

- Rochester to New Brighton between RR and River – not sure about ownership
- McKinley Run (flows into Beaver River)– there is land at border between Rochester Borough and Rochester Twp to develop a park – would help with erosion and sediment control
- Include trails in industrial property redevelopment in Rochester along the Ohio River.
- He felt that there should be efforts to add to and improve the existing parks. They are poorly maintained. He noted that there has been talk of developing walking and biking trails in Brady’s Run Park for years along abandoned roads, but nothing has happened. This would be a great resource.
- Connection from Brady’s run down hill to Littell Steel through Fallston and Bridgewater to the Beaver River.
- He noted that Boulder, CO has a “greenbelt” surrounding the city with trails. They have a different mentality there.

18. Some greenways do not include trails, but simply conserve corridors of open space. Are there places in Beaver County that should be set aside primarily to protect wildlife habitat (e.g., streams, flyways) or sensitive environmental features (e.g., floodplains, steep slopes)?

Not sure. Not his area of expertise.

19. What types of greenways & trails would be the most economically beneficial for the County?

Snowmobile & skiing trails – bring new people into the County.

20. What economic benefits do you think greenways & trails will bring to Beaver County? What should the plan do to maximize those benefits?

Greenways and trails would be a good marketing tool to get young families to move to the County. Population is aging. Need to attract new families.

21. What do you see as the primary obstacles to developing a greenway plan? Are there ways to overcome these challenges?

The “imaginary boundary line,” specifically the line in people’s minds’ that divides “your town” and “my town.” There are a lot of politics. People are not willing to cooperate. He thinks this problem is engrained in people. No way to overcome.

Key Person Interview with Janet Butler,
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Interview/Contact Date: September 1, 2005

2. What is your position/title and what is your organization's mission or role in the County?

She is the Visitor Services Manager for the Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge.

The refuge consists of 22 islands in 3 states: Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Kentucky. These islands were acquired in 1990 and are federally managed to restore hardwood forests for migratory birds. The two islands in PA are Phillis Island (39 acres) and Georgetown Island (10 acres).

3. Didn't the Fish & Wildlife Service want to acquire more land in PA for the refuge?

Yes. It was looking to add the Ohioview Embayment, a significant wetland area on the north side of the River. However, they only have congressional authority to acquire islands at this point. The Fish & Wildlife Service is working on a land protection plan that would expand their authority to protect mainland wetlands. But until (and if) this passes, plans to acquire the Ohioview Embayment are on hold.

She said that the Service did a comprehensive study of all properties along the Ohio that they would like to add to the refuge. The only other property in PA that is included in the Plan is the Ohioview Embayment.

I asked her to fax us the pages from the study that discuss this property.

4. Does Fish & Wildlife have any funding sources to assist local governments in establishing conservation-based greenways?

She mentioned the "Partners for Fish & Wildlife" program that helps private landowners improve their properties as habitat areas. Other than that, she didn't know of anything. She suggested I contact their regional office in State College.

Key Person Interview with Janet Thorne,
Executive Director, Hollow Oak Land Trust

Interview/Contact Date: August 26, 2005

I called Janet Thorne to talk specifically about a piece of conservation land owned by HOLT, Boggs Run Conservation Area, that is partially located in Beaver County. (Note: I printed description of site from HOLT website.)

1. Tell me about the Boggs Run Conservation Area in Beaver County.

Boggs Run consists of 60 acres of wooded and boggy land adjacent to Boggs Run on the north side of the Beaver Valley Expressway. Only a small piece of the property extends into Beaver County. The property is landlocked, although it can be accessed if you pull off the expressway. It has a dirt road that runs along a gas pipeline that would be suitable for walking & biking. This road continues beyond the property into Beaver County paralleling the expressway.

2. Some people in Beaver County would like to find ways to connect up to the Montour Trail. Would it be possible to create such a connection, possibly through this property?

Janet thought there might be an opportunity. She suggested the following route:

On the Pittsburgh side of Boggs Run Conservation Area, there is a piece of property that is currently for sale (HOLT has looked at it, but has not purchased). This property connects to Spring Run Rd Extension. A trail could run from Boggs Run across this property, then follow Spring Run Rd Extension to Flaugherty Run Road, down to the Ohio River to Route 51 through Coraopolis to the beginning of the Montour Trail. This trail could consist of a combination of on-road bike lanes and paths running parallel to the RR tracks along the Ohio. This would be the easiest and flattest connection.

Janet offered to show us the Boggs Run property at any time. I indicated I would discuss it with John Buerkle and get back to her.

