational activities such as picnicking, canoeing, swimming
  - Support trades such as bakers (Bread lock park), muskrat hunters, store ledgers, relate what was purchased where
- Many unique elements to choose from for project possibilities
  - Plane 9 excavated (interpretation opportunity)
  - Highest elevation change
  - Plane 10 potential
  - Plane at Port Colden
  - Restored school and store
  - Water at Saxton Falls
  - Lock 4 at brickyard
  - The way it was watered – i.e. how the canal was designed to utilize existing water resources. Use of models and other learning tools to communicate with the public – versus trying to re-water the canal, which is not practical.
  - Connectivity of the towpath trail more important than re-watering the canal because it provides access to the communities and key recreational resources.

#### CONSTRAINTS

- Preservation/presentation of materials – especially reel-to-reel tapes of oral history recordings, canal store ledgers, paintings, city directories, furnishings from period houses, etc.
- Adequate interpretive “people power” - i.e., volunteers or paid staff to be trained and serve as interpreters, availability of these individuals to be on-site to allow for greater

# Morris Canal 25-Year Action Plan

## Opportunities + Constraints Discussion Results

### September 13, 2011 TAC Meeting

hours of operation for interpretive activities at key sites. Need to “groom” the next generation of canal preservationists.

- Condition of the canal - Soil / debris cover (one extreme), houses/roads bisecting (the other extreme), erosion problems, storm damage,
- On-going maintenance, ecological enhancement and historic landscape management plan
  - Some areas more intensely maintained than others
  - Balance between historically accurate sites and realistic level of maintenance
- How to preserve / maintain headwalls of Plane 9, for example,
- Partnerships with other canal related sites
  - Canal museum in Easton= ☹ \$ ————— , only one staff person, little funding,
  - Waterloo Village = ☹ \$ ☺- Deteriorated site condition, but on an upswing with group from Native American village

#### OVERALL COMMENT

- The ability to pick and choose from several key sites to concentrate preservation and interpretive efforts there rather than trying to restore the entire canal.

# **Morris Canal 25-Year Action Plan Opportunities + Constraints Discussion Results September 13, 2011 TAC Meeting**

To preserve and enhance the historic Morris Canal, a national engineering treasure, and the cultural landscape through which it passes in a manner that... **tells the story of life along the canal, its influence on past events and its relevance to today's society to support public education and foster community pride.**

## **OPPORTUNITIES**

- Today's villages were formed around canal commerce, canal created jobs, sense of place
- Working model / scale framework to show size of turbines
- American labor movement / unionization (strikes over wages, NY Times archives)
- Interpret changes in settlement patterns due to canal infrastructure
- Modification of local economies, eg., the farmer who opens a store in Port Colden to sell his crops, etc.
- Canal contributed to energy supply – compare to today's energy issues
- Potential self-guided tours/ interpretive experiences, capture imaginations and minds of kids
  - Iphone hotspot
  - Geocaching
  - History fairs, technology competitions
  - "Classroom to Canal" educational programs with schools
  - Displays (ex. Bread Lock Park)
  - Period home (ex., Plane 9 W)
  - Auto tours (like Gettysburg)
  - Walking tours
- Other resources- photos, reel 2 reel, paintings, furniture, period pieces (eg., Edison phonograph)
- Who is our audience? (Both an opportunity and constraint)
- Co-opting tourists here for other reasons as well
- Civil War significance – transported iron/cannons, troops guarded the canal
- Traveling chest idea sent from school to school and containing canal-related educational resources for teachers and their students
- Bring the story to them and entice families / similar groups to return
- Two schools on canal today-Meadowbreeze and Stewartville Elementary- local curriculum
- Opportunities for partner organizations / volunteer community service
  - Warren County Community College
  - Centenary College
  - Vo-tech

## **CONSTRAINTS**

- How to connect old energy economy with new- Civil War period vs. solar field
- Liability issues/insurance with tour groups (canal, turbines, etc.)

# **Morris Canal 25-Year Action Plan Opportunities + Constraints Discussion Results September 13, 2011 TAC Meeting**

- Lack of interpreters\
- Need to make stories relevant to today's society
- Logistics of transporting kids from schools to canal sites for field trips vs. in-classroom interpretation
- Existing collections of artifacts and documents in storage, not accessible to public or otherwise preserved properly for posterity
- Cost and effectiveness balance between self-guided learning experiences and volunteer interpreter experiences

DRAFT

# Morris Canal 25-Year Action Plan

## Opportunities + Constraints Discussion Results

### September 13, 2011 TAC Meeting

To preserve and enhance the historic Morris Canal, a national engineering treasure, and the cultural landscape through which it passes in a manner that...**interconnects communities and links points of interest by serving as a continuous greenway of open space across the county.**

#### OPPORTUNITIES

- Multi-modal opportunities, ways to get to school / work / play (Allamuchy State Park, Merrill Creek, and other green spaces)
- Value-added- thinking of canal as green infrastructure in county
- Impact on eco-tourism
- Conservation of wildlife habitats – what/where are they?
- Don't need to "hyper" interpret for all users
- Historic structure designations for properties that may be subdivided / produce revenue
- Lopatcong, Franklin township, Washington Borough, Independence Township have adopted the model Morris Canal preservation / conservation ordinances-
  - Possibility for adoption of a model ordinance by the county? How to put teeth - Morris County adopted an ordinance in the last 4-5 years
- Leverage even weaker resources i.e., Native American village at Waterloo Village
- Would like preserved lands to interconnect key open spaces and recreation lands even if by spurs or alternative routes off of the towpath
- Access to county open space funding
- Compatibility between preserving the canal and providing recreational opportunities (like disc golf at Bread Lock Park)
- Protects sections of the canal that may not be restored, enhanced

#### CONSTRAINTS

- Crossing of Rt. 22, railroad blocking towpath in Washington Borough
- Public resistance
  - Nimby (residents, farmers)
  - Unwilling sellers
  - Small properties
  - Financial issues - maintenance of existing structures that come with the property
- Timing of land acquisition is like the challenge of puzzle piece placement
- Previously developed areas, like Washington Borough
  - May present different opportunities for interpretation
    - Pocket parks
    - Signage
- State farmland preservation program regulations do not allow for perimeter trails, exceptions, public access issues to be part of preserved lands. Licensing a solution?
- Inconsistency in county planning documents, Morris Canal not addressed in County Farmland Preservation Plan
- Land conservation is costly and time consuming for county staff

# **Morris Canal 25-Year Action Plan Opportunities + Constraints Discussion Results September 13, 2011 TAC Meeting**

## **OVERALL COMMENT**

- This 25-Year Action Plan should provide the groundwork for the next 25-Year Action Plan

DRAFT

# **Morris Canal 25-Year Action Plan Opportunities + Constraints Discussion Results September 13, 2011 TAC Meeting**

To preserve and enhance the historic Morris Canal, a national engineering treasure, and the cultural landscape through which it passes in a manner that...**provides convenient access to a towpath trail for non-motorized passive recreational use as an integral part of a unique educational, travel and fitness experience.**

## **OPPORTUNITIES**

- Through population centers, available land for “canal head” parking
- Multi-modal backbone that connects communities but also the “in town” networks, part of an overall bike/pedestrian/bus/train network
- Potential for four seasons of use / activities-
  - horseback riding, skiing, snowshoeing, snowmobiling, etc.
  - Cancer walk
  - The Morris Canal marathon
  - Small-scale Iditarod
  - Strollers
  - Cross-country teams from schools
- Connect to the County’s Health Improvement Plan and Hackettstown Mayor’s Health and Fitness Initiative
- NY/NJ Trail Conference – possible volunteer help

## **CONSTRAINTS**

- Lack of parking and bike connections
- Initial clearing / trail construction, then maintenance
- Control of ATVs, etc.- trail and adjacent land access issues/patrolling
- ADA / BOCA- pedestrian bridges, SHPO reviews
- Brush clearing, trail maintenance
- Breaches in towpath
- Need for decent trail surface



**Morris Canal 25-Year Action Plan**  
Minutes of the TAC Meeting  
October 11, 2011

In Attendance:

Brian Appezzato – Warren County Planning Department  
Don Brinker – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Nate Burns – Langan Engineering  
David Dech – Warren County Planning Department  
David Detrick – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Mike Helbing – NYNJ Trails Conference  
Jim Lee, III – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Jim Lee, Jr. – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Megan Kelly – NJ TPA  
Elizabeth Roy – Warren County Planning Department  
Karen Williamson – Heritage Conservancy

Discussion Items:

1. The group reviewed the results of the September 29, 2011 Stakeholders meeting, making the following comments:
  - Dave Dech felt the meeting went well and noted that none of the participants asked that the county establish a Parks Department to maintain the canal and associated property.
  - Nate Burns was pleased at the diversity of participants, although Jim Lee Jr. had hoped that more municipal representatives had attended the meeting. Nate Burns indicated that one of the upcoming focus group meetings will be targeted for municipal officials. Karen Williamson suggested that the county considered sending a follow-up letter to those agencies and individuals who did not attend the meeting to entice them to come to a future meeting.
  - Dave Detrick felt that staff had done a great job on the invitations and that the presentations were well done. He was glad that the attendees got to hear that the preservation of the Morris Canal is not just an initiative in Warren County but also a regional effort, as evident in the comments made by meeting participants involved in canal restoration work in other counties across the state.
  
2. The group discussed various strategies for constructively engaging farmers and residents living in subdivisions adjacent to the canal in the 25-year action planning process, in light of the desire to balance a respect for private property rights with the potential public benefit canal preservation activities can bring to the county. Key suggestions were:
  - Understand the history of prior concerns and conflicts of landowners along the canal. The group briefly reviewed the background of the Stewarts Hunt subdivision and the results of initial negotiations with farmers as examples.
  - Find a “down-to-earth” non-threatening representative to communicate the county’s action plan initiative using a door-to-door approach.

- Obtain testimonials as to the benefits of canal preservation from communities along the Delaware & Raritan or Delaware & Lehigh Canals.
  - Identify key questions landowners might have and develop ready responses to “Frequently Asked Questions” for use during discussions with landowners.
  - Use signage and other marketing materials to make sure canal users know where public access ends and private property begins (such as the End of Trail signage currently installed in several locations).
  - Identify key individuals within the farm community and residential subdivision who might be able to serve as canal greenway ambassadors to relay information about the project to other farmers and residents.
  - Improve a section of the canal in a high-quality manner so that it can be used to demonstrate to concerned citizens the intent of the canal action plan and convince them to support the project.
  - Inform municipal officials of the canal action plan benefits and ask for their help in supporting outreach efforts to landowners along the canal.
  - Understand that there is only so much that can be done to improve the canal over a 25-year period. It is possible that the recommendations of the 25-year action plan may not end up being controversial.
3. Nate Burns led the group in completing the discussion of the opportunities and constraints to be addressed by the master plan, in keeping with the vision for the project. The results of this brainstorming session are attached to these minutes.

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**Meeting:** Morris Canal Greenway Focus Group 1-4 Meeting  
Warren County, New Jersey  
Langan Project No.: 200034701

**Date / Location:** Meeting Date: 06 December 2011  
Warren County Vo-Tech School

**Prepared By:** Nate Burns, Langan  
Todd Poole, 4ward Planning  
Karen Williamson, Heritage Conservancy

**Date Prepared:** 12-22-11 (finalized)

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## Meeting Summary

The meeting began with a short introduction to the 25-Year Master Plan Project and the progress made to date. The participants were then asked to identify themselves and indicate what prompted them to attend this meeting. Participants were then broken into 3 groups to discuss specific questions. All groups started with the same four questions:

1. How do you interface with the Morris Canal Greenway currently?
2. What benefits would you hope to gain from the acquisition and improvements to the Morris Canal Greenway?
3. In what ways would you be able to support the goals of the Greenway?
4. What issues, items or opportunities concerning the Morris Canal do you think should be addressed?

Each group then had additional questions, more specific to their focus, to aid in continuing the discussion. Results for each group are discussed below.

## SCHOOLS + EDUCATORS FOCUS GROUP

### Participants

David Dech, Warren County Planning Department  
Charlie Fineran, Allamuchy Township  
Tim Frederks, Allamuchy Board of Education  
Karen Graf, Washington Township Board of Education  
Roy Huckel, Hackettstown School District  
Dawn Moore, Warren Hills Regional High School

Tony Villante, Hackettstown School District  
Karen Williamson, Heritage Conservancy – Discussion Group Leader

## Discussion Questions

- To what extent do you feel that the board, administrators and teachers in your school district are aware of the Morris Canal and its contribution to local history?
- What value does your school district place on local history education and the visitation of historic places?
- What resources does your school district need to improve local history education about the Morris Canal?
- What challenges does your school district face in educating children about local history and the Morris Canal?
- What are the most effective ways to teach local history to children?
- What resources do you need to integrate Morris Canal information into your local history programs?
- What criteria are used to determine whether to take students on a field trip?
- What are the biggest challenges facing the county in developing and implementing a 25-Year Action Plan for the Morris Canal?

## Participant Feedback

- There is a direct relationship between the proximity of a school to the canal and the awareness and appreciation for the Morris Canal – i.e., schools in close proximity to the canal are better informed about the canal.
- The most effective method for teaching people about the canal is through one-on-one, person-to-person sharing of stories and experiences about the canal. The process of “handing down” these stories from generation to generation is particularly valuable – and is more effective than reading a sign or brochure and instills a deeper meaning and sense of the region’s heritage. Folklore is seen by the participants as a critical component of canal-based learning.
- The participants feel that there is much more than can be done to integrate Morris Canal teachings into the school curricula – especially at the elementary school level (4<sup>th</sup> grade).
- The participants were unanimous that field trips would be very valuable learning experiences that would be supported by their districts – especially if the trip would be interdisciplinary in design and cover multiple topics (math, science, art, writing, history, etc.). The canal is close enough to the schools to make for easy travel, even though funding for buses would have to be obtained.
- The participants were interested in knowing whether there are any sections of the canal in working condition. At least one teacher has taken students on a boat ride at Hugh Moore Canal Park in Easton. If there are no working sections of the canal, virtual experiences would be helpful. The participants were not aware of the Famous Tiller

Sharks video (Tales the Boatman Told) and the inclined plane and lock animations at the <http://www.canals.org/funandgames/lockpuzzle/> and <http://www.shubenacadiecanal.ca/how-canal-works> websites.

- Are there any places where you can canoe along the canal? If so, this might provide another opportunity for learning along the canal.
- One school district sponsors a “showcase day” for their high school students. The school brings in a variety of individuals from the community for the purposes of focusing on a special topic as primary information sources. The Morris Canal could easily be the subject of a showcase day if community representatives could be found to attend/contribute knowledge to the event.
- Waterloo Village was discussed as a field trip location due to the canal, lock, inclined plane, town, and Native American features.
- The participants wanted to know if there are any structures along the canal that have been or will be preserved – like a locktender’s house. Elsie’s house was discussed as an example of a dilapidated structure that has a boat launch on site. The need for preserving such structures through adaptive reuse, not only as museums, was discussed. A grant application is currently under review by the Freeholders for rehabilitation of the Campbell House as a canal-related historic site.
- The participants asked how much of the canal is presently accessible. The group discussed the benefits of hosting bike races, canal days, scavenger hunts, trivia contests, walks and other events in combination with art shows, antique sales, etc. to bring attention to the canal and increase community interaction with the canal. Florence Kuipers Park was discussed as a possible location for a hike event.
- Port Colden was seen as an area where the canal resources are used for educational purposes with the students. One educational event included having the students present their work from the steps of the historic Port Colden Administration Building and former schoolhouse. (The kids believe that the building is haunted and had a great time interacting with the building – sometimes “hooks” like these are needed to engage them!).
- The process for educating students about the canal would typically include in-class review of primary source material (readings, photographs) coupled with a field trip and follow-up homework/further study. Ideally, Morris Canal would not just be discussed with students in their history class but also coordinated with concurrent classroom studies in math, science, English.
- The participants inquired as to whether educational programs featuring the canal have ever been provided to scout troops or other community youth groups. Some Eagle scout projects have been completed along the canal, but no formal programs exist.
- Educational topics include: people/daily life, physics/math/canal engineering concepts; utilization of natural resources; local economic impacts; town character; modes of transportation.

