Scenic Route 169 Advisory Committee  
Meeting #5 Notes- January 6th, 2016  
University of Connecticut Windham County Extension Center, Brooklyn, CT

Attendance  
Sam Alexander, NECCOG  
Jules D’Agostino, Brooklyn  
Ken Mahler, Lisbon  
Delia Fey, Woodstock  
Dick Whitney, Southbridge

Topics

- Planning objectives and recommendations in Chapter 3 of the plan (attached)

Discussion

Goal 1: Communicate and plan on the local, regional, and State levels, to ensure that the vision of the Corridor Management Plan is realized

- First selectmen (or chief elected officials) should serve on the permanent Advisory Committee, as well as Planning/Zoning chairmen

Goal 2: Guide the future and planned growth of towns along the byway corridor in a way that does not diminish the rural character of the byway, but rather seeks to enhance aesthetics and sense of place, protect open spaces and farmland, and preserve historic buildings, sites, and patterns of development

- In years between Plan of Conservation and Development updates, work with Planning and Zoning Commissions to annually identify sensitive properties and resources along the byway. Publish and prepare a document of these areas and possible actions to be taken by the commission
- Review, with Planning and Zoning Commissions, the Plan of Conservation and Development and make recommendations for actions related to Route 169
Goal 3: Collaborate with ConnDOT, utility companies, public works departments, and landowners to achieve context-sensitive approaches to future maintenance and improvements that may alter the scenic character of Route 169 and diminish the road’s relationship with its rural surroundings

- Education and outreach is important to gain buy-in
- A variation on “Green Up Day” in Vermont (http://www.greenupvermont.org/) would be a low-cost, community-based effort that would lead to a greater sense of ownership amongst property owners and other residents
- Public works departments could request permission from ConnDOT to perform certain maintenance activities

Goal 4: Position Route 169 as an economic driver by establishing a byway brand and strategy for marketing and tourism which would allow local businesses and attractions to capitalize off of their location

- Will the proposed signage design work on Route 169? Would ConnDOT approve? Similarly designed signs have been implemented in Massachusetts and elsewhere, but would agency policies in Connecticut prevent their implementation?
- Include Facebook and Twitter symbols on signage
- Are there wood-grained steel reflectors for sign posts that would meet current reflectivity standards?

Town Recommendations

- Consider the creation of a new zoning district for Woodstock Hill, or use a Village District (§8-2j), that would better address the types of uses that are compatible with the area and the existing Historic District. Consider the use of this new zone outside the existing Historic District as well
- Make recommendation to address sand and gravel operations in all towns
- Reference the POCD when recommending sidewalks in Newent
- Identify and plan for priority open space areas in all towns

Other Discussion

- If scenic pull-offs are developed, there should be signage warning against littering along the byway—littering has been an issue
Chapter Three: Ten-Year Strategy

Goal 1: Communicate and plan...
Goal 2: Guide the future and planned growth...
Goal 3: Collaborate with local...
Goal 4: Position Route 169 as an economic...

Byway Vision
Norwich and Southbridge
Recommendations for All Towns
Planning Recommendations

Contents
Ten-Year Strategy

Four corridor management goals (see Figure) were developed as part of this Plan to

Goal 1: Communicate and plan on the local, regional, and State levels, to ensure that the vision of the Corridor Management Plan is realized.

Goal 2: Guide the future and planned growth of towns along the byway corridor in a way that does not diminish the rural character of the corridor, but rather seeks to enhance and preserve the historic and scenic character of the region.

Goal 3: Collaborate with local governments, utility companies, ConnDOT, and potentially massDOT, to achieve context-sensitive approaches to future maintenance and improvements.

Goal 4: Position Route 169 as an economic driver by unifying area businesses and attractions, promoting the image of the region as a whole, and spurring tourism investment.

