

# Air Line State Park Trail



## WINTER 2022 PROJECT NEWSLETTER



## **Moving the Air Line State Park Trail Master Plan Forward**

*By Jeanne Davies*

This is a challenging time for so many, struggling to cope with frontline jobs, caring for children, family, friends and themselves, managing those blurred lines between home and work. Based on data over the last two years, Connecticut's parks, trails and open spaces have increasingly become a sanctuary for reflection and rejuvenation. The Air Line State Park Trail is one of the jewels of the Connecticut State Park and Forest network.

Two years ago, a large group of enthusiastic Air Line State Park Trail stakeholders met at the Hebron Library meeting room. Breaking into small focus groups, they strategized how to move a plan forward which would optimally coordinate trail stewardship between the twelve towns of the Air Line State Park Trail. How can towns work collaboratively with the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CTDEEP) and so many passionate stakeholders and trail users to advocate and improve the experience for the trail visitor? Most importantly, how can these twelve towns that adjoin the trail work together and leverage economic benefit from this amazing 50-mile recreational and tourism asset.

The outcome was a blueprint for creating a synergistic 12 Town ALSPT Master Plan, which engages town residents, businesses, partner organizations, tourism groups and CTDEEP. The plan begins with intensive research that includes:

- Data mapping, demographic data, land use patterns, site visits, trail user counts and interviews to understand current conditions of the trail
- Infrastructure needs and collaborative maintenance concepts
- Regionalized cost savings possibilities
- Participation and role of stakeholders and partner organizations, economic influence corridors
- Expertise toward an inventory of natural resources on and near the trail as well as land-use policies and viewshed protection.

COVID banged on the door soon after, and the next group meeting was canceled. The CT RC&D staff requested an extension from the CTDEEP Recreational Trails Program to adjust to a new paradigm of virtual meetings. The planning process begins with designing a template so stakeholders and the public can easily contribute ideas and suggestions toward a draft plan. The project team has moved forward over two years to:

- Assist seven Air Line State Park Trail towns in creating a fold-out wallet-size EZ map to promote the towns and the ALSPT region.
- Establish five working project committees with members from the original ALSPT Stakeholder Committee and new volunteers. The six committees include: Conservation; Advocacy & Marketing; Sustainable Economics and Land Use; Infrastructure; and Governance and Leadership.
- The University of Connecticut's Trail Team initiated trail counting and user surveys to understand trail usage, experience and conditions.

- Form an Environmental Review Team - as a match to the Recreational Trails Grants, CTC&D's Environmental Review Team Program organized a team of 22 environmental, cultural and transportation professionals to highlight the management of vital natural and cultural resources and access within four focus areas of the trail. Select CT DEEP staff have contributed their time to this same process to guide natural resources and wildlife of significance in the 50-mile corridor
- Hire consulting specialists to support the work of each working committee. To date, consultants include the expertise of the University of Connecticut (Trail Counts- User Surveys, CT Trail Finder): The Last Green Valley (Tourism & Forestry Initiatives), the Eastern CT Conservation District (Watersheds), Barton and Loguidice Engineering (Infrastructure), Ninigret Partners (Economics), Amy Petrone, AICP (Land Use Analysis), and Quinn & Hary (Marketing & Website)
- Outline the chapters and content for the 12 Town ALSPT Master Plan

**Next steps for Winter & Spring 2022 include:**

- Bridging the work of working committees to match up findings and recommendations
- Working with partners in economic influence corridors to build marketing synergy and trail connections
- Continued research and mapping
- 12 Town Regional Website-Design platform and content
- Revisit sites with Environmental Review Team for springtime assessment
- Graphic design for the 12 Town ALSPT Master Plan
- Newsletter updates to stakeholders and interested public/town residents
- Create a script for a promotional video

As we continue to create this dynamic plan, your voice, insights and contributions are valuable and welcome. We will soon enter the stage where the project will invite feedback and insights into the plan. Visit the 12 Town ALSPT website <https://ctrcd.org/airlinetrail/> to learn more about the Master Plan process, visit the trail, subscribe to this newsletter and join the 12 Town Air Line State Park Master Plan Outreach Group to get more updates.