- The group discussed the potential for re-enactments (Richard Pawling? of History Alive) as another storytelling method.
- The participants wanted to know if there are any archaeological sites along the canal. An archaeological investigation of Plane 10W by Hunter Research is planned for June 2012.
- All of the participants expressed a willingness to participate on a committee to assist the WCMCC in developing educational curricula/programs for school use. The group felt that the next steps with regard to educational activities along the canal should be:
  - Contact the Warren County Educational Specialist Juan Torres and the County Superintendent of Schools Rosalie Lamonte to engage them as key partners.
  - Ask to be on the agenda of the monthly roundtable meeting of county school officials to discuss the project, since the roundtable meetings are the most effective way to communicate with the schools. Attendance at the meeting should include a presentation on the canal/project with a fact sheet style handout.
  - Offer a tour of the Morris Canal to teachers to inspire interest and help teachers gain continuing education credits. A school district with a continuing education provider number would have to sponsor the event in order for the teachers to get CEU credit for going on the tour.
  - Consider offering a program about the canal to teachers every Columbus Day – when some schools have an in-service day.
- The group debated whether it is important to be concerned about how we could measure the success of a Morris Canal educational program. Many felt that too much emphasis is being placed on test scores or other evaluations. In the case of the Morris Canal, success should be measured in the way in which the canal is embraced/respected/visited by the community. Senior projects, art/writing contests, summer activities, PTA events could be used to show the culmination of learning.
- The greatest challenges in implementing a canal-based education program are:
  - Building enthusiasm for the Morris Canal
  - Teacher involvement in curriculum development
  - Providing a directory of resources for teacher use – the directory identifying both materials and interpreters.
  - Stipends for funding teacher work on this project.
  - Creating linkages to other forms of transportation (railroad, concrete mile, trolley, Native American paths, Revolutionary marches, scenic byway, etc.) and other local industries (iron, brick making).
  - Expanding the program to colleges
  - Identifying key historical figures who may have played a major or passing part in the canal (Underground Railroad, important person in history).

- Making connections to off-site learning experiences at Morris Canal sites in other counties (like Colgate Clock).

## GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

### Participants

Cheryl Burket, Washington Township Environmental Board  
Nate Burns, Langan Engineering  
Art Charlton, Warren County Public Info  
Daryl Detrick, Washington Township  
David Detrick, Highlands Project  
Mike Helbing, NJ Trails  
Elaine Miliani, Greenwich Township  
Eric Page, Metrotrails  
Elizabeth Roy, Warren County Planning

### Discussion Questions

- To what extent do you feel that your township leaders are aware of the Morris Canal and its contribution to your community? How could local understanding of the canal be improved?
- To what extent is the preservation and enjoyment of the Morris Canal supported by your municipality's planning documents? Are you aware of the Model Ordinance?
- What level of support do you feel your community would have towards the preservation and enjoyment of the Morris Canal?
- What techniques would do you use/or would you recommend to reach out to neighborhoods and businesses along the canal to solicit their input and support for the Morris Canal 25-Year Action Plan? Are there certain community outreach efforts that have worked well for you?
- Are you aware of any land development proposals that might relate to the Morris Canal? Would you be willing to alert the WCMCC of any new proposals?
- Is your municipality aware of any landowner concerns and conflicts relating to the Morris Canal? Would you be willing to notify the WCMCC if and when such conflicts and concerns arise? Would you be willing to assist in resolving landowner concerns/conflicts?
- How would you like the Morris Canal to be integrated into your community?
- Does your current economic development strategy include the Morris Canal Greenway as an asset to leverage?

### Participant Feedback

- Not all municipalities have adopted the Morris Canal Ordinance (MCO) and within those that have there is inconsistent enforcement. Issues/concerns with both conditions typically occur when provisions of MCO are not 100% in-line with other municipal priorities, i.e. land development.

- To make the MCO more in line with other goals, the group discussed revising it to be more incentive based for preservation of the canal and related resources. It was determined that this was a good idea but its success was really dependent on the willingness of local officials to participate.
- Group seemed to support the idea of density bonuses for developers preserving the canal and allowing access to the greenway. At the very least they felt that preservation efforts along the canal should not negatively impact density calculations. Portions of the greenway within the Highlands Preservation Area could make some of these provisions difficult to include.
- County-wide based incentive may be a better method of ensuring larger participation.
  - Could include programs similar to the way farmland preservation is performed.
  - Remove preserved portions from the tax roles of a given parcel
  - Highlands Preservation for Portions
- There is generally a lack of knowledge about the canal and its associated resources with elected and appointed officials (Planning Boards, Recreation, Open Space, Historic/Environmental Preservation, etc.). Some of this could be alleviated with better coordination about the value of the canal with existing and new members.
  - Possibly create a brochure or information packet to be distributed to new members with their other introductory materials.
  - Target municipal offices and Planning Board committee members for tour
  - Education about the canal as a resources is more of an issue in northern parts of the County
- Municipalities are currently dependent on County Planning Commission for promotion or consideration of canal-related discussions:
  - More consistent dialogue on these topics would be helpful.
  - There should be more coordination and information sharing between County Planning Staff and local planning boards. Several strategies to achieve were discussed:
    - Have County/Regional coordinator/PR person for the canal.
    - Create a Morris Canal Planning Group
- Comprised of members of planning boards from each community and historic commissions. To discuss regional and local issues surrounding the canal from a planning/decision maker standpoint.
- There was some concern that there may be too much overlap with canal Committee?
- Local PB member could become great voice for promotion of the canal in decisions at the municipal level.
- Success of this group would require reasonable level of municipal cooperation.
- As well as promotion of the canal, the planning group would be a great opportunity for concerned municipalities to spell out concerns.
- Build on excitement and interest of historic societies to serve as facilitators in promotion of the Canal with voters, hopefully passing support onto elected officials.
  - Presentations, re-occurring articles in local papers



- Town publications and fliers should include or highlight the canal and associate events.
  - Tourism/coming events list serve or even twitter feeds
  - Link on town website
  - Inclusion of events on town calendar
- Existing interpretive signage would be a good resource to provide material for articles.
- Municipalities should be encouraged to include a website link to resources to promoting the canal to new local user groups.
- Incremental education of the public about the diverse history of the canal will help to sell the product to the general public and facilitate greater support.
- It was identified that one of the largest hurdles to overcome on the local level would be the understanding of who is going to maintain trails and canal related resources?
  - Is it the county?, municipalities?, or someone else?
  - One option would be to use open space preservation funding on the local level
  - Use the canal as a method to foster and develop community pride
  - Outreach may be improved with the inclusion of some other organized groups
    - AMC and other hiking groups
    - NY/NJ trail conference
- On of the greatest hurdles to the overall success of the greenway stemmed from the fact that government groups are just not interested in preserving the canal as a resource. This stems from:
  - Lack of understanding
  - Lack of regionalism
  - Desire of elected/appointed officials to not stir up trouble or be controversial
- Immediate goal of plan should be to focus on completion of one segment and use as example for others

## **NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS + BUSINESSES FOCUS GROUP**

### **Participants**

Brian Appezzato, Warren County Planning  
Ann Miller, NJ Transportation and Heritage Corridor  
Donna Detrick, Franklin Township  
Andrew Drysdale, Warren County Cultural and Heritage  
AnnMarie McDyer, Warren County Department of Human Services  
Christine Musa, Mosquito Commission  
Todd Poole, 4ward Planning

### **Discussion Questions**

- To what extent is your organization/membership aware of the Morris Canal and its contribution to the local area?
- How does the Morris Canal relate to the overall mission of your organization?

- How would your organization like to interface with the Morris Canal?
- What resources do you need improve interaction with the Morris Canal?
- How does your business relate to the Morris Canal?
- How would you like the Morris Canal to relate to your business?
- In what ways do you think the preservation and enjoyment of the canal would improve the local business environment?

## Participant Feedback

- Local organizations (non-profit and cultural entities) should identify ways to better cross promote local heritage assets such as the Morris Canal. This would be a cost effective marketing measure and benefit all local cultural and heritage assets, and not just the canal.
- The Morris Canal history booklet which was produced a few years back for Morris County should be replicated for Warren County and made available for retail sales and special giveaways. The booklet provides an excellent introduction to the history and significance (economic and social) of the canal.
- Several “good” local retail sources should be identified for distributing (selling) the Morris Canal history booklet. Local sources would include not only area bookstores, but other heritage and cultural organizations which maintain a gift shop.
- Canal stewards should investigate opportunities for incorporating the latest smart phone technology – such as QR symbol technology – for purposes of self-guided tours and identification key points on and near the canal greenway. The thinking here is that persons who would not ordinarily peruse a history book, concerning the canal, might take interest in discovering the canal through a medium with which they are currently accustomed and adept at using. Local businesses, such as restaurants, lodging facilities or even other cultural and heritage tourism organizations, might sponsor such technology through branding.
- Similarly, formal GPS points should be created along the canal, so as persons driving through the area (or biking) and using GPS might unexpectedly discover the Morris Canal Greenway.
- A suggestion was made to “Market to your own backyard,” meaning that more local residents (particularly those who are relatively recent migrants to the area and have little knowledge of the county’s history) should be made aware of the canal, its history and significance to the county, state and broader northeast region. The thinking here is that if future canal investment – whatever form this may take – is to be embraced by area residents – particularly those whose property the canal traverses – then a more concerted marketing and education effort needs to take place, regarding the benefits to local residents and businesses.

- A strong and concerted emphasis should be placed on tying the canal's history in with local school curricula. One idea is to partner with the Warren County Vocational Technical High School to have them develop a fifteen minute DVD (in the style of a Ken Burns documentary), covering a bit of the canal's history, cultural and economic importance to the region and state. This DVD, once produced, would then become a marketing giveaway item, to be distributed at local and county events. The stewards of the canal could also direct mail the DVD to many area residents (with the assistance of a business sponsor for the underwriting of postage). Area businesses (particularly those which would benefit from increased tourism) could sponsor the development of the DVD and, in exchange, be listed as sponsors in the video (inclusive of location).
- Critical to the marketing of the canal is the identification of the many interesting facts, events and stories associated with its history. For example, how many people (locally or otherwise) are aware that Thomas Edison use the canal to transport his concrete material (the same concrete which was used to erect the original Yankee Stadium!)? By identifying the many varied facts, events and stories associated with the canal, there would be increased opportunity to reach a broader tourism audience based on varied interests – cultural, economic, engineering, etc.

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# Meeting Minutes

Morris Canal Greenway Focus Group 1-4 Meeting  
Warren County, New Jersey  
Langan Project No.: 200034701  
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2700 Kelly Road, Suite 200 Warrington, PA 18976 T: 215.491.6500 F: 215.491.6501  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1569 Doylestown, PA 18901

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**Meeting:** Morris Canal Greenway Open House (Public Meeting#1)  
Warren County, New Jersey  
Langan Project No.: 200034701

**Date / Location:** Meeting Date: 08 December 2011  
Warren County Vo-Tech School

**Prepared By:** Nate Burns, Langan  
Karen Williamson, Heritage Conservancy

**Date Prepared:** 12-22-11 (finalized)

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## Meeting Summary

This meeting was an open house type format. Participants were asked to provide feedback on a number of questions situated around the room. Each question solicited feedback on sections of the vision statement. Results from the public are included below. Following these results are general notes and observations from discussions between project team members and the public in attendance. The sign-in sheet from this meeting is also attached at the end of these minutes.

**To preserve and enhance the historic Morris Canal, a national engineering treasure, and the cultural landscape through which it passes in a manner which, highlights its distinctive characteristics and the ingenuity used in its construction to distinguish it from other historic resources and canals.**

Name one or more of the features associated with the Morris Canal that you feel is unique and should be preserved. *Answers:*

- *Phillipsburg Arch*
- *Waterloo Village*
- *Ed's Canal*
- *Houses at Waterloo Village*
- *The mills at Waterloo*
- *Rebuild top of power house at Jim Lee's*
- *Too many to mention*
- *Port Murray Canal store?*

What features of the canal do you think would be most interesting to others? *Answers:*

- *Village life along the canal*
- *Scotch turbines*
- *Canal Day*
- *Boat ride*

- *Fall or Spring Canal tour*
- *Turn-arounds and ports*
- *Families and mule care, etc.*
- *Inclined plane- restored and working would be an awesome educational tool- such a unique feature!!*

**To preserve and enhance the historic Morris Canal, a national engineering treasure, and the cultural landscape through which it passes in a manner which, tells the story of life along the canal, its influence on past events and its relevance to today's society to support public education and foster community pride.**

What are your most memorable experiences of the Morris Canal? *Answers:*

- *Cleaning it up!*
- *How people along the canal could hardly wait for its demise*

What do you think are the most important stories of the Canal? *Answers:*

- *Creation of Lake Hopatcong*
- *How the canal was maintained*
- *Why don't we do a better job of preserving our history?*
- *How it was built*
- *Who are the people that did the work?*
- *How hard the work was*
- *Hudson Maxim and others who were involved in decommission of canal*
- *Reason why a few planes, locks weren't preserved better*
- *Artifacts and examples of existing homes, locks, and planes*
- *How the canal was built*
- *Stories of the canal boat families*

**To preserve and enhance the historic Morris Canal, a national engineering treasure, and the cultural landscape through which it passes in a manner which, interconnects communities and links points of interest by serving as a continuous greenway of open space across the county.**

Would you support County efforts to preserve additional land along the route of the canal to create a greenway? Even if there was a financial cost associated? *Answers:*

- *Yes*
- *Money talks and canalers walk!*
- *yes, but keep in mind the privacy of homeowners along the canal*
- *yes*
- *Yes, it will bring joggers, bikers, hikers, ecotourism, history and engineer buffs that can create jobs and help offset cost and benefit residents*
- 

What places do you think should be preserved along the canal as part of a greenway? *Answers:*

- *Every element that tells the story of life on the canal*
- *As many of the actual historical paths, buildings, locks, etc.*

- *Bikers and hikers would enjoy the tow paths*

**To preserve and enhance the historic Morris Canal, a national engineering treasure, and the cultural landscape through which it passes in a manner which, provides convenient access to a towpath trail for non-motorized passive recreational use as an integral part of a unique educational, travel and fitness experience.**

What forms of recreation do you think would be most compatible with the canal? *Answers:*

- *hiking, biking, canoeing*
- *hiking, nature observations, biking, follow the foot- steps of people who worked on the canal, kayaking*
- *walking, biking, ice skating, picnicking*
- *what they said! (Referring to all above responses)*

Would you be willing to travel by car to access a trail or would you rather have trail connections to your community? If you would be willing to travel by car, how far would you be willing to travel? *Answers:*

- *I would travel by car- no set limit. I would visit places based on my interest in the particular spot, eg., Breadloak*
- *Trail connections preferred*
- *Travel by car is not an issue- 10-15 miles is fine- more if a nice stretch*
- *Walking it is the ultimate*
- *Trail connections*