Each year, following the implementation of the Plan, the Connecticut Route 169 National Scenic Byway will prove to be a more valuable scenic, cultural, and economic resource than it was in the previous year.
2016-2026 Corridor Management Plan: Connecticut State Route 169 National Scenic Byway

**Goal 1: Communicate and plan on the local, regional, and State levels, to ensure that the vision of the Corridor Management Plan is realized**

- NECCOG and local, regional, and State-level stakeholders must not only monitor the progress of the Plan, but create a framework for implementation that allows interested persons to take ownership of initiatives.
- Too often, planning recommendations are not implemented because the onus for implementation rests on a single party without an ongoing committee of involved persons.
- Implementing the recommendations of the Plan are not implemented because the onus for implementation rests on a single party without an ongoing committee of involved persons.

### Objectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parties</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NECCOG</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Establish a permanent Advisory Committee consisting of representatives</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>from local government, ConnDOT, NECCOG, The Last Green Valley, businesses,</td>
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<td>land trusts, the public, and other partners to be identified</td>
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<tr>
<td>NECCOG, AC</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Establish a permanent Tourism and Marketing Committee representing the</td>
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<td>economic interests of businesses and visitors</td>
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<tr>
<td>NECCOG</td>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Assign a staff person to coordinate meetings of the Advisory Committee and</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Tourism and Marketing Committee, as well as advocate with municipal and</td>
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<td>State governments for the implementation of Goals and recommenda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NECCOG, AC</td>
<td>2016-2018</td>
<td>Develop a detailed plan for tourism, marketing, and signage</td>
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<td>Advocate for and pursue extension of the highway to terminate in</td>
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<td>Taftville (Norwich) and Southbridge making the highway more</td>
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<td>characteristic of the Quinebaug-Shetucket Region</td>
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### Key

- Education and community outreach
- Land use planning and regulations
- Historic preservation
- Future planning and collaboration
- Marketing, branding, signage, and tourism
- Road character preservation or enhancement
- Land conservation and regulations
- Economic development and business growth
- Infrastructure planning and development
- Art and cultural events
- Recreation and tourism

### Parties

- NECCOG
- ConnDOT
- Munis. Municipal Governments, boards, commissions, and committees
- SCCOG
- TLGV
- TMC
- UTILITY companies (primarily Eversource Energy) with an interest in the highway
- Libraries and community resource centers
- Town and Planning Committees
- CTG
- NECCOG
- SC Committee
- CTG
- SCCOG
- TLGV
- TMC
- AC

### Map

- Road Characterization
- Land Use Planning
- Community
- Future Planning
- Education and Outreach

2016-2026 Corridor Management Plan: Connecticut State Route 169 National Scenic Byway
Corridor Management Plan: Connecticut State Route 169 National Scenic Byway

### Goal 2: Guide the future and planned growth of towns along the byway corridor in a way that does not diminish the rural character of the byway, but rather seeks to enhance aesthetics and sense of place, protect open spaces and farmland, and preserve historic buildings, sites and patterns of development

Uncontrolled growth has always been the most significant threat to the rural and scenic character of Route 169.

Responsibility lies with individual municipalities to adopt land use plans and regulations that treat Route 169 as a national treasure, deserving of special attention.

NECCOG is able to educate land use commissions and help to coordinate inter-municipal cooperation on land use matters. NECCOG is able to review and use commissions and help to coordinate inter-municipal regulations that treat Route 169 as a national treasure, deserving of special attention.