*Jeanne Davies, AICP*  
 ALSPT Master Planner & Project Manager  
 CTC&D Executive Director  
[Sign up for this newsletter](#)

## 12 TOWN AIRLINE STATE PARK TRAIL MASTER PLAN

PLANNING FOR REGIONAL and LOCAL COORDINATION FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH, CONSERVATION, COST SAVINGS, MAINTENANCE COORDINATION, TOURISM- MARKETING



**ALTSP TOWN STAKEHOLDER COMMITTEE**  
 Contributes to oversight and final recommendations for 12 Town ALSPT Master Plan  
 Assists with project outreach, participates on project committees, works with consultants, plan advocates



**Infrastructure & Municipal Leadership Committees**  
 Town CEOs, Planners, Public Works Officials, Park Supervisors, Engineers & CTDEEP advise toward coordination on infrastructure and leadership

**Conservation Committee**  
 Team of local and regional environmental volunteer provide expertise and recommendations to manage natural and culture resources

**Advocacy & Marketing**  
 Local and regional partners in tourism and marketing research and recommend on regional marketing strategy, outreach guidelines and website development

**Sustainable Economics & Land Use Committee**  
 Team of local and regional economic expert volunteers and stakeholders research and recommend on regional economic and land use policies to enhance region





February 2020 Infrastructure Committee Breakout Session  
 Local Public Works Dir., Park Supervisors, CT DEEP & others outline priorities for 12 Town ALSPT Master Plan  
 Advocacy and Marketing Committee meets up in the background

## 12 Town Air Line State Park Trail Master Plan Stakeholder Group

*Members Provide Insights and Guidance Toward Plan Completion*

Sam Alexander, SECCOG  
 Robert Aloise, CRCOG  
 Ken Beausoleil, Thompson  
 Jim Bellano, Windham  
 John Bolduc, BikeWalk Bolton  
 Janet Booth, Wyndham Land Trust  
 Matt Bordeaux, Colchester  
 Willie Bousquet, Putnam  
 Kim Bradley, CT Trails Census  
 Jane Brawerman, CRCCD  
 Elizabeth Brown, National Park Service  
 David Brown, Middlesex Land Trust  
 Laura Brown, UConn  
 Lois Bruinooge, TLGV  
 Craig Bryant, Hebron  
 David Buckley, CTDEEP  
 Margot Burns, RiverCOG  
 Rich Cahill, Hampton  
 Joe Cassone, CTDEEP  
 Phil Chester, Lebanon

Sarah Heminway, CT Audubon  
 Brian Holdt, Airline Cycles  
 Dean Hunniford, Lebanon  
 Jennifer Kaufman, Mansfield  
 Amanda Kennedy, SECCOG  
 Ann Kilpatrick, CTDEEP  
 Michael Lambert, CTDEEP  
 Jim Larkin, NECCOG  
 Stan Malcolm, ALSPT Photographer  
 Tim Malone, CRCOG  
 Christopher Martin, CTDEEP  
 Scott Moorehead, Putnam Trail Committee  
 Dan Mullins, ECConservation District  
 Maureen Nicholson, Portland  
 Charlie Obert, Thompson  
 Brian O'Connell, Hebron  
 Sylvia Ounpuu, BikeWalk Bolton  
 Patrick Gallagher, Hebron  
 Amy Patterson, CLCC  
 Louis Pear, Portland

Michael Cipriano, CRCOG  
James Cordier, Hebron  
Kevin Cwikla, Lebanon  
Mike D'Amato, Tyche Planning  
Scott Dawley, CTDEEP  
Jeremy DeCarli, East Hampton  
Mary Dickerson, Portland  
Bruce Donald, East Coast Greenways  
Karen Durlach, Thompson  
Chris Elkinson, Thompson  
Delia Fey, Putnam  
Bruce Fitzback, Putnam  
Nick Gardner, Pomfret  
Laurie Giannotti, CTDEEP  
Jay Gigliotti, Colchester & Chaplin  
LyAnn Graff, TLGV  
John Guskowski, Tyche Planning  
Jeremy Hall, East Hampton  
John Hankins, Bike Walk Bolton  
Rob Haramut, RiverCOG  
Brian Hess, CTDEEP