**To preserve and enhance the historic Morris Canal, a national engineering treasure, and the cultural landscape through which it passes in a manner which, stimulates the local economy through heritage tourism.**

What do you think makes the Morris Canal worth visiting? *Answers:*

- *It is a completely unique engineering achievement*
- *So many communities grew up along it, and were so intertwined with it- it is a story worth learning.*
- *I live in Port Murray and own part of the canal including a building that was once a general store for the canal. Also one of our barns was a forge and provided iron products for the boats/horses/mules, etc.*
- *History*
- *Scenic openness*
- *Its engineering history*
- *Its economic impact on local towns/villages*

What attractions/facilities would be most critical to maximize your enjoyment of a trip to a historic/heritage tourist destination? *Answers:*

- *Make Port Colden Manor a B&B*

- *Love this one! But it would take major \$\$\$ (Referring to the above answer)*
- *Lake Hopatcong*
- *Lake Musky*
- *Mountain bike*
- *Hiking*
- *Organized trips*
- *Scotch turbines*
- *Nearby buildings supporting canal activities*
- *Port Colden manor should be preserved before it deteriorates any further. Any ideas?*
- *Port Colden Manor could be a: restaurant, bed and breakfast, canal offices*
- *Would love to see an operating inclined plane*

**To preserve and enhance the historic Morris Canal, a national engineering treasure, and the cultural landscape through which it passes in a manner which, leverages the value of the canal to support sound land use planning decisions.**

Warren County has prepared a model ordinance for municipalities to adopt in order to protect the Morris Canal from development. Would you support the adoption of this ordinance in your community? *Answers:*

- *Yes*
- *Yes*
- *Unfortunately the canal does not pass through my town*

Would you also support land use policies that provided incentives, such as additional density allowances, for proposed developments which provide greenway links with public access? *Answers:*

- *Yes*
- *I guess the increased density is inevitable, but I would have some question about how this would be done before I would endorse the policy.*
- *yes*

**To preserve and enhance the historic Morris Canal, a national engineering treasure, and the cultural landscape through which it passes in a manner which, increases public and private support for and involvement in canal preservation efforts.**

How familiar are you with current canal preservation efforts? *Answers:*

- *We are members of the Canal Society*
- *Was a member of the Canal Society for about 10-15 years- lost touch the last 10 years*

What would be the most effective way to publicize these efforts and promote public involvement in the 25-Year Action Plan for the Canal? *Answers:*

- *Freeholder meetings*
- *Websites*
- *local schools*
- *radio stations*



- *County Cultural and Heritage Committee*
- *through the schools*
- *media- WRNJ, newspapers*
- *Create an electronic (interactive) game to tell the story*
- *schools!!!*
- *local papers- Warren Reporter desperately needs some well-written articles- on-going if possible*
- *I'm sure that a regular appearance could be worked out with Norm at WRNJ*
- *Morris and Warren County Reporter Newspapers*
- *Agree with concept of game- as a kid I played "Oregon Trail"- think it could parallel that theme or roller coaster amusement park games*
- *Include in new "NJ+U- perfect together"-type commercials*
- *NJTV, WRNJ, WNTI or other TV*
- *Children's books*
- *Partner with MWA or other such orgs.*
- *Local newspapers*
- *schools*
- *TV*
- *Radio*
- *Internet*

The following are notes from the public in attendance at this meeting:

- Roberta and Charles Kugelmeyer are retired history teachers and live on a beautiful piece of canal property that we visited on the tour earlier this year (the one with the barn filled with antiques and located in between the canal bed and railroad tracks). Roberta says that they own some books about the canal. Roberta is concerned about privacy. They are members of the Canal Society of New Jersey.
- Steve Ellis of the NJ State Parks, indicated that he only had a limited amount of time to spend at the event but would like to talk more about the project. I gave him my business card so we could follow-up with each other. Especially regarding Elsie's Tavern.
- Jesse Lubkiewicz said that he had lived along the canal in three different communities across the state and was curious about the project.
- Bob and Brenda Horn said that her ancestor (grandfather?) worked along the canal (was a locktender?) in Port Colden and that they have a historical picture of Port Colden in their living room (same photo as on the Port Colden interpretive sign).
- There was a gentleman who is recently retired and is looking for volunteer opportunities. His father was a tug captain on the Hudson River? ...so he is interested in canals. I introduced him to Jim Lee and Dave Detrick.
- John Dehuff is a member of the Canal Society of New Jersey. He too was curious about the project and acknowledged that he had lost touch with canal activities over the past few years due to a busy life/schedule.

- To the greatest extent possible, I let the attendees know about the canal tours held in May and October each year. Several participants were not familiar with the inclined planes, so I took some time showing them the interpretive sign information about the planes.
- Several individuals were interested in purchasing the Morrell book. Perhaps we could send a follow-up letter to the attendees thanking them for their participation and including an order form for the book.
- We discovered that the current Morris Canal Greenway website does not appear to be on the color brochure...perhaps a sticker with the current website can be attached to this document.
- Phil Molner and Matt Smith from the Express Times published a nice story about the event. See [http://www.lehighvalleylive.com/warren-county/express-times/index.ssf/2011/12/morris\\_canal\\_greenway\\_project.html](http://www.lehighvalleylive.com/warren-county/express-times/index.ssf/2011/12/morris_canal_greenway_project.html)
- broader tourism audience based on varied interests – cultural, economic, engineering, etc.

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# Meeting Minutes

Morris Canal Greenway Open House (Public Meeting#1)  
Warren County, New Jersey  
Langan Project No.: 200034701  
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Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1569 Doylestown, PA 18901

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**Meeting:** Morris Canal Greenway Open House (Public Meeting#1)  
Warren County, New Jersey  
Langan Project No.: 200034701

**Date / Location:** Meeting Date: 08 December 2011  
Warren County Vo-Tech School

**Prepared By:** Nate Burns, Langan  
Karen Williamson, Heritage Conservancy

**Date Prepared:** 12-22-11 (finalized)

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## Attendees

Brian Appezzato – Warren County Planning Department  
Don Brinker – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Nate Burns – Langan Engineering  
David Dech – Warren County Planning Department  
David Detrick – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Mike Helbing – Board of Recreation Commissioners, NYNJ Trails Conference  
Jim Lee, III – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Elizabeth Roy – Warren County Planning Department  
Myra Snook – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Karen Williamson – Heritage Conservancy

## Meeting Summary

1. A focus group meeting was held on December 6<sup>th</sup> to solicit input from several important constituent groups including municipal officials, educators, non-profit organizations, and business leaders. Sixteen individuals from the community attended the event along with six representatives from the Warren County Planning Department, Morris Canal Committee, Heritage Conservancy, 4Ward Planning, and Langan Engineering. Nate Burns from Langan Engineering briefly reviewed the scope of the project using a PowerPoint presentation. The participants were then divided into three groups: educators, municipal officials and non-profits (no business leaders attended the event). The project consultants facilitated the discussions for all three groups using a series of questions prepared in advance of the meeting. A summary of results of the discussions are attached. The overall response from the participants was one of serious and enthusiastic interest in the history and preservation of the Morris Canal and the success of a 25-Year Action Plan, along with a desire to work more closely with county representatives to implement specific projects. A display of canal related reports, brochures and signage was also provided by the Warren County Planning Department at the event for informational purposes. Myra Snook expressed interest in working with educators to develop curriculum materials for the Morris Canal, as she has already started to compile educational information for this purpose.

2. The first public meeting was held on December 8<sup>th</sup> to solicit input from the general public on the development of a proposed action plan. Nineteen members of the public (including members of the press) attended the event in addition to seven representatives from the Warren County Planning Department, Morris Canal Committee, Heritage Conservancy and Langan Engineering. An open house format was used for the public meeting. Two display boards were used to provide background information on the Morris Canal as an introduction to this historic resource and the proposed action plan. Participants were asked to provide feedback on the project using two different interactive exercises. One exercise asked participants to place different colored arrows on a map at locations indicating where they live, important canal features, potential obstacles and ? A second exercise used a series of 7 display boards, each showing a different phrase of the proposed vision for the action plan with two questions to stimulate thought. The participants were asked to answer the questions to provide insight into various issues associated with each phrase of the vision statement. A display of canal related reports, brochures and signage was also provided for informational purposes. The results of the exercises are attached. Most, if not all, of the attendees indicated that they had a connection with the canal at some point during their lives, which prompted their interest in the action plan.
  
3. The Warren County Planning Department provided a laptop, projector and internet connection to Google Earth to facilitate a review of recent field reconnaissance by Nate Burns and Karen Williamson. The group discussed the results of the field reconnaissance work from Phillipsburg to Bread Lock Park. The discussion was prefaced with a reminder that each phrase of the action plan vision focuses on a different goal – historic preservation, education, greenway connections, recreation, economic development, land use planning and public participation. The action plan will have to balance the desire to emphasize the primary intent of historic preservation with the need to achieve the remaining goals. It will not be possible for all of the goals to be achieved at every location along the canal corridor. However, the action plan should identify those areas where the greatest public impact can be achieved in the shortest period of time with the least amount of investment – to stimulate greater interest, utilization and support for the project.
  - The apparently vacant lot between Market Street and the Delaware River Park is likely owned by the railroad company.
  - Mercer Street is a shorter, more direct trail route than Main Street, even though a Main Street trail route would support local businesses.
  - Phillipsburg is in the process of developing a trail route through the sewage treatment plant property.
  - The Green’s Bridge area is a challenging one, due to narrow shoulders/right-of-way, poor sight distance, stream location, bridge abutments, etc. If at all possible, it would be nice to utilize Green’s Bridge for pedestrian access as a way to cross both South Main Street and Carpentersville Road. The 25-Year Action Plan will most likely suggest a detailed engineering study into the logistics of a crossing at this location.
  - During the recent Route 22 highway study, Pohatcong Township did not express any interest in establishing a pedestrian crossing for Route 22.

- Consider a possible connection to the Changewater Stable for horseback riding access to the canal towpath/trail.
- It would be nice to incorporate a roadwalk along the concrete mile segment of Route 57 as part of the trail route for the 25-year action plan.

The group struggled with the practicality of following the route of the canal in areas where the canal has been damaged, obliterated or otherwise obstructed versus pursuing alternative routes away from but roughly parallel to the canal.

The field work revealed that the following segments of the canal could become either linear or looped user experiences that are anchored on both ends by significant open spaces and connected by the canal proper or parallel trail route:

Phillipsburg:

- Northampton/Main Street Bridge to Stryker Street (Loop with South Main Street)
- Delaware River Park to Harry Wyant Park (Portion looped with South Main Street)

Pohatcong and Lopatcong Townships:

- Park at Logan and Lock Streets to Lock Street Park to Plane 10 West (Linear)
  - With existing sidewalk loop to Thomas Edison's Valley View Historic District featuring concrete homes.
  - With future linear extension along canal from Plane 10 West to Phillipsburg Mall, incorporating proposed sidewalks in Sycamore Landing development.

Lopatcong and Greenwich Townships:

- Strykers Road to Plane 9 West (Linear)
  - With future linear extension along canal to Emergency Services Station on North Main Street in Stewartsville with existing sidewalk loops to Stewartsville and several sizable surrounding residential neighborhoods.
  - With future linear extension along canal to Bread Lock Park paralleling Route 57 or alternative linear extension across agricultural fields and Richline Hill Road.

The next TAC meeting will include a review of the remaining field reconnaissance findings.

4. Myra Snook distributed copies of the new Trail Guide for Sussex County called Sussex Skylands, New Jersey's Great Northwest, which was produced by the Sussex County Chamber of Commerce. The brochure highlights rails-to-trails hiking opportunities, some of which may offer the potential for continuation into and/or connections to trails in Warren County.
5. Karen Williamson agreed to contact Steve Ellis, Northeast Regional Superintendent for the New Jersey DEP State Park Service, to set up a meeting to discuss the canal action plan on January 10<sup>th</sup>, 2012. While attending the December 8<sup>th</sup> public open house meeting, Steve expressed a desire to talk more about canal preservation project. It may be possible to coordinate a separate visit to the Brickyard on the same day as the meeting with Steve.

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Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1569 Doylestown, PA 18901

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**Meeting:** Morris Canal Greenway Master Plan  
Technical Advisory Committee Meeting #5  
Warren County, New Jersey  
Langan Project No.: 200034701

**Date / Location:** Meeting Date: 10 January 2012  
7:00 pm  
Rutgers Room  
Wayne Dumont Jr. Administration Building  
165 County Rout 519 South  
Belvidere, NJ 07823-1949

**Prepared By:** Nate Burns

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## **Trail Routing/ Field View Discussion** (Continued)

The agenda for this meeting will be the continued discussion about the proposed trail routing and connection strategies as a result of the field views completed in late December. Discussion will start with the December 9 Field Recon Notes (attached), which covers Greenway portions from Breadlock Park to Port Colden. Time permitting, discussion will also focus on the December 13 Field Recon Notes (attached) which cover Greenway portions from Port Colden to Bilby Road.



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and Historic Heritage*

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# memorandum

**To:** Nate Burns/Project File  
**From:** Karen Williamson  
**Date:** December 20, 2011  
**Subject:** Morris Canal – December 13, 2011 Field Reconnaissance  
**cc:** Jeff Marshall, Todd Poole

The following are notes from this field visit organized by canal segment analyzed:

## Port Colden to Port Murray

- This section of canal is significantly separated from Route 57 by distance and an active railroad line and is currently under private ownership. Nearby local roads are also a distance away from the canal, making these alternate routes equally impractical. Domin Lane appears to provide access to two residences (Lots 233 and 234). Harts Lane leads through an industrial facility to a preserved farm and some private residences. A portion of the canal in this area is watered and appears to be in good condition.
- We would suggest that acquisition efforts continue in this area in the hopes of purchasing all of the properties, prior to pursuing an alternative route for the trail. Will reassess this section after we visit the Brickyard.

## Port Murray to Rockport Pheasant Farm

- There are several nearby open spaces/public services along Port Murray Road that could be tied to the canal: the elementary school, athletic fields, Mansfield Township Municipal Building, Mansfield Township Park and the Comcast fields to the north of Route 57 and Point Mountain to the south of Route 57.
- There are limited sidewalks or trails connecting the school to the athletic fields, municipal building and Mansfield Township Park. There is a trail system within Mansfield Township Park that is currently being built. **Is Brickyard Road a public street?**
- The village of Port Murray is a quaint historic district with two train cars on a siding along the alley/street opposite Hoffman Road. However, there are no sidewalks in the village. The Main Street bridge over the active rail line is narrow and on a bend (we almost got hit by a tractor trailer) with bad visibility. One possible way of linking the existing open spaces to the canal and the village would be to cross Port Murray Road at the Comcast fields or at Brickyard Road, follow Brickyard Road to its bridge over the active rail line, through the Brickyard property to Hoffman Road and/or Towpath Road.
- A trail is accessible from Towpath Road through preserved land to Cherry Tree Bend Road. The route passes by a former canal boat basin. The northern terminus of this trail is marked by a Morris Canal sign. No parking is available.



- Cherry Tree Bend Lane is narrow, windy and without sidewalks. There are a number of structures located near the road that would obstruct the construction of a trail. The canal traverses the middle or rear of many of the properties in this area. Glimpses of the canal can be seen along this road, some of which are attractive wooded views (Lots 271, 272).
- Rockport Road is a wider roadway with a higher speed limit. The canal traverses through a series of private properties between Cherry Tree Bend Lane and Washburn Road.