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<tr>
<td>Work with towns to amend plans of conservation and development to address local priorities for the byway's intrinsic qualities and incorporate goals and recommendations of the Plan</td>
<td>NECCOG, Munis.</td>
<td>2016-2026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adopt local design guidelines and/or utilize the Scenic Road Land Use and Maintenance Considerations (Annex B) to aid in the preservation of rural lands, villages, and mill villages</td>
<td>NECCOG, Munis.</td>
<td>2016-2026</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advocate and plan for the use of an overlay zoning district to protect scenic vistas along the byway</td>
<td>NECCOG, Munis.</td>
<td>2016-2026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocate and plan for the use of a special zone district to protect scenic vistas along the byway</td>
<td>NECCOG, Munis.</td>
<td>2016-2026</td>
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<tr>
<td>Educate and support the use of Village District zoning (C.G.S §8-7)</td>
<td>NECCOG, Munis.</td>
<td>2016-2026</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recommented goals and recommendations of the Plan</td>
<td>NECCOG, Munis.</td>
<td>2016-2026</td>
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Goal 3: Collaborate with ConnDOT, utility companies, public works departments, and landowners to achieve context-sensitive approaches to future maintenance and improvements that may alter the scenic character of Route 169 and diminish the road's relationship with its rural surroundings.

- The merits of geometric road improvements, upkeep of guardrails and signs, and cutting of overhanging tree limbs must be balanced with a need to preserve Route 169's unique character and discourage increased driving speeds.
- Features like bridges and guardrails can complement the scenic character of the byway if properly constructed.
- The stone walls and scenic vistas visible from the roadway were instrumental in Route 169's designation as a National Scenic Byway.
- Working with ConnDOT, municipalities, and private landowners, scenic views and the intimate character of the roadway can be maintained.
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### Objective

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<td>NECCOG</td>
<td>Work with responsible parties to remove vegetation from key scenic areas in Route 169 Environmental Review Packet.</td>
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<td>ConnDOT</td>
<td>ConnDOT, Munis.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Munis., Utils.</td>
<td>2016-2026</td>
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<tr>
<td>NECCOG, TLGV</td>
<td>Develop a program to educate landowners in Route 169 National Scenic Byway Land Use Guidelines to promote context-sensitive approaches outlined in the Route 169 National Scenic Byway Land Use Guidelines.</td>
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<td>NECCOG</td>
<td>ConnDOT, Munis.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Munis.,Utils.</td>
<td>2016-2026</td>
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- Petition responsible parties to consider context-sensitive approaches outlined in the Route 169 National Scenic Byway Land Use Guidelines to promote context-sensitive approaches outlined in the Route 169 National Scenic Byway Land Use Guidelines.
- Work with ConnDOT, municipalities, and private landowners, scenic views and the intimate character of the roadway can be maintained.
- The stone walls and scenic vistas visible from the roadway were instrumental in Route 169's designation as a National Scenic Byway.
- Working with ConnDOT, municipalities, and private landowners, scenic views and the intimate character of the roadway can be maintained.
Goal 4: Position Route 169 as an economic driver by unifying area businesses and attractions, promoting the image of the region as a whole, and spurring tourism investment

- Implement a marketing plan after development
- Develop a dedicated, promotional website for the byway
- Increase tourism and wayfinding signage along the byway
- Review information and possibly secure pull-offs and view Microplan
- Establish a permanent Tourism and Marketing Committee that represents the economic interests of business owners
- Develop and maintain a calendar of cultural events
- Identify locations for possible scenic pull-offs and visitor information
- Increase tourism and wayfinding signage along the byway
- Develop a dedicated, promotional website for the byway

Economic Development Research Group, A Review of Impact Studies Related to Scenic Byway Designation
Planning Recommendations

Recommendations for All Towns

**Recommendation**

Develop a unique vision for the conservation and development of land along Route 169, and incorporate that vision into the municipal POCD and land use regulations.

Review, through the Planning and Zoning Commission(s), Annex B: Scenic Road Use Considerations, of this Plan, and consider adopting its suggestions into design guidelines, zoning regulations, subdivision regulations, ordinances, or municipal projects.

**Norwich and Southbridge**

Recommendation

Plan for the preservation and reuse of mill structures and mill buildings in Taftville and downtown Southbridge.

Pursue, along with NECCOG, the Advisory Committee, CMRPC, and SCCOG, a lengthening of the byway into Norwich and Southbridge.