**Project Manager:** Jeanne Davies  
**Assistant Planner:** Chris Roberts  
**Marketing Associate:** Hannah Hurwitz

Tyra Penn, Thompson  
Nathan Piche, CTDEEP  
Jean Pillo, EC Conservation District  
Paul Provost, Thompson  
Matthew Quinn, CTDEEP  
Kate Rattan, SECCOG  
Jim Rivers, Windham  
Sari Rizzo, Portland  
Elaine Sistare, Putnam  
Rob Smith, East Haddam Land Trust  
Steve Sokoloski, At Large Trail Enthusiast  
Marsha Sokoloski, At Large Trail Enthusiast  
Paula Stahl, Columbia  
Stephanie Stroud, National Park Service  
Charlie Tracy, Pomfret  
Tom Tyler, CTDEEP  
Delpha Very, Putnam  
Mark Walter, Columbia  
Emily Wilson, UConn  
Brian Wilson, CTDEEP  
Pat Young, Salmon River- Eight Mile  
Li Yukshan, Windham  
Anne Zitkus, Hebron  
Frank Zitkus, Hebron

*Emeritus Staff & Members*  
*Andrea Peres, Outreach Coordinator*  
*Mike O'Leary, Hebron Town Planner*



## **Chris Roberts - ALSPT Mapmaker**

Over the last two years, it quickly became clear, this project would need a dedicated staff person to design and create maps for ongoing discussion, analysis and the final plan. Enter Chris Roberts, our new GIS coordinator, economics research assistant, demographer, land use coordinator and project assistant. He has a lot on his plate. Chris is a recent graduate of CCSU's Geography Program who was hired in 2021 to support this project. He had previously worked as an intern for East Hampton's Land Use Department creating a draft economic growth plan for the downtown. He recently found a full time position as assistant land use coordinator for the Town of Willington, but continues to work on this project in his spare time. All contributions to



mapping and geospatial data are encouraged to help provide support to the project. Chris will take the lead as mapmaker for the 12 Town ALSPT Master Plan with important data and shapefiles provided by University of Connecticut, the Last Green Valley, NECCOG, RiverCOG, CRCOG and SECCOG. The project continues to be grateful to the expertise and insights of Emily Wilson, Geospatial Educator at the University of Connecticut. Emily has provided expertise from the project's beginning and has created data insights and mapping to support the project over the last two years. She continues to offer support with challenging mapping questions, especially in her work with CT Trail Finder.

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The Rookery  
(Photo Courtesy of Council of Millennial Moms)

## ALTSP AND FAMILIES: A PERFECT MATCH IN COVID-19 TIMES

*by Steve Sokoloski*

The ALTSP has become a haven for my family in this year of Covid-19. As pandemic restrictions became the new normal last spring, exploring the trail from North

so we can watch the frogs before they jump. We know that ducks say, “quack” and geese say, “honk”. We have counted the herons and nests in the North

Windham to Pomfret Station became the mainstay recreation for our family “bubble”. Retired grandparents, our then pregnant daughter, an active two-year-old, a dog, and now a six-month-old, we have become a merry band, finding socially distanced adventure on the trail as a daily activity.

We have found the ALTSP to be a welcoming place for family recreation. The trail is a broad, flat avenue, great for walking or a bike rides. A stroller with sturdy wheels is usually fine on the packed stone dust surface. The long straight site distances offer plenty of time to adjust masking, or to step aside to wait for passing runners, bikes or parties with dogs or horses. There are just enough people so you can travel by yourself, yet you do not feel alone. The trail gets more crowded on the weekends or when you are close to the parking areas at Pomfret Station or Goodwin Forest. The more remote road crossings offer a few trailside parking spaces if you want to be more isolated. The road crossings break the trail into short sections, offering a variety of trip possibilities. We have made piles of acorns for the squirrels and collected raspberries for the birds.