- If access to the canal within private properties on Cherry Tree Bend Lane and Rockport Road (up to Washburn Road) cannot be obtained, what alternatives are available? It appears that Mansfield Township Park abuts a very large preserved farm with frontage along almost all of Washburn Road. There is an at-grade crossing of the railroad on Washburn Road and it appears that Washburn Road is lightly traveled. The views from Washburn Road of the surrounding hills and ag lands are beautiful. A trail could be constructed from Mansfield Township Park through the preserved farm all the way to Washburn Road, where it could rejoin the canal route. The railroad may be in a cut situation in this area and therefore may not obstruct views. If so, it might be possible to view the canal route from a trail on the south side of the railroad (Washburn Road alternative). A trail route through the preserved farm would be in keeping with the greenway goal of the action plan vision. There may need to be a stream crossing for the trail if the Washburn Road route it pursued.



- Land at the southeast corner of Washburn Road has been preserved, so the Washburn Road trail route could return to the canal here. The canal continues to traverse the interior of the privately owned lots along Rockport Road between Washburn and Hazen Roads. However, the Rockport Road right-of-way and lot frontages from Washburn to Hazen Roads are more open and undeveloped, making it more feasible to construct a trail along the highway in this area. No sidewalks exist in this area. Beautiful barn on the north side of Rockport Road at Snyder Road.



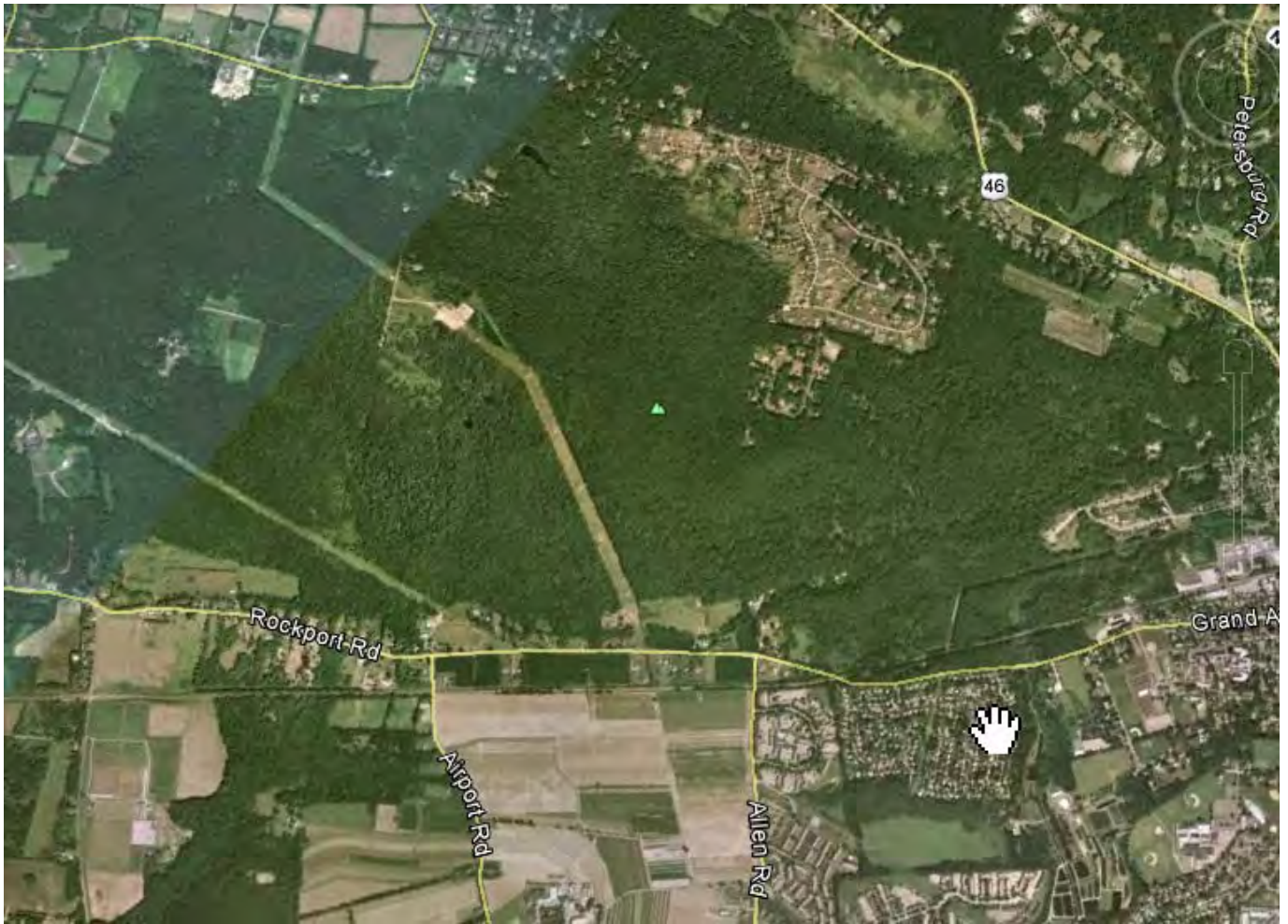


- The intersection of Rockport and Hazen Roads is constricted, with poor visibility and an awkward intersection alignment – a dangerous combination for a trail. The major landholding on the southwest side of this intersection includes a wide lawn area between the houses along Hazen Road. It might be possible to route the trail away from the intersection and through this lawn area to a mid-block crossing of Hazen Road. A mid-block crossing of Rockport Road is needed to access the canal on the north side of Rockport Road opposite the existing entrance to the Pheasant Farm.
- Would the state be willing to provide land for a redesign of the Hazen/Rockport Road intersection? Would such a re-design provide a possibility of a land swap with neighbors along the west side of Hazen so a trail crossing could be built?
- Parking and interpretive information (kiosk) is available at the Pheasant Farm. Some canal signage is also present. Water is flowing in the canal section on Pheasant Farm property.



- Heading east from the Pheasant Farm, the canal again traverses the middle of a number of private properties before reaching more state property in the east of the Allen Road intersection – making acquisition and development along the canal another challenge.
- One option would be to build a trail along the south side of Rockport Road between Hazen and Allen Roads since the lots are deep and most of the homes/structures are set back from the road.
- Another option would be to take the trail south along Hazen Road and across the train tracks at-grade and then east through the Pheasant Farm to the new Mansfield Township Emergency Services station along Airport Road. Trails users would then be able to explore more of the Pheasant Farm and learn about the train crash (and hopefully not repeat an accident!). Another at-grade train track crossing could occur at Airport Road to return the trail to a parallel route along Rockport Road. Connections could be made along Airport Road to the airport and Donaldson Farm.
- The last option would be to try to buy the wooded hillside to the north of the canal for the purposes of a larger greenway in this area that could interconnect the Pheasant Farm property with other state-owned lands containing the canal near Allen Road. A trail could be constructed within the woods, even if the actual canal route cannot be purchased. The downside would be crossing under two major utility lines and their associated open right-of-ways. But this option would be in closer proximity to the historic canal route.





- The sidewalks within the apartment complex and adjacent housing development east of the Allen and Rockport Road intersection are interconnected. Sidewalks also exist along Allen Road frontage of apartment complex up to the bridge over the railroad. This bridge is too narrow to allow new sidewalk construction.
- If a trail connection is made through the Donaldson Farm, then a mid-block crossing on Allen Road into the apartment complex is possible, avoiding the railroad underpass on Grand Avenue and bringing trail users to Grand Avenue at College View Drive. If the crossing occurred at Riva Drive, then the trail could go through more open space areas in these developments to Nancy Lane and/or the Fish Hatchery.
- There are sidewalks along most, if not all, of the south side of Grand Avenue Mountain View Drive to Route 46 and downtown Hackettstown. (Check the north sides of Grand Avenue for sidewalks which may be sporadic). These sidewalks provide a potential connection with Centenary College and the Fish Hatchery – with additional potential linkages down Beatty and Stiger Streets to the train station, municipal building and a possible Charles/Prospect/Harvey Street connection to Florence Kuipers Park.
- However, the logical spot to cross Rockport Road is at Allen Road if a traffic light can be installed for safety reasons. Unfortunately, there are several private properties on the north side of the Rockport/Allen Road intersection blocking access to the canal/state lands here. (Acquisition of the hillside on the north side of Rockport Road would preclude the need for a street crossing here at all. But this route would not provide easy connections to the apartments, residential development, college, fish hatchery, etc.).

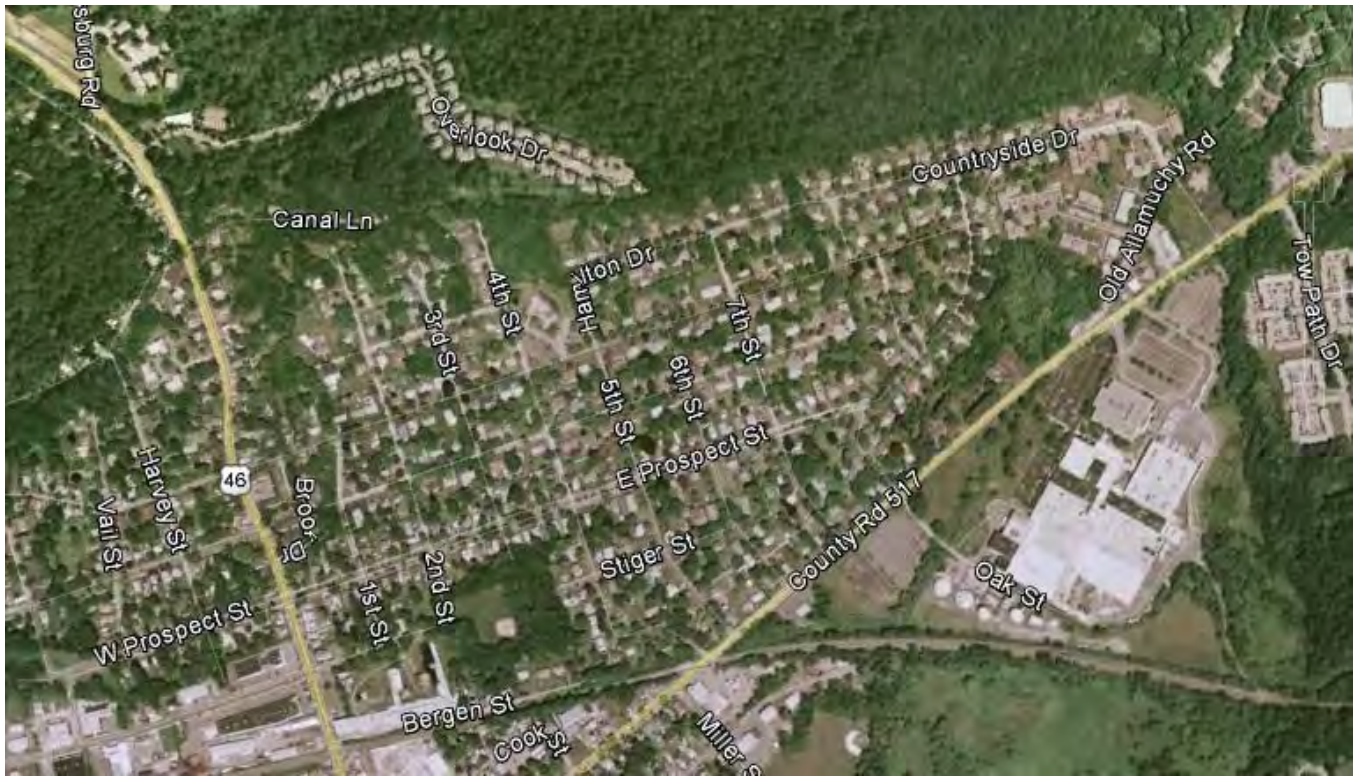


- The towpath within the state property east of Allen Road connects with Florence Kuipers Park and ends at Harvey Street.
- Buck Hill Road on the north side of Grand Avenue is an unimproved road that goes through a narrow (one-vehicle wide) railroad underpass, connecting the canal with Grand Avenue. **Is this a public thoroughfare?** This road is heavily eroded due to stormwater washouts. There are unattractive abandoned structures on the north side of the canal at the end of this road. It would be unlikely that the railroad underpass could be upgraded to allow two-way traffic.
- The terminus of Roosevelt Avenue should be improved to clearly divide vehicular traffic from trail use.
- Sidewalks are sporadic from the Florence Kuipers Park entrance down Harvey Street to the various side streets (Charles, Prospect, West Valley View Ave.) that connect with Main Street or Stiger Street. But sidewalks connections could be made. There appears to be a paper street section of Harvey Street between Prospect and Stiger that might be wide enough for a trail access adjacent to a storm drainage channel.





- The Roosevelt/Main Street intersection is an awkward one with poor visibility and angular alignment. There are no sidewalks along Roosevelt Street or on the opposite side of Main Street at this intersection.
- An alternate route might be to follow sidewalks down Main Street to East Baldwin Street. Although East Baldwin Street does not have any sidewalks, it appears to be a lightly traveled road. Note that there are striped crosswalks on Route 46/Main Street at East Baldwin Street.
- East Baldwin leads through a sizeable residential development to a church at 4<sup>th</sup> Street that has wooded property along the canal at the rear of this lot.
- The canal follows the rear of a townhouse development off of Overlook Drive that includes a tot lot and detention basin along (or actually over) the canal.
- The canal is also located behind an apartment complex on Countryside Drive with a picnic area adjacent to the canal as well. There are sidewalks within the apartment complex and along Old Allamuchy Road.
- It might be possible to acquire access rights to the canal through the church property, connecting a large residential neighborhood with the townhouse development, apartment complex and nearby downtown.



- The challenge is to safely cross Old Allamuchy Road and Route 517, highlighting the M&M Mars plant along the way. There is a wooded area at the intersection of Old Allamuchy Road and Route 517 – not sure what it is used for. Could the wooded area be used to improve the Old Allamuchy Road/M&M Mars plant entrance intersection and include a pedestrian crosswalk? Would M&M Mars help pay for a traffic light here and allow for a trail along its Route 517 road frontage?
- The intersection of the canal with Route 517 offers poor visibility half-way down a hill along this busy highway. There are no sidewalks leading north from the canal along Route 517 to the Bilby Road intersection. Not sure how best to cross these roads. Needs more investigation. Perhaps beyond scope of 25-year period for action plan.
- The canal corridor to the east side of Route 517 is interrupted in sections by construction of the Towpath Apartments. However, the canal is intact in the undeveloped Phase 2 portion of this complex. The canal crosses under major utility lines in this area which would adversely impact views. There are sidewalks within the apartment complex that could be connected to the canal trail.
- The some of the buildings within the housing development between the Towpath Apartments and Bilby Road are situated in close proximity to the canal. The sidewalk system internal to this development is incomplete and appears to be designed primarily to get people from parking areas to the adjacent buildings, rather than to interconnect all of the buildings within the development. There are no sidewalks along the primary entrance routes into this development off of Bilby Road. No sidewalks exist along Bilby Road, with the exception of a short segment on the northeast corner of Bilby Road and Route 517.
- The abutments for the Bilby Road bridge over the railroad tracks do not appear to allow sufficient room for trail access under Bilby Road. Need to further investigation into best location for trail crossing at Bilby Road.



- Bilby Road parking lot is small and might need expansion if canal greenway/trail becomes more popular. Nearby railroad, wetlands and utility poles provide little space for better parking lot. Visibility to Bilby Road south from the parking lot is not good.



- Followed towpath to breach in canal at stream crossing. At times, the major utility line gets close to or intersects the existing canal trail.
- See NYNJ Trail Conference Map of how canal can connect to network of trails in Stephens Park Trail and to the Morris County Patriots Park trail
- See also Point Mountain Trail Map for location of trail network in relationship to Port Murray.