Interview with Jeff Lloyd,
Canoe Raccoon Creek

Interview/Contact Date: August 31, 2005

5. What is your position/title and what is your organization's mission or role in the County?

The group is very informal. No title. They worked with the Conservation District to establish and promote the Raccoon Creek Water Trail several years ago. Established four launch sites and signage. Group is not very active anymore. The group is strictly focused on Raccoon Creek, but Mr. Lloyd is an avid canoer and paddles on many of the County's streams and rivers.

6. Do you think a greenway network should be established in the County? If yes, what do you think are the principle reasons that a greenway network should be established in Beaver County?

Yes. Get people to enjoy the outdoors and get exercise.

7. Greenway plans often consist of a series of "hubs and spokes." The hubs consist of population centers; significant parks or other natural areas; as well as key cultural and historic sites. What are the areas that you think are the most significant destinations for visitors and residents?

- Brady's Run
- New Brighton Fishing Park (just established)
- Fort Macintosh (Beaver)
- Historic Heritage Museum (Beaver)
- Beaver Borough
- Ambridge (Old Economy)
- Raccoon Creek State Park

8. The spokes are the corridors that link the hubs. They may be rural hiking, biking, skiing or multi-use trails, water trails, abandoned rail lines redeveloped for recreational uses, urban waterfront paths as well as designated bike/pedestrian lanes on roads or urban streets.

- a. Are there existing or planned trails that should be used to help connect the "hubs?" Where are they?

There are some existing bike trails in Brady's Run

- b. Where would you most like to see new trails developed?

He would like to see more bike trails, particularly along the rivers, but there aren't many abandoned RR tracks like there are in other counties.

There is an abandoned track along the Little Beaver that would make a beautiful rail-to-trail.

Other than Raccoon Creek, he spoke of several canoeing opportunities in Beaver County:

- Little Beaver Creek – starts in Beaver County, but then flows into Ohio. Re-enters Beaver County just before it empties into the Ohio River. Very beautiful stream (wild & scenic). Canoeable April to June. There is a put in point at Grimms Bridge about 4 miles from the mouth. Used to put in at Frederickton (in Ohio), but now there is no parking there. Can also drive up to Beaver Creek State Park (15 miles upstream) and canoedown. Stream can be dangerous when water is too high. Can also put in about half a mile from the mouth and canoe into the Ohio River where the National Wildlife Refuge islands are accessible. The Little Beaver also has a fork that goes through Darlington. Not sure if its navigable.
- Beaver River from Beaver to Fallston Dam (this is the southernmost of three dams on the Beaver River. Good fishing there.
- Beaver River from Wampum in Lawrence County (access ramp there) to Beaver Falls). Can also put in at Koppel, but have to cross an active RR line.
- Connequenessing – this is only navigable from April to June. It's kind of muddy. He wasn't sure about access points. Hard to canoe to the Beaver River because of the rapids near the confluence.
- Ohio River – there are existing Fish & Boat Commission launch sites in Rochester, Monaca and New Brighton.

He felt that because several of these are seasonal, it may be difficult to establish official water trails.

He noted that there is an excellent canoeing guide that describes all these rivers. It is called something like "The Canoeing Guide to Western PA and Northern West Virginia," and it put out by the Pittsburgh Council of American Youth Hostels. (tel: 412-362-8182). It costs about \$25.

9. What do you see as the primary obstacles to developing a greenway plan? Are there ways to overcome these challenges?

He believes that property acquisition and money are the two big sticking points. He noted that Beaver Borough has developed lots of park plans, but little has moved forward due to lack of funding.

Key Person Interview with John Trant,
Cranberry Township Planning Department

We are in the midst of updating our Comprehensive Plan, which will include greenway/trail planning, so there isn't a whole lot on the books right now. However, I've provided some information below that you may find helpful. If you have any other questions, feel free to give me a call. (724-776-4806 ext. 1097)

1. Are there any recreational trails (existing or planned) in your area that are in close proximity to the Beaver County border? How would we best make connections to them?

Darlington Road is likely to include a trail adjacent to the Road when that area develops. It is a very scenic area (farms, woods).

2. Are there destination points in or around Cranberry (significant parks, natural areas, cultural or historic sites) that our greenways or trails might connect to?

A large new community park (Graham Park) will be under construction starting in '07. It is on the west side of the Turnpike, north of Rochester Road.

The Township's golf course is in the NW corner of the Township, near the Beaver County border.

3. Are there any other planning efforts in Cranberry that we should be aware of that might be relevant to our greenways & trails plan?

As I mentioned above, we are in process of updating our Comprehensive Plan, which will include recommendations for trail and greenway connections.