We know where the turtles lay their eggs, and the logs they like to sun on after they are born. We have learned to walk quietly

Windham rookery and found the geocache up by the Pomfret Senior Center. It is always worth the walk to see if the noisy, “Oreo Cookie Cows” are out at the farm on Griffin Road. We have found the rock that commemorates the site of Elliott’s Station. We throw rocks in every pond and admire the work of beavers in constructing homes and dams. We have played miles of “shadow tag” pretending to be hawks chasing Yaya and Pee. We have explored side trails in the Gellert Preserve, and the Native Plant Gardens at the Goodwin Education Center, and “discovered” that the horse trail at Hampton Reservoir loops back to the Air Line making a nice one-mile loop. On another side trip (that was destined for a major melt down) on the Blue Flag Meadow trail, Momma discovered that the trail was “enchanted” and magic jellybeans began appearing just up the trail on tree limbs and rocks, just in time to get us all back to the Air Line.

If you are looking for a place to go with family, pack your stroller with lots of snacks and drinks, be patient and kind with your kiddos, (you can turn around and go back any time) and head for adventure on the ALTSP.

## **The Air Line State Park Trail Environmental Review Team**

CT RC&D's Environmental Review Team has a fifty-year track record of excellence, providing support services to municipalities and land trusts to inventory and recommend management of natural and cultural resources on specific properties of concern. With the Airline State Park Trail, the Environmental Review Team, takes this process to a new level of achievement. To say the least, an inventory process of this scale will be challenging. The scope of natural and cultural resources, wildlife and accessibility on a trail fifty miles in length requires an approach that recognizes both landscape context of expansive acres of critical

resources and an understanding and examples of how to manage resources on individual properties, both town and privately owned.

The project's Environmental Review Team includes a myriad of natural and cultural resources specialists who are contributing insights and recommendations on geology, forestry, wetlands, soils, agriculture, wildlife, herpetology, archaeology, ornithology transportation safety, pollinator pathways, invasive species management, stream ecology, fisheries, consistency with Connecticut's Plan of Conservation and Development and watershed management. CT DEEP has provided specialists in forestry, wildlife and fisheries to support this section of the plan, which has already contributed valuable insights and useful links to resources.

To date, members of the team have visited three separate focus areas.

- **Focus Area A** is on the Hebron section, near the Hibbert Property and the Bernstein Property. Hebron's Conservation Commission sought an inventory of important forestry, wildlife and fisheries resources to enhance ecological management of the properties and create a larger landscape of ecological value in collaboration with the adjacent state forest.
- **Focus Area B** is on the Lebanon section, near farmland near Village Hill Road and Krause Road, to understand the potential for economic connections that support farm visits from the trail and ecological management of agriculture uses near the trail.
- **Focus Area C** is on the Pomfret section, near the town's recreational park system and Mashamoquet State Park, to evaluate how to create a connective ecological landscape with varied property owners and partners toward forest management trail construction to adjacent sites and accessibility. Partners in this section include the Wyndham Land Trust, the Town of Pomfret and CTDEEP.

The project staff is working with the Towns of Putnam and Portland to create a Focus Area D to evaluate how best to connect missing sections of the trail while protecting, enhancing or reclaiming natural resources and viewsheds.

More site visits are anticipated for April and May when the team can fully evaluate vernal pools, wildlife, and emerging plant life. We'll introduce you to some of our ERT members in our next newsletter.





Photo A - ERT Team at Raymond Brook Photo B - ERT Team Pomfret Town Trail Connection Photo C - ERT Team at Village Hill Road Crossing Lebanon Photo D - ERT Team - Hebron Introductions



Fall 2021 Environmental Review Team - Pomfret Focus Area Site Visit  
From left to right: Brian Hess- TDEEP, Chris Roberts-CTRC&D, Charlotte Pyle-Pollinator Scientist,  
Ann Kilpatrick-CTDEEP, Jean Pillo-Eastern CT Conservation District,  
Janet Booth-Wyndham Land Trust, Chris Allan, Landtech-Soils- Wetland Scientist

## The Eight Town Air Line State Park Trail EZ Maps

**AIR LINE STATE PARK TRAIL HISTORY**

In the 1960s, over fifty miles of the rail bed from East Hampton to the Massachusetts border were acquired by the Connecticut State Park System to construct a recreational linear park.