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# memorandum

**To:** Nate Burns/Project File  
**From:** Karen Williamson  
**Date:** December 12, 2011  
**Subject:** Morris Canal – December 9, 2011 Field Reconnaissance  
**cc:** Jeff Marshall, Todd Poole

The following are notes from this field visit organized by canal segment analyzed:

## **Morris Canal Arch to Delaware River Park**

- There are sidewalks along Hanover Street and Market Street that can be used to more quickly access the Delaware Canal Park from the bridge over the railroad tracks. Both streets are narrow and the adjacent buildings are not in the best shape...but the access is much quicker than going down Main Street all the way to Stockton.
- There is a dirt path across a vacant lot on Market Street that is presently being used to access the park...however, the ownership of this lot is not know and appears to be private, since the Delaware River Park is entirely fenced and there is a gap in the fence that is being used for pedestrian access.
- There is another gap in the fence at the north end of Delaware River Park that people are using to get from the park to the arch and the train ride. There is a grade differential between the arch and the park, necessitating a climb up a short section of steep slope to get into the park.
- There is a paved path and/or driveway along the western edge of the entire park.

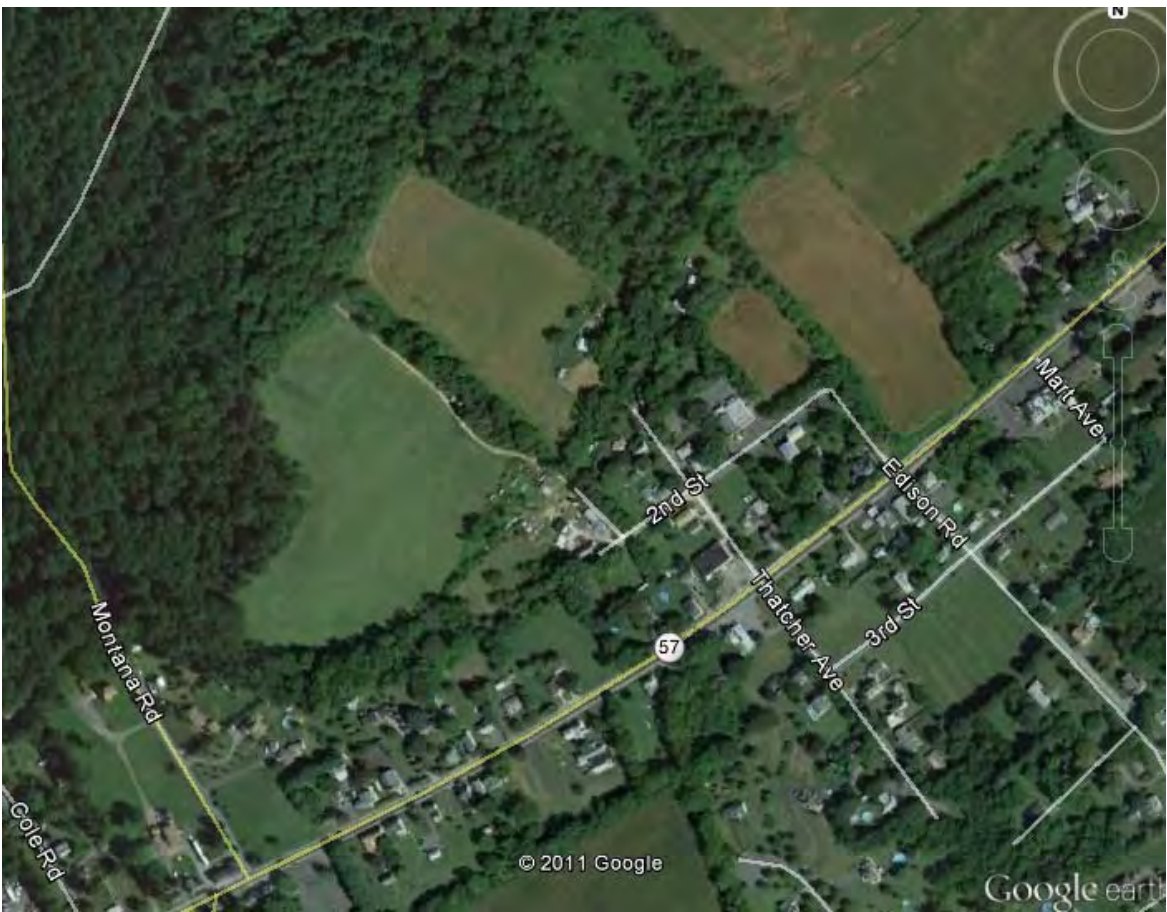
## **Lock Street**

- Access to the historic concrete homes in the Valley View development is very quick from Lock Street up Ridge Street.

## **Bread Lock Park to Little Philadelphia Road**

- There were many instances in where there was standing water in the canal during the entire day's of field reconnaissance.
- There is a small dirt/gravel pull off on the east side of Montana Road at the canal crossing. Possible to make a connection to Merrill Creek Reservoir from here is Parcels 93 and 94 are acquired?
- At Thatcher Road, there is a gravel driveway across the canal leading into private properties. The streets are narrow and more like alleys in this area. The county maps show a drainage issue in this area. Second Street appears to extend all the way to the preserved Parcel 95.

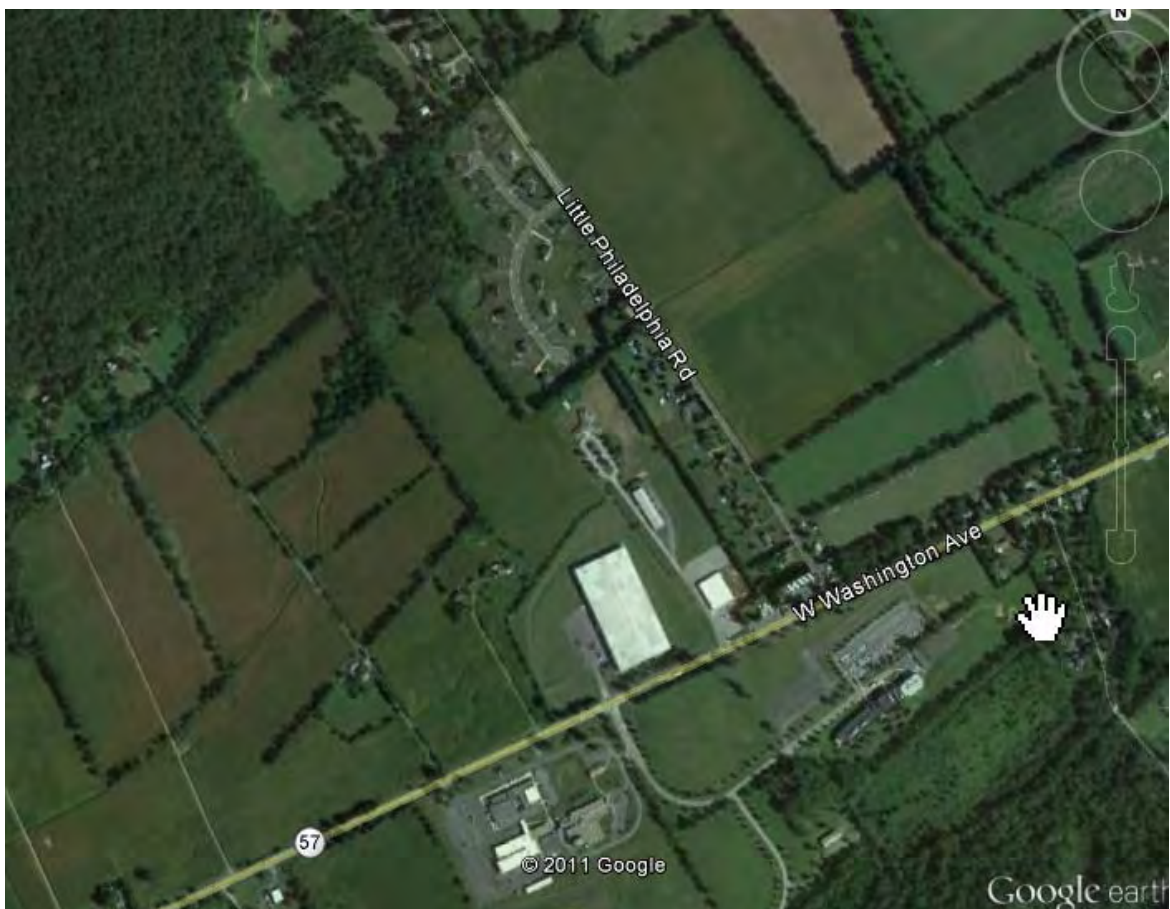




- There are no sidewalks along Montana Road or Millbrook Road. However, there are sidewalks along Route 57 at the Millbrook Road intersection for possible pedestrian connect to Broadway community. Fancy Farm is the only preserved property in this area. **Check where sidewalks end in Broadway**
- Halfway House Road is very narrow and windy with, poor sight distance, one-lane bridge and stream paralleling east edge of road.
- Would not recommend that trail follow Route 57 from Bread Lock to Little Philadelphia Road unless efforts to acquire canal for towpath trail fail.

### Little Philadelphia Road to Port Colden

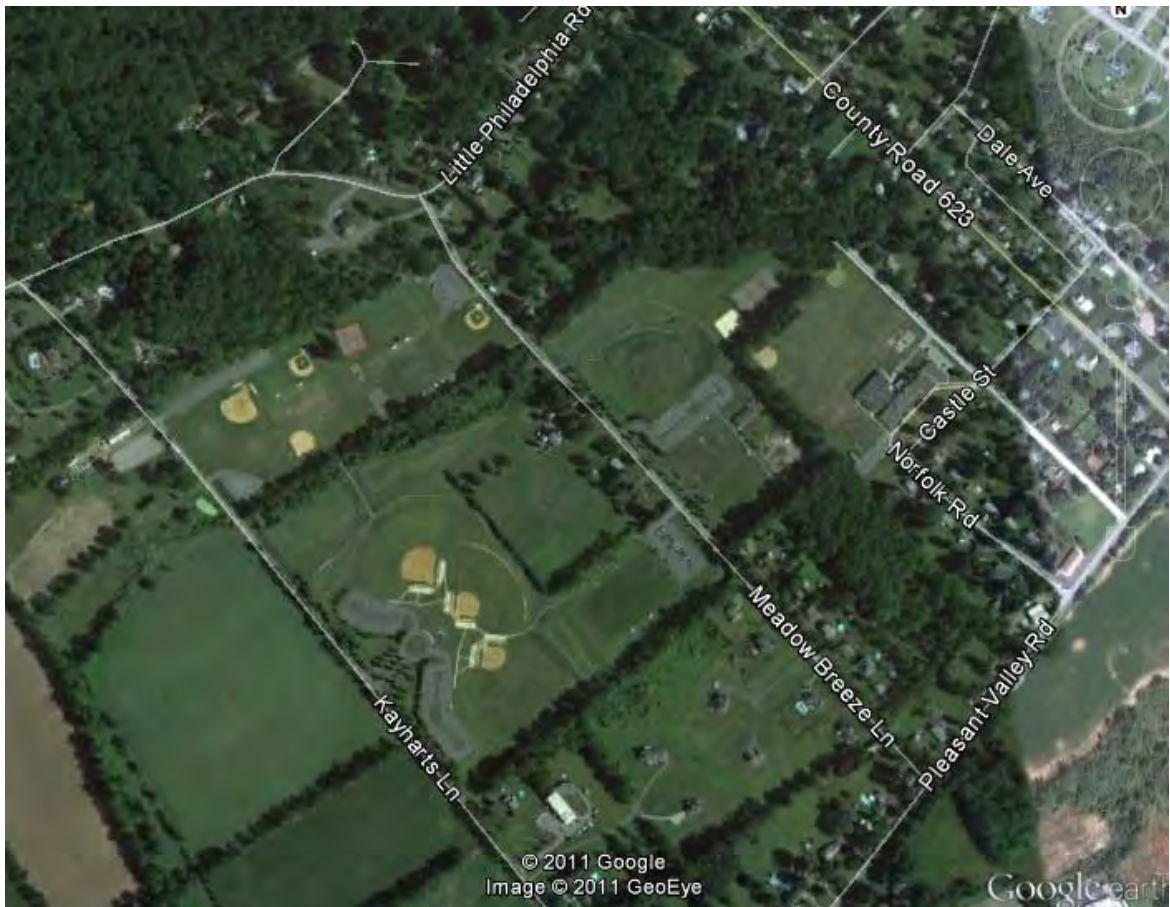
- Too steep and possible dangerous to go from Halfway House Road down Little Philadelphia Road to the canal.
- Great views to and from canal at Little Philadelphia Road. Some land for sale in this area at canal/road intersection.
- Sidewalks exist along west side of road along frontage of new subdivision. Frontage along farm on east side of road is clear of utilities, while remaining section of west side of road to Route 57 includes utility poles. Most houses set back far enough to create walkway. Narrowest ROW is at intersection with Rte 57.
- Proximity of horse farms prompts consideration of horseback riding use of any future trail system.



- Would be nice to create a connection between canal towpath to Community College, Vo-Tech School and Library (if not all the way to the Franklin Township Building/Recreation Center). Would need lighted crossing of Route 57.
- With acquisition of two more properties, the canal could be preserved from Little Philadelphia Road and to Meadow Breeze Park at Kayharts Lane.

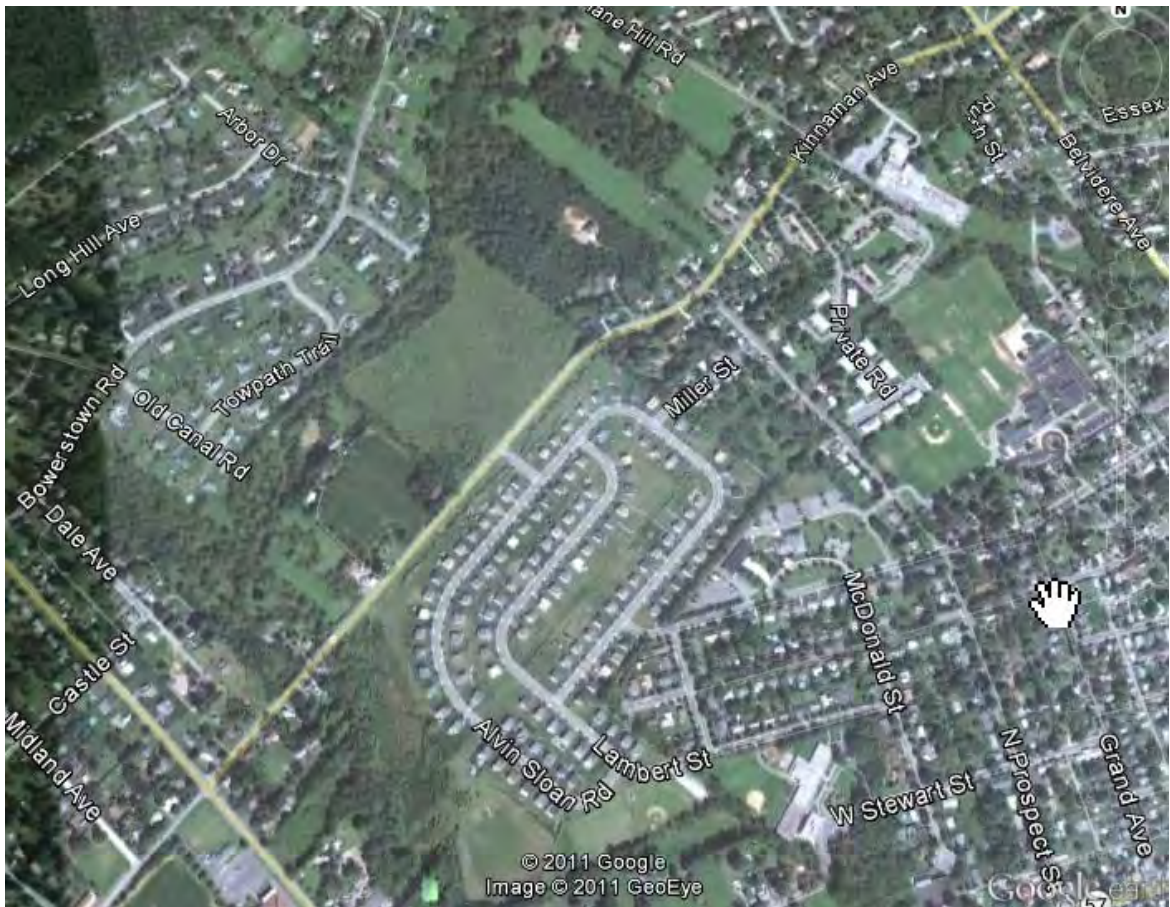


- Section of canal through west portion of Meadow Breeze Park is fairly intact, some dumping of yard waste and soil occurring. More beautiful views. Need to create pathway connection between west and east portions of the park, perhaps through the acquisition of Lot 126 and sidewalk construction along Meadow Breeze Lane. Canal through east portion of Meadow Breeze Park is hidden by vegetation.
- Trail system in east portion of Meadow Breeze Park falls just short of a connection to a paved path at the rear of the adjacent school. No sidewalk exists along Midland Avenue, but there are sidewalks along Castle Street.
- Portion of canal immediately adjacent to Brass Castle Road is filled in as lawn near historic canal store. The canal is also filled in all along Bowerstown Road, so there is no significant reason to follow this street if alternate route is possible.