We recently completed the Brush Creek Smart Growth Plan, which includes pedestrian connections in the area west of the Turnpike and north of Rochester Road.

The Brush Creek Plan also includes Park Place, an 800 unit TND that is likely to be under construction starting next year. This will be a major destination in Cranberry. It will include a variety of housing types, as well as retail.

Interview with Keith Klos,
North Country Trail Association

Interview/Contact Date: August 26, 2005

22. What is your position/title and what is your organization's mission or role in the County?

He is the president of the Allegheny National Forest Chapter of the North Country Trail Association. This organization is working to establish a walking trail from Crown Point in New York to North Dakota. To date, 1700 miles have been certified by the National Park Service. It will be a walking path only.

He is vaguely familiar with the stretch in Beaver County, but suggested I talk to Joyce in their "Wampum Chapter." She is working on the trail in Beaver County. He agreed to send me her contact information.

Key Person Interview with Larry Morley,
New Brighton Borough

Key Person Interview with Larry Morley, New Brighton Borough Manager

I met with Larry in his office on 11/15/05. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss Larry's thoughts on trail development in New Brighton Borough. Larry suggested that we drive around the Borough to take a look at his thoughts for where trails might be located in the Borough.

Larry said the primary trail corridor in the Borough would begin in Big Rock Park and terminate at the Beaver County YMCA, located on Junction Stretch in Rochester Township.

Larry feels it will be difficult to connect New Brighton and Beaver Falls as the Seventh Street bridge has a narrow sidewalk and is not conducive to pedestrian or bicycle traffic.

Big Rock Park is located on the eastern bank of the Beaver River, and is between the river and several active railroad tracks. Big Rock Park is accessed through two tunnels that pass beneath the railroad. One is located at 8th Street and the second is located between 11th and 12th Streets.

The northernmost entrance to Big Rock Park is at Eighth Street and is about four blocks south of Larry's proposed terminus if the trail. It is possible for the trail to either be low, along the river, or be high where it would share the access road through the park. The lower option is more appealing although it would cost more to develop.

The trail would continue through Big Rock Park, and if it is placed low, along the river, it would climb the bank near the water intake building. At that point it will continue along the road to the southern park entrance located between 11 and 12th Streets. The trail would cross beneath the railroad tracks, through the tunnel, and upon exiting the tunnel turn south and follow Second Avenue. Second Avenue has sidewalks located along most of its length, and appears to be wide enough to accommodate bike lanes. Therefore, the trail will follow Second Avenue to the Fallston Bridge. The Fallston Bridge is being replaced, but the bridge is intended to remain for pedestrian and bicycle traffic. The bridge will allow residents of Fallston to access the trail.

The trail will continue along Second Avenue, to 19th Street. At 19th Street the trail would turn east, and cross State Route 18 at its intersection with 19th Street.

Between 19th and 21st Streets New Brighton Borough is constructing Fishing Park. The park is situated on the eastern bank of the Beaver River and it is located just south of the Townsend Dam. Recognizing this area was a popular location for anglers, the Borough had the opportunity to acquire the property and develop into a formalized fishing access. The park is currently under construction and will be completed in the Spring of 2006.

When completed the park will include accessible fishing access from a boardwalk located on the bank of the Beaver River. It is the only accessible fishing access point on the Beaver River in Beaver County.

After crossing State Route 18, the trail will turn south onto 3rd Avenue. At Third Avenue the trail will continue to the inactive railroad bed that extends the length of Junction Stretch, to Rochester Borough. As the trail continues along the railbed in New Brighton Borough, and enters Rochester Township, the trail will intersect with Sharon Road.

The new Veterans Memorial Bridge is proposed to connect Rochester Township, on the eastern side of the Beaver River, with Bridgewater Borough on the western banks of the Beaver River. The new bridge, in its current form, is proposed to have a ten foot wide shared use path located along the southern travel lanes of the bridge. Therefore, a trail spur is proposed to continue west from the Third Avenue and Sharon Road intersection, along Sharon Road to the new bridge. Once this trail segment crosses the bridge into Bridgewater it will continue through Bridgewater and Beaver Boroughs and will provide access to the Beaver Riverfront Park, and Brady's Run Park located in Brighton Township.

Following the tour of the riverfront Larry took me to the 10th Street Overlook. Although Larry said it cannot be connected to the trail system, he wanted to make us aware of the outstanding view of the Beaver River from the overlook. The overlook is located on the eastern bank of the Beaver River, where the former 10th Street Bridge was once located. The overlook provides an extraordinary riverfront view of the Beaver River Corridor with the Patterson Dam as the focal point and Beaver Falls as the backdrop.