This trail has a colorful past. The "Air Line" was envisioned as a direct line between New York City and Boston. It opened in 1973 and 26 miles shorter, it offered fierce competition to the shoreline rail service from New York to Boston. The mesmerizing, white-painted express train, known as the Ghost Train, made the run between Boston and New York in six hours, a record time for 1984.

The construction of the new rail line contained ambitious feats of engineering, blasting through granite hills, navigating deep valleys and rivers along the route. The Air Line Railroad's "Ghost Train" began in 1891 and was designed to attract wealthy travelers. Luxurious Pullman cars were painted white with gold trim and the staff of the train wore formal white uniforms.

The catastrophic Great East Thompson Train Wreck on December 4, 1991 clouded the introduction of this first new rail service. It was one of the greatest train wrecks in American history, and the only train accident to involve four trains. Still, over the next four years, successful businessmen and prominent citizens, including President Benjamin Harrison, rode the increasingly well-known Ghost Train. As it sped across eastern Connecticut, its lustrous cars were easily recognized, especially at night.

In the new 20th century, technology increased, railroad engines became faster and cars became longer, everything became heavier and after World War II, access to automobiles and interstate highways reduced the profitability of rail travel. The quaintness of the Air Line's winding grades, as well as the weight restrictions of the spindly trestle bridges began to show its limitations. During its construction, the Air Line Railroad was expensive and controversial, but its operational costs would lead to its ultimate demise and abandonment. Passenger service on the Air Line ceased by 1937, and the track was completely abandoned by 1965.

Today, visitors enjoy scenic panoramas, village life, wildlife, hiking trails, and the tranquility of the rural landscape. The United States Department of the Interior recognized the southern section of the Air Line State Park Trail as a national recreation trail in 2002.

For more maps in this series, email [outreach@ctdol.org](mailto:outreach@ctdol.org) or visit [ctdol.org](http://ctdol.org)

**PARKING**

Many parking areas serve the Air Line State Park Trail. Some primary locations are:

**THOMPSON**

- Large parking lot at 121 Riverside Dr., (US 32, Massachusetts)
- Pull off for a few cars at Air Line trail crossing, 185 Sand Dam Rd
- 5 car parking lot, located at 642 East Thompson Rd, near the junction of New Rd

**PUTNAM**

- 18 Kennedy Dr. across from Canal
- 80 Kennedy Dr. directly across from the South entrance of Oronoco Park
- 88 Kennedy Dr
- 185 Kennedy Dr (DMV lot)

**POMFRET**

- 18 car paved parking lot at Pomfret Station, 13 Railroad Ave (off of Rt. 169)
- Parking adjacent to trail. An 18 car paved parking lot, west side of Pomfret Town Office, 455 Middlesex Rd (Rt. 44)
- Parking available in rear of town owned paved parking lot at Pomfret Senior Center, 207 Middlesex Rd (Rt. 44)

**HAMPTON**

- Pull offs for a few cars at the intersection of Bowler Hill Rd and Windham Rd (Rt. 203) in northwest Windham

**WINDHAM**

- Pull offs for a few cars at the intersection of Bowler Hill Rd and Windham Rd (Rt. 203) in northwest Windham

**COLUMBIA**

- Rt. 87, Cook Hill Rd and Village Hill Rd

**PORTLAND**

- Limited parking at 82 Middle Haddam Rd

**MAILS TO TRAIL**

**AIR LINE TRAIL**

A CONNECTICUT STATE PARK

Legend:  
 - Air Line State Park Trail  
 - Trail Entry/Parking  
 - Colchester Spur  
 - Hop River State Park Trail

"Easy" is a relative term when it comes to coordinating eight towns to produce a wallet-sized foldable map. The Eastern Regional Tourism District funded the fun and insightful project with a match from each of the participating towns and project financial oversight provided by CT RC&D. Through the process, the eight participating towns gain insights on the options available within their towns to entice trail users and visitors to their town's iconic attractions, businesses and events. This great demonstration project served as a stepping stone to larger twelve town marketing coordination. Quinn and Hary, a marketing and communications company in New London, CT, worked with the towns using enthusiasm and determination to meet a quick project deadline. The maps are designed to showcase the region on one side and highlight the participating town on the other side. If you happen to find a map, you'll be one of the lucky ones. These beautiful EZ maps were in great demand and there is discussion on how to reprint them for this coming season.