- Could use Castle Street to cross Brass Castle Road, since the westernmost portion of Bowerstown Road does not have sidewalks. There are sidewalks along Dale Avenue to Bowerstown Road.
- Sidewalks along the south side of Bowerstown Road do not start until Dale Avenue and continue up to Foundry Road. However there is a steep slope falling away from Bowerstown Road from Foundry Road to Plane Hill Road, so the extension of sidewalks along Bowerstown would be difficult unless the sidewalk shifts to the north side of the street.
- Plane Hill Road is very narrow all along it, with limited opportunities for sidewalks. The northernmost portion of the street is very steep. Many of the canal structures are buried under the road or in adjacent private yards.
- Bowerstown Historic District is located northwest of the intersection of Plane Hill Road and Bowerstown Road. There are no sidewalks along Bowerstown Road in this area. Many of the buildings in this historic district are owned by the Washington Regional School District. It is unclear whether any are open to the public for educational purposes related to local history and whether the structures retain any interior historical components.

- There appears to be a paper street at the intersection of Castle Street and Dale Avenue. Perhaps it is a driveway to a private house behind this street. If this street could be used for a trail, then an alternate route could possibly follow stream corridor to Plane 7 West and beautiful stone arch structure (aqueduct) over the creek. The Morrell Book says this is the best aqueduct left along the canal. However, it is not clear how a person would get from the creek level up the steep hill to Plane 7 West and the historic structures at Bowerstown owned by school district.
- Another option is to follow the creek and then turn south through undeveloped property to the intersection of Kinnaman Avenue and Alvin Sloan Road, where sidewalks exist in this residential development with a tie to Carlton Street. Carlton Street could take you to the Junior and Senior High Schools, the Campbell House and down Belvidere Avenue into Washington Borough.



- There is no sidewalk along Kinnaman Avenue, which is more heavily traveled.
- There is room along the south side of the fence at JCP&L to return to the canal with a trail extending to Belvidere Avenue. However, the eastern end of the JCP&L site contains many utilities pole in the canal bed that are very unattractive. The industrial buildings on the east side of Belvidere Avenue opposite the JCP&L site are also unattractive.
- The Campbell House is only a few doors down North Lincoln Avenue from the JCP&L property and appears to share a rear property line with the adjacent Junior High School. But there is no direct pedestrian connection between the high school and Campbell House and there are no sidewalks on North Lincoln. If the Campbell House included public restrooms, this could be a popular stop along a towpath trail.
- There are no sidewalks along Belvidere Avenue between the JCP&L site and New Street. However, sidewalks do extend from New Street all the way down Belvidere Avenue to downtown/Route 57.





- Washington Avenue is an attractive street with businesses that could support visitors to the canal and trail, so a direct connection with downtown would be desirable. The key is making a strong, clear connection back to the canal at Harding Drive while safely crossing Route 31.
- The simplest option is to use the sidewalk system to cross Route 31 at Route 57, but this is a very busy intersection. The sidewalks would allow pedestrians to follow the east side of Route 31 into the neighborhood between Route 31 and Harding Drive – the route would have to weave through a neighborhood street system that does not provide a direct route from Route 31 to Harding Drive. (i.e., Route 31 to Myrtle to South Pickel to Flower to Harding)
- Another alternative is to use the downtown sidewalk system (possibly Church Street past the Municipal Building) to access the north end of Jackson Avenue, Brown Street, Hahn Street or E. Stewart. Street which all dead end at what appears to be an abandoned railroad ROW that is elevated as it passes over Route 31 and Route 57 (the Penn Central Line from Manunka Chunk to Belvidere?). Jackson Avenue is the closest to downtown, but lower in relationship to the elevation of the railroad than the other streets. This railroad intersects with the Erie Lackawanna that runs east/west to Port Colden and Phillipsburg. If this abandoned railroad could be used for a trail, then might be possible for pedestrians to use Jackson Street to get up to the railroad and use the existing overpasses to safely cross Routes 31 and 57. The northeast corner of the Route 31 overpass could be graded to provide access down to street level and the sidewalks along the east side of Route 31. We would need to check the northeast corner of the Route 57 overpass to see if as similar access could be provided (there are billboards in this area).





- There are gaps in the sidewalks heading east along the south side of Route 57 towards Port Colden. But the new townhouse development has recently installed a large segment of sidewalks in this area. How would a person safely cross Route 57 to get to Port Colden if this alternative route is used? A crossing might be made at a light at the intersection with the Port Colden shopping center. The sidewalk could then continue on the north side of Route 57 to Port Colden. A preserved farm appears to surround the rear and east side of the Port Colden shopping center, which could be used for trail access back to the canal.





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**Meeting:** Morris Canal Greenway TAC Meeting  
Warren County, New Jersey  
Langan Project No.: 200034701

**Date / Location:** Meeting Date: January 10, 2012  
Offices of Warren County

**Prepared By:** Nate Burns, Langan  
Karen Williamson, Heritage Conservancy

**Date Prepared:** 01-18-12 (finalized)

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### Attendees

Brett Bragin – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Don Brinker – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Nate Burns – Langan Engineering  
David Dech – Warren County Planning Department  
David Detrick – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
James Lee, Jr. – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
James Lee, III – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Elizabeth Roy – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Myra Snook – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Karen Williamson – Heritage Conservancy

### Meeting Summary

1. Jim Lee, Jr. distributed copies of the newly printed Lock Street Walking Tour brochure.
2. Karen Williamson summarized the result of this morning's meeting with Steve Ellis, Acting Regional Superintendent, Northeast Region, NJ State Parks, as documented more fully in the attached minutes of this meeting.
3. The day's activities also included a visit to the newly preserved Brickyard. The inclined plane and portions of the canal and towpath have been obliterated on this site due to quarrying and other industrial activities. 2/3rds of the water tower structure are intact. The site appears to be actively used by ATV's. The existing driveway serving several residences coincides with the former canal towpath. There is water in the canal in some locations. The remnants of a former road leading from the canal to the portion of the property along Hoffman Road and could be used for trail access into and out of the site.

4. Prior to this meeting, Nate Burns submitted draft text for the TAC's review and comment.
5. The remainder of the meeting was spent discussing possible strategies for various segments of the canal between Bread Lock Park and Stephens State Park while looking at Google Earth aerial maps and referring to field reconnaissance notes taken by the consultants. Key points from this discussion are as follows (proceeding from west to east from Bread Lock Park):
  - a. With the acquisition of a few parcels, there is the potential to connect Bread Lock Park with Merrill Creek Reservoir, from a greenway and trail perspective, and tie into existing preserved land just east of Montana Road.
  - b. There is a long stretch of unprotected canal between Montana Road and Little Philadelphia Road, with the exception of the preserved Fancy Farm along Millbrook Road and a large preserved farm east of Halfway House Road. Land preservation efforts should be continued in this stretch to the greatest extent possible before any decision is made to abandon conservation in this area and develop a trail along Route 57, since the development of a trail along Route 57 would be an expensive undertaking and would result in a less attractive trail (given the outstanding views of the countryside from the canal in this area).
  - c. There are sidewalks along Route 57 in Broadway that could be extended up Millbrook Road to make a pedestrian connection between this neighborhood and the canal.
  - d. During prior meetings and field trips, the group had discussed the possibility of developing a trail along Route 57 east of Bread Lock Park through Broadway if the canal cannot be preserved in this area and reconnecting with the canal via Halfway House Road. The existing physical characteristics of Halfway House Road (narrow width, existing stream paralleling east side of road, curviness) are not conducive to trail development from a safety perspective.
  - e. There are sidewalks along the west side of Little Philadelphia Road that could be extended to provide a pedestrian connection between the canal, community college, library and vo-tech school. Efforts to link significant public sites and their users to the canal should be encouraged.

- f. With the acquisition a few parcels to the east of Little Philadelphia Road, a sizeable segment of the canal can be preserved and linked to recreational opportunities at Meadow Breeze Park and educational opportunities at Brass Castle Elementary School.
  
- g. Several alternative routes leading east from the Washington Township Elementary School were discussed, along with the pros and cons of each alternative.
  - Follow the route of the canal precisely by following Boyertown Road and Plane Hill Road.
    - Con – No existing sidewalks along Boyertown Road in the vicinity of the Brass Castle Road crossing.
    - Con - The canal has been obliterated by Boyertown Road and the residential properties in this area.
    - Pro – There are existing sidewalks along the south side of Boyertown Road between Dale and Arbor Drive which would allow a connection to this residential area.
    - Con – Extending sidewalks on the south side of Boyertown Road to the east of Arbor Drive would be difficult due to the steep drop off in grade in the front of the residential properties in this area. Trail might need to shift to the north side of the road.
    - Pro – This route could provide for a connection to the Boyertown Historic District.
    - Pro – Could see some remnants of canal on Plane Hill Road (some hidden in vegetation).
    - Con – Plane Hill Road is steep and narrow, making it difficult to create a parallel trail. No existing sidewalks in this area.
    - Pro and Con – Assumes canal will be preserved through JCP&L lands which contain unsightly power lines. A more direct route, but less attractive.
  
  - Use Castle Street to cross Brass Castle Road and follow stream corridor to Plane Hill Road.
    - Pro – Can utilize existing sidewalks and crosswalks on Castle Street to cross Brass Castle Road (this is a recognized school crossing location).
    - Pro – Possible paper street at Castle and Dale could provide access to existing stream corridor. Need to confirm this is not a flag lot.
    - Pro – A path along the stream corridor would allow for a better view of the aqueduct at Plane Hill Road. Only a few landowners would need to be contacted about an access easement.

- Con – Not as direct a connection with residences in this neighborhood.
  - Con – Would need to overcome a difference in grade between streamside area and Plane Hill Road to utilize Plane Hill Road for remainder of route and make a connection to Boyertown Historic District.
  - Pro – Could see some remnants of canal on Plane Hill Road (some hidden in vegetation).
  - Con – Plane Hill Road is steep and narrow, making it difficult to create a parallel trail. No existing sidewalks in this area.
  - Pro and Con – Assumes canal will be preserved through JCP&L lands which contain unsightly power lines. A more direct route, but less attractive.
- Use Castle Street to cross Brass Castle Road and follow Kinnaman Avenue to Plane Hill Road.
    - Pro – Can utilize existing sidewalks and crosswalks on Castle Street to cross Brass Castle Road (this is a recognized school crossing location). Existing sidewalks on Dale Avenue could provide access to Kinnaman Avenue.
    - Con – Would need to develop sidewalk or trail along Kinnaman Avenue (more heavily traveled than Boyertown Road).
    - Pro – Could connect sidewalk/trail to extensive existing sidewalk network to the south of Kinnaman Road and the associated neighborhoods and schools.
    - Con – Would not make a connection to Boyertown Historic District or the remnants of canal on Plane Hill Road.
    - Pro and Con – Does not assume that canal will be preserved through JCP&L lands and does not need JCL&L easement to complete this route. Avoids unsightly power lines, but does not follow canal route.
  - h. JCP&L property provides direct link between Plane Hill Road and Belvidere Avenue, although the very unsightly power lines adversely affect this section of the canal. A short connection is needed to connect the Chapman House to the JCP&L property.
  - i. Existing sidewalks along Belvidere Avenue could be used to connect the canal to downtown Washington Borough for economic development reasons. Industrial parcels to the east of Belvidere Avenue are not conducive to canal preservation efforts and include polluted lands on a superfund site.

- j. Consider acquiring the abandoned Warren Railroad right-of-way and overpasses to create a safer road crossing, instead of crossing Route 57 and 31 at grade using existing crosswalks through this heavily traveled intersection. Preservation of the abandoned railroad corridor offers the potential for future connections to other county and regional trails.
- k. Although there are sidewalks along the east side of Route 31 and down Myrtle Avenue from Route 31 to South Pickel Avenue, the canal has been obliterated along much of Myrtle Avenue and the residential development in this area does not give the impression that pass through traffic would be welcomed. The Acquisition Report shows most of the parcels between Belvidere Avenue and the eastern end of Harding Court as unlikely to materialize. Existing sidewalks along the streets surrounding Myrtle Avenue would need to be used for trail purposes in this area.
- l. The TAC did not favor developing a parallel path along Route 57 between Route 31 and Port Colden as an alternative to following Myrtle and Harding Avenues.
- m. The canal has been protected as part of a farmland preservation acquisition just to the east of Harding Avenue. However, access rights for trail purposes have not yet been obtained. Efforts between Harding Avenue and Port Colden Road should focus on land acquisition, as a result.
- n. With the recent purchase of the Brickyard property, there appear to be realistic opportunities to preserve the entire canal between Port Colden Road and Hoffman Road. Acquisition efforts should continue in this area, rather than pursuing alternate routes since there are no roads in close proximity to the canal.
- o. The Brickyard property provides an opportunity to create a parking area for a trailhead along Hoffman Road.
- p. The TAC did not favor connecting the Brickyard to the Comcast fields, Mansfield Township Recreation Area and preserved farmland along Washburn Road in lieu of following the historic route of the canal through Port Murray and along Cherry Tree Bend and Rockport Roads, where significant segments of the canal have been obliterated and incorporated into residential properties.