**Lisbon**

Recommendation

Amend subdivision regulations to encourage developers to preserve existing stone walls, trees, and other features.

Amend subdivision regulations to allow for "cluster subdivisions" that award a density bonus for greater open space set aside.

Connect municipal buildings, parks, and historic buildings in Newent with sidewalks.

Investigate and prioritize possible locations for a new town green in Newent with stews.

**Canterbury**

Recommendation

Investigate how and where sand and gravel operations are permitted in town, and what the town can do to limit the long-term impact of those operations on open land and scenic aerial views.

Consider the appropriateness of a Local Historic District or Village District in the center of town.

Consider adopting a scenic road ordinance to protect the character of scenic town roads.

Acquire development rights or help seek conservation easements for land in high quality scenic vistas east of the byway.

**Brooklyn**

Recommendation

Investigate how and where sand and gravel operations are permitted in town, and what the town can do to limit the long-term impact of those operations on open land and scenic views.

Connect municipal buildings, parks, and historic buildings in the center of town with sidewalks.

Consider the appropriateness of a Local Historic District or Village District in the center of town.

Investigate how and where sand and gravel operations are permitted in town, and what the town can do to limit the long-term impact of those operations on open land and scenic views.

Connect municipal buildings, parks, and historic buildings in Newent with sidewalks.

Investigate and prioritize possible locations for a new town green in Newent with stews.

Amend subdivision regulations to encourage developers to preserve existing stone walls, trees, and other features.

Amend subdivision regulations to allow for "cluster subdivisions" that award a density bonus for greater open space set aside.

Connect municipal buildings, parks, and historic buildings in the center of town with sidewalks.

Encourage property owners with land abutting the byway to trim overgrowth blocking important vistas to the east.

Consider adopting a scenic road ordinance to protect the character of scenic town roads.

Acquire development rights or help seek conservation easements for land in high quality scenic vistas east of the byway.

**Liverpool**

Recommendation

Pursue, along with NECCOG, the Advisory Committee, CMRPC, and SCCOG, a lengthening of the byway into Liverpool and Southbridge.

Plan for the preservation and reuse of mill structures and mill buildings in Liverpool and Southbridge.

**Northwood and Sandwich**

Recommendation

Pursue, along with NECCOG, the Advisory Committee, CMRPC, and SCCOG, a lengthening of the byway into Northwood and Sandwich.

Plan for the preservation and reuse of mill structures and mill buildings in Northwood and Sandwich.
Acquire development rights or help seek conservation easements for land in high quality scenic vistas east of the byway, near the Canterbury town line and Pomfret town line.

**Pomfret**

**Recommendation**
- Amend subdivision regulations to allow for “cluster subdivisions” that award a density bonus for greater open space set-aside
- Prioritize development rights of land abutting or visible from the byway for purchase by the town, the State, or land trusts
- Create a pedestrian connection between Pomfret Community School and the Bafflin Wildlife Sanctuary

**Woodstock**

**Recommendation**
- Consider the use of Village District zoning for areas in Woodstock Hill and South Woodstock that are outside of the bounds of the Woodstock Hill (Local) Historic District
- Encourage ConnDOT and property owners with land abutting the byway, especially between Woodstock Hill and North Woodstock and North Woodstock and the Massachusetts state line, to trim overgrowth on stone walls
Corridor Management Plan: Connecticut State Route 169 National Scenic Byway

Special Projects

Covered pedestrian bridge carrying the Air Line Trail over Route 169/44 in Pomfret

Description

Air Line Trail State Park crosses Route 169 in Pomfret, roughly 200 feet north of where the road joins U.S. Route 44, and 475 feet south of Railroad Street. Poor sight lines in this area make crossing dangerous for pedestrians, cyclists, and horseback riders using the trail.

Funding

Planning for this project may be funded by NECTCO, through the State Planning and Research Program of the FHWA and ConnDOT.