## HIGHLIGHTS IN EAST HAMPTON, CT

**The Joseph N. Goff House**  
Museum and Cultural Center  
2 Barton Hill Rd.  
This historically preserved building contains artifacts and memorabilia of Connecticut's 8th Governor and East Hampton native, William A. Goff. The Cultural Center sponsors musical and enrichment programs, a special testament to our community's cultural, civic, and architectural heritage.

**Bellevue Village Center**  
Historic Main Street is lined with eclectic boutiques offering clothing, local handmade, pottery, flowers, art, antiques, furniture and even window blinds. You will also find salons, a coffee house, artisan bakery, liquor store, barber shop, hair salons, and Public Library.

**AirLine Cycles**  
66 Main St. (860) 365-8496  
Visit our family friendly, local bike shop in the Bellevue Village Center for new or used bicycles, tune-ups and repairs.

**The Chatham Historical Museum and School House**  
6 Bevin Blvd.  
chathamhistorical.org  
A private, nonprofit, organization open to the public the first Sunday of each month from 2-4pm. The museum is loaded with displays of historic artifacts, photographs, toys, costumes, tools and items of interest.

**Lake Pocotopaug**  
Seav's Fork, 66 North Main St.  
Nested on the western shore of Lake Pocotopaug is our beautiful Seav's Park. Featuring a public beach, playground, pavilion, picnic shelter, garbage, boat launch, tennis, and basketball courts, open to East Hampton residents. Please use extreme caution while cycling on the busy roads from the Air Line trail to Seav's Park.

**Conestock Covered Bridge**  
East Hampton  
The Bridge spans the Galton River in southeastern East Hampton and is named after the town's first postmaster, Frederick C. Conestock. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places as one of only three remaining historical covered bridges in the state. It serves as a well-preserved example of a Howe truss design patented in 1840 - and also provides the only remaining example in Connecticut of a wooden pony truss.

**Historic Highlights**

1. Coastal Station Light
2. Joseph N. Goff House Museum
3. Chatham Historical Society
4. Seav's Park, Lake Pocotopaug
5. Shaker's Hut
6. Seav's Seaweed Shell Factory
7. Cranberry Bog
8. Seav's Pavilion
9. Rapallo Viaduct
10. Lyman Viaduct
11. Conestock Bridge

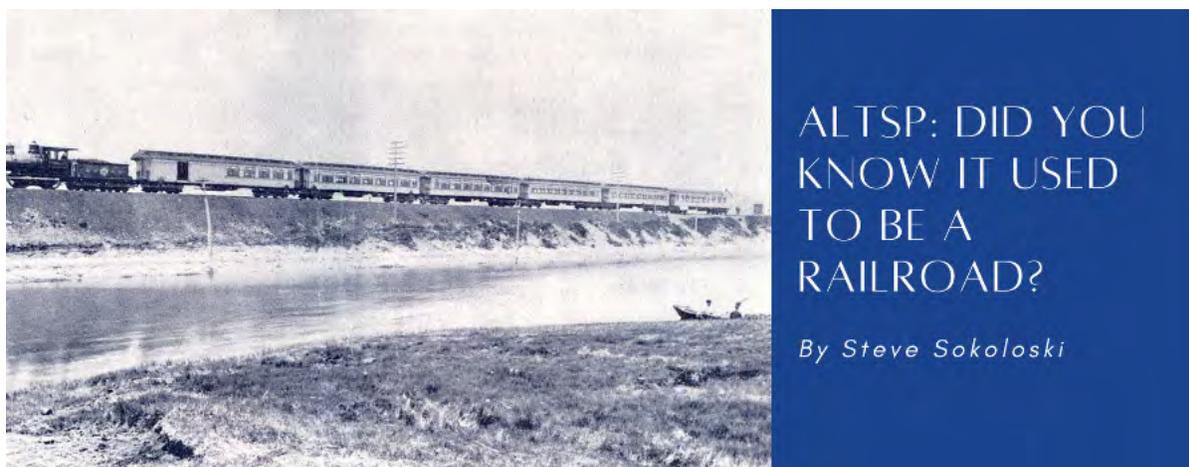
**Food/ Snacks**

1. Pizzeria Da Vinci
2. The Tavern on 66
3. Po's Rice and Spice
4. ECO Coffee House
5. Main Street Pizza
6. Gulf Gasoline

**Trail Tips**

- Horses and riders have right of way.
- Bring water and a cell phone.
- Let someone know where you're going and when you might return.
- Clean up after your pet.
- Carry out what you carry in.
- If you see something, say something.