- q. The road frontage along Rockport Road between Washburn Road and Hazen Road appears to be wide enough to create a parallel trail, even if the right-of-way of the canal cannot be preserved.
- r. Safety of vehicular traffic at Hazen and Rockport Road is limited by the presence of existing buildings in close proximity to the roadway. If the intersection cannot be redesigned to provide better visibility for cars and room for a trail, then an alternative route for a trail should be investigated. There may be a vacant parcel along Hazen Road that could be used to make a mid-block trail crossing along Hazen Road into the Rockport Pheasant Farm.
- s. Heading east from Rockport Pheasant Farm to Buck Hill Road, the TAC preferred to pursue the acquisition of land to the north of Rockport Road rather than explore a route to the south of the railroad through properties owned by the state, Mansfield Township, and Donaldson Farms and along sidewalks in the residential areas east of Allen Road.
- t. The following issues were discussed with regard to heading east from Florence Kuipers Park to Route 517:
  - Route 46 is a heavily traveled roadway that crosses the canal on a downhill curve section of the road, which offers little opportunity for drivers to safely stop at a pedestrian crossing at this location.
  - Roosevelt Avenue is narrow roadway that cannot easily be widened to accommodate a trail.
  - There is a guardrail opposite the intersection of Roosevelt Avenue and Route 46 blocking the potential continuation of a trail at this location.
  - A residential development on the east side of Route 46 has obliterated a significant segment of the canal.
  - Although there are no existing sidewalks along Harvey Street, there are sidewalks along nearby streets and an existing pedestrian crosswalk at Route 46 and Baldwin Street. Sidewalks along Main Street could be used to create a trail connection to downtown Hackettstown and Centenary College for economic development and recreational purposes. A connection to the trail station is also possible for multi-modal purposes.
  - The Baldwin Street neighborhood could be used as an alternative route for a trail, since some sidewalks are present and the streets appear wide enough for a trail. The wooded rear of a church property at Fourth and Baldwin Streets or open spaces within an apartment complex could be used to reestablish a trail along the canal in this area. Myra Snook said that Baldwin Street is used a vehicular shortcut and did not recommend Baldwin Street as an alternative route.



- u. The safety of a canal crossing at Route 517 is a concern due to heavy traffic and poor sight distance to the north.
  - v. The potential exists to preserve some of the canal within the Towpath Apartment complex and develop a trail connection to Bilby Road.
  - w. There appears to be room along Bilby Road for the construction of a small parking area to serve as a trailhead.
6. In summary, in areas where a suitable and reasonably viable alternative to the historic route of the canal does not exist, the TAC does wishes to pursue a proposed greenway/trail route coinciding as much as possible to the historic route of the canal. As a result, the TAC wants to focus on preservation of the historical route rather than exploring alternative options that might utilize existing sidewalks to traverse surrounding neighborhoods, make regional greenways connections with other preserved lands in the area or utilize abandoned rail corridors to link up with other trails.

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**Meeting:** Morris Canal Greenway, 25-Year Action Plan  
Warren County, New Jersey  
Langan Project No.: 200034701

**Date / Location:** Meeting Date: February 1, 2012  
Conference Call

**Attendees:** Dave Dech, Brian Appezzato, and Elizabeth Roy (Warren County Department Of Planning (WCDoP))  
Scott Rowe and Megan Kelly (NJTPA)  
Jeff Marshall and Karen Williamson (Heritage Conservancy)  
Todd Poole (4ward Planning)  
Nate Burns (Langan)

**Prepared By:** Nate Burns

**Date Prepared:** February 1, 2012

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The following items were the discussion points of the conference call occurring on the above referenced date to discuss NJTPA and WCDoP comments on the draft of the 25-Year Action Plan provided in late December 2011.

Specific plan comments were provided by NJTPA and WCDoP prior to this call.

## Discussion

### *Comments on Economic Development and Demographic Analysis*

- Scott pointed out NJTPA's primary reason to fund this plan was the creation of a multi-modal trail and the resulting economic benefits to the County. Todd's analysis, as well as other plan elements, should reference to these goals.
- Todd mentioned the difficulty in making a direct comparison between the economic benefits of existing canals and trails that are continuous and the Morris Canal which is currently broken by obliterated and/or privately owned segments.

### *General Plan Comments*

- Brian requested the inclusion of specific items identified during stakeholder discussion in the report. Nate indicated that the final report would include a much more in depth discussion of the themes and input from the various meetings and public forums.

- A key component to the success of this project will be the way the planning team can work to balance the input of the TAC and other groups with the technical analysis. Nate indicated that this point would be discussed in the introductory portion of the report and that references would be provided in the text when thoughts or ideas were taken directly from stakeholder input.
- A methodology section will be added to the beginning of the report which provides more detail on the planning approach; discusses the TAC involvement and outlines the next steps for the plan.
- It was requested that the next draft provided would include mapping and other graphic elements. Megan indicated that the NJTPA FTP site would be available to post future drafts and avoid file size issues.
- The plan text needs to lay the foundation for any recommendations presented.

## *Historic Review Comments*

- All agreed that it was critical for the plan to use the rich history of the canal as a facilitator to show the general public why the canal is an important resource worth saving.
- Scott asked that the planning team clarify and expand on the history of the canal, gaining much of this insight from the TAC, possibly via interview.
- The history of the canal should be more of a hook to build excitement about the plan. As such, it should have its own section within the plan, possibly towards the end of the intro section.
- The two key elements of the plan should be the plan's focus on preservation of canal resources and active programming of the preserved resources. It should identify very specific resources in an appendix and talk about preservation of priority elements more within the plan.
- SHPO information should be moved to an appendix.
- Jeff added that historic resources along the length of the greenway would be prioritize according to the following criteria:
  - o Significance to the story of the canal;
  - o How soon/readily they can be used in promoting the goals of the plan;
  - o Resources that need to be preserved sooner rather than later; and
  - o Specific resources critical to creation of the greenway.

## *Comments on other Plan Portions*

- Vision discussion should be moved forward in the plan, located directly after the introduction. It should show the reader the elements they should be looking for throughout the remainder of the plan.
- Additional information on Hackettstown and Independence Township should be added to the review of existing planning information. Dave indicated that he would provide some additional materials which should be included here.
- Scott and Megan both indicated that the Hackettstown Business Improvement information was critical since they serve as the terminus of the commuter rail network within Warren County. They also asked if Hackettstown had a Highlands Center Designation and that this would be a very important discussion point for the report.
- Scott asked generally how the recommendations evolving from the field reconnaissance work would be presented and organized in the plan. Karen indicated that the greenway would be broken down into smaller segments that interconnect specific hubs of activity. The plan would discuss the features and recommendations of each segment.
- Dave asked that the report generally follow the outline provided on page 25 of the RFP.
- Karen then discussed the TAC's passion about having a trail that would not vary from the historic route of the canal. Elizabeth believes that the TAC's passion represents its fear that efforts to preserve the canal will be abandoned too easily if other routes are suggested. Elizabeth feels that the TAC is actually more receptive to alternative routes than we may perceive to be the case. Scott added that the construction of the trail is important to the success of this project and should utilize the most suitable route for trail construction in the short-term and focus on canal preservation/ acquisition efforts over time.
- Scott asked that the plan discuss the importance of trail construction as a means to gain public support, as part of the greenway development.
- Megan added that any reference to land acquisition and associated efforts must be handled with great sensitivity in the final report.
- Nate agreed that the team would send over portions of the draft plan for review as they become revised. He also agreed that they would work out a schedule for completion of these sections and provide this to the group.

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**Meeting:** Morris Canal Greenway Master Plan  
Technical Advisory Committee Meeting #5  
Warren County, New Jersey  
Langan Project No.: 200034701

**Date / Location:** Meeting Date: 14 February 2012  
7:00 pm  
Rutgers Room  
Wayne Dumont Jr. Administration Building  
165 County Route 519 South  
Belvidere, NJ 07823-1949

**Prepared By:** Nate Burns

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## Project Strategy and Recommendation Discussion

The agenda for this meeting will be a presentation of the methods used to generate specific project strategies and recommendations. Discussion will then focus on reviewing the current project strategies and attaining feedback from the TAC and also identifying project strategies and recommendations the committee feels are critical and should be added to the list.

Project Strategies Matrix and Strategies Details will be provided prior to the meeting.

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**Meeting:** Morris Canal Greenway TAC Meeting  
Warren County, New Jersey  
Langan Project No.: 200034701

**Date / Location:** Meeting Date: 14 February 2012  
Offices of Warren County

**Prepared By:** Nate Burns, Langan  
Karen Williamson, Heritage Conservancy

**Date Prepared:** 02-22-12

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## Attendees

Brian Appezzato – Warren County Planning Department  
Don Brinker – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Nate Burns – Langan Engineering  
David Dech – Warren County Planning Department  
David Detrick – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Jim Lee, Jr – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Megan Kelly - NJTPA  
Myra Snook – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Karen Williamson – Heritage Conservancy

## Meeting Summary

1. Jeffrey Marshall gave an overview of his historic resource assessment work which looked at three categories of resources:
  - Canal structures proper – i.e. various components of the canal itself
  - Canal-related structures – structures that were associated with the operation of the canal such as a locktender’s house or canal store
  - Other historic buildings in close proximity to the canal that were the result of the canal being a magnet for other kinds of surrounding development, such as Warren’s Mill.
  
2. Nate Burns stated that a number of criteria come into play when deciding which of these resources is the most significant. These criteria include the extent to which a resource:
  - Has the highest physical integrity (the condition of physical remains)
  - Is surrounded by a site that most closely represents the period of significance (setting) and evokes the subjective feeling and association with that resource
  - Is the last remaining example of that resource

- Can easily be preserved, stabilized, restored and/or adaptively reused
  - Has interpretive potential
  - Serves a symbolic function
  - Is accompanied by other resources (there is a critical mass)
3. Jeff Marshall said that what might be of interest to a canal buff may not generate the same enthusiasm from an ordinary visitor. Finding a way to link disparate parts of the canal into a single experience is a challenge, so you look for the elements that tell the best story.
  4. Jeff Marshall stated that, since the Morrell book was completed, the Van Doren Mill and a lime kiln have collapsed. All of the other resources are still there, but with further deterioration. Many of the canal features are archaeological sites that are not suited to visitation, while other features are minor structures (like a culvert) that may not generate a lot of public enthusiasm. Some structures, like the stone archways, offer symbolic and/or architectural interest. Jeff has documented the results of his assessment in a spreadsheet accompanied by a series of maps to correlate his findings with that of the Morrell book. (The maps were distributed at the meeting and the spreadsheet will be forthcoming).
  5. Nate Burns suggested that a scoring system be used to rank the various projects within the 25-year action plan based upon certain criteria. These criteria can include the extent to which a proposed project:
    - Advances various aspects of the vision
    - Preserve or stabilized a resource
    - Reaches and/or engages the most people
    - Improves visitor readiness/supports visitation
    - Support other planning efforts
    - Generates the greatest return on investment
  6. Dave Dech felt that the group should be able to fine tune the results of any scoring system as needed.
  7. Myra Snook expressed concern that the discussion was not taking into consideration that there are a lot of people who travel from state to state looking for buried canal resources and that we should not just be focused on visitation by the general public.
  8. Jeff Marshall asked the group their opinion of what one feature was the most significant and representative resource along the Morris Canal. The group unanimously felt that Plane 9W was the most significant. However, Dave Detrick felt that Plane 5W at the Brickyard site was important too, since you can see the exposed plane from the side.
  9. Karen Williamson asked the group whether they felt that all of the canal could be saved within 25 years or more. Given the fact that implementation of historic preservation studies for Bread Lock Park and Plane 9W would cost at least \$10 million, is it realistic

to think that \$50 or \$100 million could be raised to preserve the entire canal? Jim Lee, Jr. felt that finding a way to use the canal for hiking and biking was the most important goal. He wouldn't recommend buying the Port Murray canal store, but he would like to find a way to encourage its preservation/adaptive reuse by someone in the private sector. Dave Detrick wanted the county to own the canal, but keep restoration work simple by clearing brush and installing signage, gates, etc. Jim Lee expressed concern about the long-term maintenance costs associated with such a large project. However, he would like to see the lock at Saxton Falls restored. Dave Detrick agreed that he would like to see a watered section of canal at Saxton Falls. Myra Snook said that she would like to see the entire canal prism restored across the county and expressed confidence that the funds could be raised, since communities in other states have been successful in completing similar projects.

10. Dave Dech said that the county is not just buying land to preserve the canal but is also trying to use the land to make physical connections between places along the canal.
11. Two handouts were distributed in a matrix format - one listing greenway-wide recommendations and the other segment-by-segment recommendations. Nate Burns explained that each matrix lists the various elements of the vision statement at the top and the list of recommendations down the side. Boxes on the matrix are colored coded to indicate whether the listed recommendation helps to achieve an aspect of the vision statement. Black boxes indicate that a recommendation significantly advances an element of the vision statement while grey boxes indicate that a recommendation somewhat advances the vision statement. A white box indicates that the recommendation is not associated with that aspect of the vision statement. Nate Burns presented an example of a greenway-wide recommendation with the group and Karen Williamson presented the segment from downtown Phillipsburg to Millpond Park as an example of a segment recommendation. Several comments generated by this discussion include:
  - o Don Brinker expressed doubt as to the practicality of Phillipsburg's attempt to create a trail along the Delaware riverfront due to damage from flooding.
  - o Phillipsburg is investigating the feasibility of utilizing an old railroad bridge across the Delaware River as a future pedestrian connection with Easton.
  - o Dave Detrick felt that the county planning department could focus on greenway-wide planning issues while the canal committee could focus on the nuts and bolts of canal preservation activities.
12. Nate Burns asked that the group review the recommendations listed in the matrices and provide feedback as soon as possible.
13. Nate Burns reported that some updated draft report text had been submitted to the county planning staff. Dave Dech indicated that he did not forward it to the canal committee since he did not have a chance to review it yet.



# Meeting Minutes

14. Nate Burns and Dave Dech said that they needed to coordinate the schedule of the next TAC and Stakeholder meetings.
15. Dave Detrick asked when the project might be done. Nate Burns indicated that the project team was working to complete the project by April.
16. Megan Kelly stated that NJ TPA will be hosting a Morris Canal Working Group meeting on March 22 at 2 p.m. at its office in Newark – the first of its kind – and that representatives from Warren County are invited to attend. Megan also mentioned that Warren County has been selected to make a presentation on the Morris Canal at the New Jersey Historic Preservation Conference on June 7, 2012.

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**Meeting:** Morris Canal Greenway Master Plan  
Technical Advisory Committee Meeting #10  
Warren County, New Jersey  
Langan Project No.: 200034701

**Date / Location:** Meeting Date: 13 March 2012  
7:00 pm  
Rutgers Room  
Wayne Dumont Jr. Administration Building  
165 County Route 519 South  
Belvidere, NJ 07823-1949

**Prepared By:** Nate Burns

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## **Project Strategy and Recommendation Discussion**

The agenda for this meeting will be continued discussion on the greenway wide project strategies and recommendations. Discussion will focus on reviewing the current project strategies and attaining feedback from the TAC and also identifying project strategies and recommendations the committee feels are critical and should be added to the list.

Also, there will be a preliminary review of the results of the land owner's survey gathered to date.