While standing at the overlook I noticed a footpath on the hillside below. Larry noted that it has been created by anglers who use it to access fishing spots on the Beaver River. Larry also noted that it provides access to a biological diversity area as identified by the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy. Larry doesn't think the BDA was identified due to threatened or endangered species, but designated because it represents a vegetative community that is rare in Beaver County.

Interview with Laura Rubino,
Beaver County Corporation for Economic Development

Interview/Contact Date: April 5, 2006

I called Laura to discuss the Conceptual Master Plan for the Bridgewater Crossing Development.

1. Will there be an overpass over the railroad tracks at the entrance to the site?

No. They looked into constructing a tunnel under the tracks, however, the pedestrian lane would have had to be in a separate tunnel. This was prohibitively expensive. Therefore, the crossing will be at grade with gates and signals. There will be a pedestrian lane that will be suitable for bicycles.

2. Will the site have a boat access ramp?

No. The current sunken barges at water level are failing. They looked into repairing or replacing them, but this was also too costly. Therefore, the barges will be removed and the shoreline will be filled and rip-rapped. To compensate, the development will have a dock to the West of the overlook where boats can tie up. She will send us the plans for this dock.

3. Our Greenways and Trails Plan is proposing a shared use path that would start at the proposed Beaver Riverfront Park and continue under the railroad bridge through the Bridgewater Crossing development. Are the current plans for the site compatible with this trail proposal?

Yes. The plans show a trail that circles the site. In addition the road that currently ends in a cul-de-sac will eventually be extended to connect under the railroad bridge to Beaver Riverfront Park.

**Key Person Interview with Lincoln Kretchmar,
President, Beaver Area Chamber of Commerce**

Interview/Contact Date: September 8, 2005

23. What is your position/title and what is your organization's mission or role in the County?

Mr. Kretchmar is owner of Kretchmar Bakery in Beaver and is president of the Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber's mission is to improve the business community in downtown Beaver and promote the town as a whole.

24. Do you think a greenway network should be established in the County? If yes, what do you think are the principle reasons that a greenway network should be established in Beaver County?

Yes. It is a good idea to conserve land for recreation and conservation. Shows a commitment of legislators to create inviting environments for people to grow and blossom in. They need to manage land better. The big industries that use to dominate the area did not take this into consideration. The benefits of the plan would be to combat sprawl, improve habitats and attract new families and residents to the County.

25. Greenway plans often consist of a series of "hubs and spokes." The hubs consist of population centers; significant parks or other natural areas; as well as key cultural and historic sites. What are the areas that you think are the most significant destinations for visitors and residents?

- Historical sites (many)
- Beaver
- Ambridge (Old Economy)
- Beaver Falls
- Brady's Run
- New commercial areas (like those in Center)

26. The spokes are the corridors that link the hubs. They may be rural hiking, biking, skiing or multi-use trails, water trails, abandoned rail lines redeveloped for recreational uses, urban waterfront paths as well as designated bike/pedestrian lanes on roads or urban streets.

- a. Are there existing or planned trails that should be used to help connect the "hubs?" Where are they?

Not sure.

- b. Where would you most like to see new trails developed?

- i. Beaver to Beaver Falls
- ii. Trail to Ohio (along Route 68) – connecting to Ohio’s planned & existing trails
- iii. Trail along the Ohio River to Ambridge – putting on the Aliquippa side would give Aliquippa some help.
- iv. Overall, the trails should run close to those towns with denser populations.

27. Some greenways do not include trails, but simply conserve corridors of open space. Are there places in Beaver County that should be set aside primarily to protect wildlife habitat (e.g., streams, flyways) or sensitive environmental features (e.g., floodplains, steep slopes)?

Doesn’t know.

28. Are there brownfield sites, abandoned industrial properties, mine reclamation areas or other underutilized properties that would benefit from trail development?

Mentioned the old J&L site on the Aliquippa side of the Ohio.

29. Are there locations that provide important vistas of natural areas (hills, valleys, rivers) or man-made features (cities, villages, farms) that should be protected (scenic viewsheds)?

Brighton Township hill – looks over Beaver & Rochester
View from Monaca to Beaver

30. What do you see as the primary obstacles to developing a greenway plan? Are there ways to overcome these challenges?

- The communities themselves. When it comes to the public use of land, everyone has their own ideas and are not eager to compromise.
- Land ownership – uncooperative land owners

He indicated that the way to overcome these obstacles is to develop a good marketing plan to sell the greenways & trails plan and get people on the “same page.”

31. Do you have any reports or other written resources that would be useful to us in the development of the Greenway Plan?

No, the Chamber has not done any studies or surveys.