For additional copies of this map, please e-mail [trail@easthamptonct.gov](mailto:trail@easthamptonct.gov)



**ALTSP: DID YOU KNOW IT USED TO BE A RAILROAD?**

*By Steve Sokoloski*

Many of us know the story of the New York and New England Limited, the Air Line's famous all white "Ghost Train" express that brought luminaries like Charles Dickens and Rudyard Kipling from New York to Boston in just six hours. Did you know that the Limited only ran for just four years, from 1891-1895? The full rail line served eastern Connecticut for almost a century with freight and passenger service, shaping the lives of rural farmers and city workers. Today, when we use the trail for recreation, its origins in the age of railroads are obscured by time. However, there are still visible reminders of rail history to appreciate. We can stand on the buried trestles of the Lyman and Rapallo Viaducts. We can still use the Willimantic Footbridge that was built to safely take pedestrians over the railyards. The Willimantic Freight House stands shuttered, but still sports its mansard roof, the last existing building from what was once a busy railyard. The Connecticut Eastern Railroad Museum has a rebuilt version of the Columbia Junction Roundhouse. At Pomfret Station, you can read about the April 10, 1918 two train crash that killed five. In downtown Putnam, the Gertrude Chandler Warner "Boxcar Children" Museum is scheduled to reopen in summer 2021

in its renovated home, an authentic boxcar. At the north end of the trail, you can learn about the Great East Thompson Train Wreck of December 4, 1891. It stands as one of the nation's greatest train tragedies. The intrepid folks of the Thompson Trails Committee are working to develop this site into a park.

I enjoy looking for the smaller, less visible pieces of rail history that still exist along the trail. The remains of an old multi-armed telegraph pole, the concrete block near RT 44 that was the base of an iron "telltale", warning about the upcoming bridge. Sharp eyes can see old, rusted iron signal arms near Modock Road, and Station Road. Look closely in the rock cuts to see the drill channels from left from blasting. Easy to see in the big cut in East Hampton, but still visible in smaller cuts along the trail.

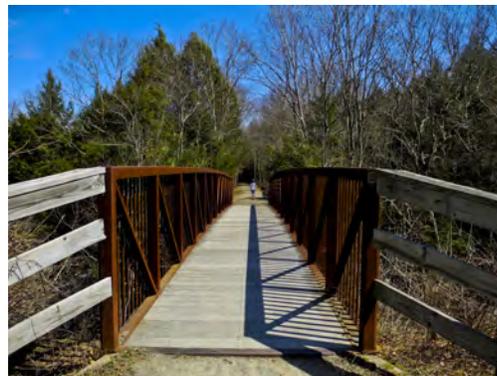
Why is the street called Railroad Street or Station Road or Depot Road? Was there a station stop there? A friend passed along a picture of a "conductors map" that shows the stations along northern end of the line. I think I know where they all were located. At least, I have found the commemorative rock that marks where Elliott's Station once was at Brooklyn Road.

The artifacts tell us about times gone by. The farmer using a siding to load milk. The student being transported to Pomfret School for start of term. The immigrant coming to live with existing family and to work in the mill. As we work to enhance the trail, we would do well to weave its special past into its modern incarnation.