Morris Canal 25-Year Action Plan  
TAC Meeting  
March 13, 2012

In Attendance:

Brian Appezzato – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Don Brinker – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Nate Burns – Langan Engineering  
David Dech – Warren County Planning Department  
David Detrick – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
James Lee, Jr. – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
James Lee, III – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Elizabeth Roy – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Myra Snook – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Karen Williamson – Heritage Conservancy

Discussion Items:

1. Dave Dech indicated that approximately 340 letters had been mailed to property owners along the canal asking them to provide their input on the Morris Canal 25-Year Action Plan by completing an on-line survey. Roughly 20 letters were returned due to problems with the mailing address. Nate Burns distributed a handout with preliminary results from the survey which will remain open to additional responses until March 16<sup>th</sup>. To date, more than 35 people have completed the survey, representing at least a 10 percent response rate. The final results will be reviewed with the TAC once the survey period is closed.
2. Dave Dech reported that the proposed solar farm to the south of Bread Lock Park was denied by the municipality and that the landowner has inquired as to whether the county would be interested in purchasing the property.
3. Dave Dech and Jim Lee, Jr. will be attending the March 20<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Greenwich Township Environmental Commission to discuss Morris Canal preservation efforts. The Mayor and a representative of the Planning Board will also be in attendance at the meeting.
4. Nate Burns distributed a draft set of maps and an updated draft of the recommendation matrices for review and input by the TAC. The recommendations relating to the various segments have each been assigned a code using a number in combination with a letter. The codes have been placed on the maps at the locations of the proposed recommendations. Some of the recommendations are linear in nature, while others are associated with a specific point. The dashed red line represents the boundary of the greenway based upon the boundaries of the parcels associated with and adjacent to the canal. The TAC mentioned a number of corrections to be made to the maps and expressed concern as to the extent of information to be shown on maps that will become accessible to the public, given the sensitivity of future land acquisition negotiations and potential concerns by the public about trail access. The group expressed a desire to make the recommendations realistic and debated whether and where the emphasis should be placed on acquiring land vs. developing a trail vs. stabilizing and restoring the canal and towpath. Jim Lee, Jr. felt it was more important to have a trail rather than incur the cost of stabilizing and restoring the canal and towpath. Dave Detrick expressed interest in maintaining existing watered areas of the canal

and restore highly visible sections, but not making any improvements at Florence Kuipers Park for example. Myra Snook felt that it was not necessary to restore the canal in sections that are not currently watered. Dave Dech felt that the priorities should be to acquire the canal, establish a trail and stabilize and restore the canal only on public lands.

5. The group inquired as to suitable trail surfacing. Nate Burns envisioned a hierarchy of trail surfaces depending upon the proposed intensity of use and said that typical trail cross-sections would be provided. Remote areas might remain packed soil while areas in town might have a stone fine surface. Myra Snook expressed concern about stone dust trails that are easily eroded and large stone surfaces that are hard for the handicapped and bicyclists to use. Myra said that asphalt surfaces have been outlawed along the Erie Canal because they are slippery and no good for horseback riding. The Paulinskill Trail kept the surface left over from prior railroad use. Don Brinker suggested crushed concrete as a possible trail surface and Nate Burns mentioned naturally bonded materials as another option.
6. Jim Lee, Jr. and Elizabeth Roy were interested in using low-growing, sturdy grasses to prevent erosion problems and reduce lawn maintenance responsibilities and costs. Elizabeth liked the grass mixture proposed for the Effi-Solar project in Greenwich Township. Dave Dech said that Tim Dunne from NRCS had previously offered suggestions for vegetating the canal prism.
7. Dave Dech asked that written text be provided to explain the various recommendations shown on the matrices and would like to review this information soon.
8. Karen Williamson presented the Organizational Structure text, reviewing the three alternatives in some detail. Myra Snook indicated that the text pertaining to the Friends of the Morris Canal on Page 8 was incorrect and should be removed, since this group has disbanded. Karen Williamson indicated that the three organizational alternatives can be implemented in stages over time and were intentionally designed as a progression to support the implementation of the action plan. Dave Detrick expressed a desire for Planning Department to continue to support the WCMCC due to the strong relationship between land use planning and canal preservation activities.
9. Dave Detrick acknowledged that the recommendations represent a very big “to do” list and was concerned about how the recommendations will actually be implemented.

Morris Canal 25-Year Action Plan  
Minutes of Stakeholder Meeting #2  
March 15, 2012

In Attendance:

Brian Appezzatto – Warren County Planning Department  
Myra Boyer-Campbell – Campbell Cultural Heritage House  
Cheryl Burkett – Washington Township Environmental  
Nate Burns – Langan Engineering  
Dan Callas – Transoptions  
Dave Dech – Warren County Planning Department  
Daryl Detrick – Washington Township Recreation  
Dave Detrick – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Andrew Drysdale – Warren County Cultural and Heritage Commission  
Charlie Fineran – Allamuchy Township Open Space  
Mike Helbing – NYNJ Trails Conference  
Debbie Hirt – NJDOT Community Relations  
Naomi Hsu – Jersey City Planning  
James Lee, Jr. – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Neal Leitner – Sussex County Planning Department  
Megan Kelly – NJ TPA  
Jeff Marshall – Heritage Conservancy  
Carol McNeil – Campbell Cultural Heritage House  
Dawn Moore – Warren Hills Regional School District  
Christine Musa – Warren County Mosquito Commission  
Todd Poole – 4Ward Planning  
Elizabeth Roy – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Jason Sarnoski – Warren County Freeholder  
Robert Swint – Campbell Cultural Heritage House  
Karen Williamson – Heritage Conservancy

Discussion Items:

1. Dave Dech briefly gave a brief overview of the project and introduced the consultant team.
2. Nate Burns, Karen Williamson, Jeff Marshall and Todd Poole gave a PowerPoint presentation that provided an update on the project activities, investigations, discussions, findings, and recommendations as per the attached PowerPoint Presentation.
3. A public comment period was provided after the presentation and generated the following comments:
  - a. Charlie Fineran suggested that the donkey return bridge at Waterloo Village be repaired in order to make canal connections to Stanhope, the Sussex Branch Railroad and Cranberry Lake.

- b. Christine Musa was surprised that there are no governmental regulations preventing private property owners from destroying the canal on their land. Jeff Marshall explained that current laws only prevent activities conducted by governmental agencies and projects that require governmental permits from adversely affecting historic resources. Jeff said that public education is therefore key to obtaining private landowner support for canal preservation activities. Nate Burns explained that a landowner survey was underway to obtain feedback from those individuals located most closely to the canal.
- c. Andy Drysdale stated that he has been involved in efforts to revitalize Waterloo Village and he does not believe that NJDEP is enthusiastic about its revival, even though the turnout for Canal Days is phenomenal and public interest in its success is high.
- d. Andy Drysdale was in favor of getting local municipalities involved, and Nate Burns agreed that local “boosters” were needed at the community level. Jeff Marshall stressed that historic preservation can’t just be for history buffs but must appeal to a broader base.
- e. Mike Helbing expressed his support for making park of the towpath available for the public as soon as possible, with signage to identify the route, rather than waiting until all potential obstacles are addressed. He feels that Warren County should be a leader in this regard in order to create the demand for additional trail access in the future.
- f. Charlie Fineran suggested contacting the Jersey Off-Road Biking Association for help in building and maintaining a towpath trail.
- g. Debbie Hirt suggested that contact be made with the Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator for NJDOT who is an avid bicyclist. She feels that the Morris Canal would be as popular a trail as the D&R Canal towpath.
- h. Todd Poole reiterated that need to engage a variety of beneficiaries who might support canal preservation based upon different but compatible interests. He encouraged the county to leverage the interest of these constituents to advance canal preservation activities. Debbie Hirt agreed that this kind of partnering is important and valuable.
- i. Mike Helbing reiterated his desire to address any obstacles to the implementation of a towpath trail, taking legal action if necessary to resolve access problems. He suggested that a process be developed to deal with any access conflicts that arise. Nate Burns stressed the importance of establishing a dialogue for discussing problems and coming to a consensus to resolve them to maintain public support.
- j. Charlie Fineran felt that the Paulinskill Trail was a good example of a successful trail project.
- k. Debbie Hirt indicated that NJDEP has grant programs to support the recommendations of the 25-Year Action Plan.
- l. Dorothy Pguzzo said that the NJ Historic Trust has already provided several grants for canal preservation projects in Warren County. The Trust is conducting a survey to identify the kinds of capital improvements needed to preserve historic structures in the state in anticipation of offering grants for capital improvement projects in the future. She asked for everyone to respond to the survey to provide their input.

- m. Dorothy Pguzzo indicated that the revenue from the Discover NJ license plates are declining and recommended against seeking a special license plate for the Morris Canal.
- n. Dorothy PGuzzo inquired as to how much of the Morris Canal in Warren County has been protected. Dave Dech indicated that 1/3 has been acquired, 1/3 has been destroyed and the remaining 1/3 is in private ownership.
- o. Mike Helbing suggested licensing and leasing the canal from private property owners in lieu of acquisition, with 5 year renewable terms. Mike also felt that on-road trail use should be encouraged in areas where the canal is not accessible. Jeff Marshall expressed concern that just because a person could use an on-road route doesn't necessarily make it a safe, attractive and an appropriate thing for the county to encourage, due to liability concerns. If the county continues to make steady progress on canal preservation, Jeff felt that there will come a "tipping point" in time where the positive momentum for trail access will overcome any obstacles.
- p. Dave Dech said that he hopes the 25-Year Action Plan will result in the better design of subdivisions that are associated with the canal to improve public access. Dave Detrick concurred.
- q. Debbie Hirt asked if canal improvements could be required as part of transportation impact fees. Todd Poole indicated that such fees could only fund canal projects if the proposed development had a direct impact on the canal.
- r. Dave Detrick felt that you could spend so much time focusing on potential problems with implementing the action plan that you could overlook all of the positive steps that can be taken immediately.
- s. Debbie Hirt asked if scout troops had been asked to help with projects. Dave Detrick indicated that troops and individual Eagle Scouts had already helped with several projects, but that the WCMCC has not proactively sought assistance from scouting organizations.

Morris Canal 25-Year Action Plan  
TAC Meeting  
June 5, 2012

In Attendance:

Brett Bragin – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Nate Burns – Langan Engineering  
David Dech – Warren County Planning Department  
David Detrick – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Megan Kelly – NJ TPA  
James Lee, Jr. – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
James Lee, III – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Jeff Marshall – Heritage Conservancy  
Elizabeth Roy – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Myra Snook – Warren County Morris Canal Committee  
Karen Williamson – Heritage Conservancy

Discussion Items:

1. The meeting agenda consist of a general review of the draft report and its recommendations along with a discussion of any topics or items missing from the report.
2. Dave Detrick asked if the report will include an Executive Summary. Nate Burns stated that an Executive Summary will be provided at the beginning of the report.
3. Dave Dech asked if this summary could be provided soon for distribution to the Warren County Planning Commission prior to its June 25<sup>th</sup> meeting at 8 p.m. Nate Burns will submit a draft of this text for review by the county next week and will be attending the Planning Commission to present the project. The canal committee members were encouraged to attend this meeting.
4. The group expressed concern that the Board of Freeholders and general public may “get sticker shock” by the total cost of implementing the proposed recommendations. For this reason, the participants felt that it was very important for the Executive Summary to explain that the report is a compilation of all of the project ideas associated with the greenway initiative and that the county can pick and choose from this “menu” which projects it would like to complete, as partnership and funding opportunities become available. The summary should indicate that the plan is captures all of these ideas to show the potential of the greenway, give direction to the efforts of the Morris Canal Committee, and serve as a tool to measure the progress of preservation efforts over time.
5. A number of comments were made regarding the costs and time of completion estimates provided for the recommendations as follows:
  - Dave Dech and Elizabeth Roy inquired as to how the hourly rates used to estimate costs were developed. Karen Williamson stated that the \$50 hourly rate was intended to represent work performed by a member of the county staff and that the \$25 hourly rate reflected the efforts of volunteers. The \$50 hourly rate was also intended to show the extent to which the proposed Open Space Coordinator could assist in implementing the



recommendations of the greenway plan. The group agreed that the staff hourly rate would change depending upon the actual personnel used to perform the various tasks. The \$25 hourly rate was based upon the information developed by Independent Sector ([http://www.independentsector.org/volunteer\\_time](http://www.independentsector.org/volunteer_time)) to support charitable work nationwide.

- Dave Dech felt that a better approach might be to categorize costs according to low, medium or high values or ranges, which would have to be determined.
  - Myra Snook felt that the time of completion estimates are highly underestimated and that it takes a long time to complete a project.
  - Nate Burns indicated that the report will clarify that many projects are contingent upon the completion of other tasks.
  - The times of completion included in the current draft of the report represent the amount of time needed to implement a project from the time that project is started, not based upon the date when the entire greenway plan is adopted. Text will be added to the report to explain this distinction.
  - Everyone acknowledged that there are many variables beyond the control of the county which could affect the funds needed to complete a specific project (i.e., availability of volunteer contributions, price of land, availability of property owners willing to sell their land to the county, the availability of grant funding, the effect of inflation over a 25-year time frame, etc.). These variables make it very difficult to estimate the contribution the county will need to make in the long run.
6. The group struggled with how to prioritize the numerous recommendations. The options of prioritizing based upon project cost, population, land acquisition priorities, grant funding availability and the extent to which a recommendation achieves all of the elements of the vision statement were mentioned. Given the amount of variables involved, the group felt that prioritizing the recommendations may not be feasible, especially over a 25-year time frame.
  7. Elizabeth Roy stated that the report must include statements of the economic and public benefits of all of the recommendations, otherwise there will be no incentive for the county to implement them.
  8. Nate Burns explained that all of the individual matrices will be compiled into one large summary matrix for the purposes of creating a database as requested by the county. The information in the matrices will be in the order in which they appear in the report. The database will be designed so that it can be sorted using any of the individual cells of information created.
  9. Jim Lee, Jr. remarked that the report including many more recommendations that he initially imagine. He expressed concern that the county's funding for canal land acquisition may be diverted to projects that he considers to be secondary to the primary thrust of preserving the canal proper as the "spine" of the greenway. The group acknowledged the challenge of protecting the "spine" without completing secondary projects intended to broaden municipal support and expand partnerships to increase participation in canal preservation efforts. Each recommendation includes a list of implementation agencies to show that work will be shared with other organizations as appropriate.

10. Elizabeth Roy asked that the report indicate how the greenway plan supports the county's open space plan. Dave Detrick felt that this was especially important with regard to the interconnection of open space resources.
11. The group felt that the greenway plan could be completed with the existing level of county funding and staffing, even though additional funding and staffing would accelerate the completion of the plan recommendations.
12. Dave Dech and Elizabeth Roy asked that the report expand upon techniques that can be used to limit destructive ATV use. The group discussed the use of large tree logs, brush piles to hide access opportunities, and police patrols including the confiscation of vehicles as possible options.
13. The group felt it would be unlikely for the county to hire a staff person to perform the function of Open Space Coordinator and that it would be more likely for the county to contract out these services or obtain grant funding to finance this position.
14. Dave Detrick asked for the report to include information about how landowners of historic canal properties and structures can be encouraged to maintain and preserve them.
15. Dave Detrick and Elizabeth Roy indicated that concerns about liability are very important aspect of this project and are often obstacles to the success of preservation efforts. The report needs to stress ways to overcome these concerns.
16. Other comments included:
  - The matrices appear fuzzy in the report and need to be crisper.
  - A key should be added to the matrices to explain what the various shades mean.
  - The shading of the matrices should match the text.
  - The caption for the photo on Page 281 should be changed. The photo is of the canal store not the mill.
  - Check to see if the National Canal Museum is still using this title for its organization.
  - The Friends of Waterloo organization started last year and has since raised enough funds to pay for the completed replacement of roofs on the grist mill and blacksmith shop. Fundraising for the bridge over the Musconetcong River is underway.
  - The name of the Campbell House should be corrected to "James" Campbell House throughout the report.
  - Make sure the results of the landowner survey are included in the report (see public participation section).
  - The condition of Port Colden Manor is not as bad as depicted in the report.
  - The Port Murray Boat Basin was recently dedicated as the Dennis Bertland Heritage Area in recognition of this canal preservation efforts.
  - Recommendation F3 and F6 appear to have similar titles but different text and should be checked.
17. Copies of comments from the Planning Department staff, Dennis Bertland and Megan Kelly were also given to Nate Burns.