## **CT RC&D actively seeks high school students to become Air Line Trail Representatives!**

### **Open Call to Schools and Youth Organizations in All Towns Along the Airline Trail!**

Do you know a high school student who is interested in making a difference in their community, loves the outdoors, seeks community service and professional development opportunities? If yes, please have them reach out to [jshea@ctracd.org](mailto:jshea@ctracd.org)



Open to students from these towns:  
***Putnam, Pomfret, Lebanon, Portland,  
Hebron, Hampton, East Hampton,  
Colchester, Chaplin,  
Thompson, Windham***

# UConn Trail Census Team

The UConn CAHNR Extension Connecticut Trail Census team, including partner Aaron Budris from Housatonic Valley Council of Governments, is working with the Connecticut Resource Conservation and Development Area and project team with trail use study in support of the Air Line State Park Trail Master Plan development. Temporary infrared trail counters have been installed along the Air Line State Park Trail throughout the summer of 2021. The temporary count data collected will supplement data collected through three permanent counters, located in Portland, East Hampton and Thompson, CT, which have been a component of the state-wide CT Trail Census program. The temporary counters have been moved approximately every two weeks until data is collected in each town the Air Line State Park Trail passes through. This data collection will provide a metric of the level of use along the entirety of the rail trail. In addition, to infrared data collection, QR-based survey signs have been placed in all major parking lots and trailheads along the Air Line State Park Trail. Trail users can use their phone cameras to access a survey developed by the UConn CT Trail Census team. The information collected from this survey will be used to understand and evaluate users' needs of the Air Line State Park Trail. Frequent updates of the CT Trail Census study are provided to the CT RC&D and Master Plan development teams; please feel free to contact [trails@uconn.edu](mailto:trails@uconn.edu) to learn more.

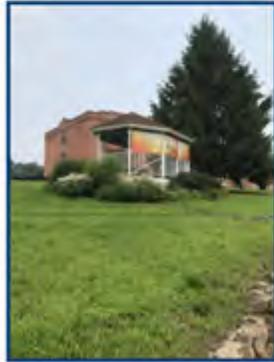


QR-based survey signs placed along the Air Line State Park Trail.



Infrared trail counters placed throughout the trail.

# East Hampton Village Center Plan

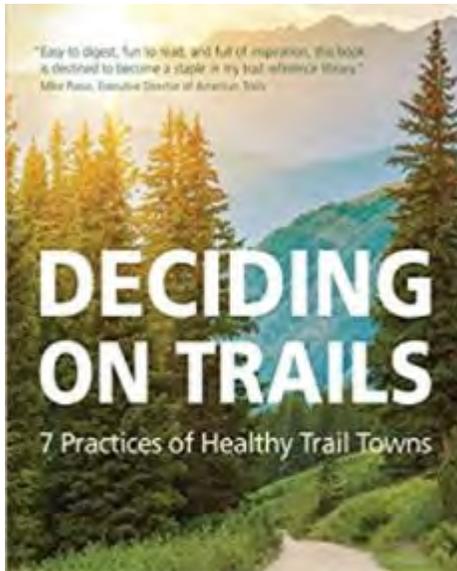


## **FOCUS ON AIR LINE STATE PARK TRAIL TOWNS:**

East Hampton: Economic Growth and the Airline State Park Trail

In the summer of 2021, the Town of East Hampton hired an intern, Chris Roberts to create a plan for the towns Village Center. Being a key asset to the Village Center, the Air Line Trail is a key part of the plan. The plan focuses on highlighting the businesses in the Village Center, pedestrian-friendly infrastructure, incorporation of wayfinding and signage, and increased connectivity between the Air Line State Park Trail, the Village Center, and its businesses. The plan can be found on the town of East Hamptons website on the land use [page](#).

## VIEW ON BOOKS - READINGS TO INSPIRE THE AIRLINE STATE PARK MASTER PLAN



After attending a seminar where Amy Camp was inspired through her examples and discussion of how to create a "trail town" culture, staff read this book and have been recommending it to everyone involved with the project.

*"DECIDING ON TRAILS is for every local champion, thought leader, and dreamer who knows that trails can make a difference in their community if only their town would recognize the value of trails. Written by one of the first Trail*

*Town practitioners, it covers the history of Trail Towns, recommended best practices, and how the concept has been adapted in dozens of places around the U.S. and Canada."*



**Deciding on Trails:** This is a presentation by Amy Camp of Cycle Forward on Trails. This is part of GMIST Sandbox Session.

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