

WILTON RECYCLING PROCEDURES Q&A's

Changes were made to the Recycling Procedures in Wilton in July. These changes were in response to Wilton's desire to encourage and improve recycling / reuse as a means of reducing the amount of solid waste that ends up in our landfills or is burned while conserving energy used in the manufacturing of new products / packaging. Among the changes were:

- All residents of Wilton were sent a "sticker" to encourage their use of the re-designed recycling facility located at the Wilton Transfer Station.
- An area of the Transfer Station was arranged for citizen recycling, separate from the area used by commercial haulers.
- Fluorescent light bulbs, including CFL's (compact fluorescent light bulbs); Electronics (TV's, computers, digital cameras etc.); and Plastics # 1 through #7 can now be recycled.

We want to thank the residents of Wilton for supporting this effort and encourage all to continue to reduce/recycle/reuse. If you have questions about Recycling, please visit the list of the most common Questions & Answers (Q&A's) that has been assembled and posted on the Town website <http://www.wiltonct.org> under the Department of Public Works tab. A sampling of the most common questions and answers is located below that tab. If your question is not addressed, please call us at 203-563-0180 or contact us at mail@wiltonct.org

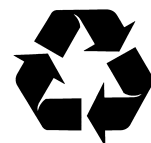
– Dave Hapke & Kristen Begor, *Conservation Commissioners*

Your Town officials post valuable information online for your convenience. Please visit www.wiltonct.org regularly for Rt 7 construction updates, trail maps, Wilton's zoning and wetland regulations, and more.



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WAY GREEN WITH A GREENWAY

In recent months changes in the Connecticut state statutes as prompted by Senator Toni Boucher have energized a core of people to pursue a long standing community desire: a Super 7 Greenway. The Super 7 right-of-way (ROW) stretches approximately 17 miles from South Norwalk to Danbury and for some 40 or more years, much of the ROW has laid quiet and untouched. For Wiltonites, however, there has always been an undercurrent of how to use it.

In 1971 a committee of residents and a professional study each concluded the ROW should serve as a linear park. Then in 1994, a second professional study was conducted that laid out with more specificity what the trail could look like and what opportunities and hurdles we would face in building such a trail. Since then, portions of the ROW have been leased by the town from DOT and support the athletic fields of Allen's Meadows, and for many years our DPW storage yard was on the ROW. There has been talk of putting the dog park on the ROW and Orem's Diner was moved to a parcel carved out of the DOT land holdings. Having some 500 acres of land running parallel to existing Route 7 will always invite ideas of how to use this fallow property.

With the passage of the bill that lifted DOT's restriction to only use the ROW for transportation purposes and pressure from the Governor's office for all state agencies to inventory unused land for possible sale, the luxury of dreaming how to use the acreage could be dwindling. Conversely, relaxing the rules of how DOT can use the ROW opens the door to act on those dreams, including the greenway trail.

The greenway dream is not Wilton's alone. Norwalk already has a small portion of the trail built,

connecting the Maritime Aquarium to Union Park with more definite plans to extend it further north. Redding and Ridgefield have had citizen efforts to create the "Sugar Hollow Greenway". Today, we have the four towns—Norwalk, Redding, Ridgefield and Wilton—partnering to pursue the Norwalk River Valley Trail that would largely exist in the ROW, with some deviations to take advantage of business districts such as Wilton Center, existing trails, and Norwalk River views. Once built, the trail will help meet many community goals such as reduction in greenhouse gases, multi-modal transportation options, healthier lifestyles, and recreation opportunities.

The four towns have recently applied for a grant from CT DEP's Recreational Trails Grant Program to engage public input and prepare designs. At this stage the towns hope to pursue a multipurpose trail, where the terrain allows, stretching from the Maritime Aquarium to the south portion of Danbury. Access to trains and nearby trail systems would be part of the design goals. The ultimate cost of trails similar to this one is about \$1 million per mile, so it goes without saying that this is an endeavor that will be worked on by many people for many years.

If you are interested in being one of those many people, please contact me at patricia.sesto@wiltonct.org



OUR TRANSITION TO A “POST-CARBON ECONOMY”

A what? A “post-carbon economy”? The term “post-carbon economy” describes a way of living where our collective goal is to substantially reduce the amount of carbon pollution that we generate. To put it another way, the term describes an economic framework that minimizes the extraction and burning of fossil fuels from below the earth’s surface; the new framework will be built with clean energy.

The first time I heard that term, I noticed that I felt hopeful and encouraged about human ingenuity and our resilient ability to solve unfamiliar problems. I wondered what a post-carbon lifestyle might look like.

Then, at a recent climate protection workshop, the New York State Office of Climate Change described the sweeping innovations that will help municipalities across the country make that transition by the year 2050:

- 1. Near-zero-carbon electricity.
- 2. A “smart” electric transmission/distribution system.
- 3. Carbon-free-energy surface transportation carriers.
- 4. Carbon-neutral buildings.
- 5. Low-carbon liquid fuels — for aircraft, etc.
- 6. Carbon sink maintenance and enhancement. (A carbon sink is a natural or manmade way to store carbon. A forest, for example, can be a carbon sink.)
- 7. Energy efficiency and conservation.

Nationally, this period of planning and ingenuity could become a new model of how our American democracy can work, because, while budgets have shrunk, many government officials are working more closely with people and business entities from their constituencies to effect new, more affordable choices in clean power generation.

Local Initiatives Are Simpler

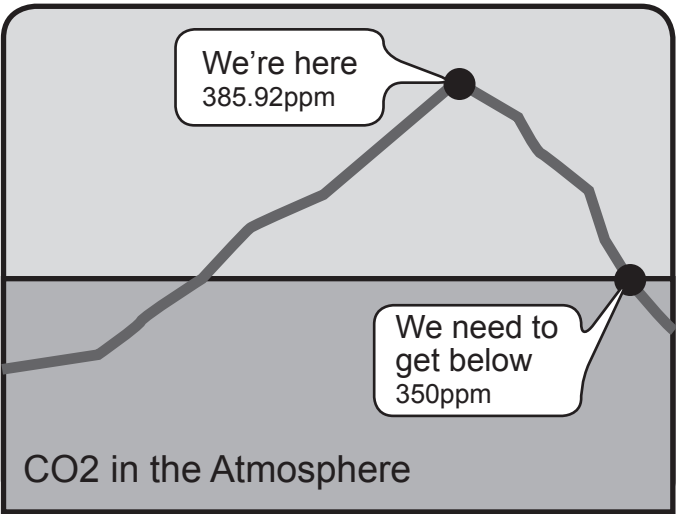
The above to-do list requires, among other things, a national consensus. On a local level, cleaning up the ways that energy is used is much simpler — often just a behavioral change. Neighboring Westport hosts monthly meetings of an all-volunteer Lower Fairfield

County group known as the Green Village Initiative (www.westportgvi.org). It offers these ideas for individual actions that address sustainability:

- 1. Eat local food. Plant a garden, participate in community-supported agriculture, and frequent farmer’s markets and stores with local produce.
- 2. Insulate fully, sign up for clean energy, set your thermostat higher in the summer and lower in the winter.
- 3. Don’t use harmful chemicals, including pesticides and certain cleaning and beauty products.
- 4. Join carpools, don’t idle your car unnecessarily, keep your tires inflated, drive within the speed limit. For your next purchase of a vehicle, select a highly fuel-efficient model.
- 5. Reduce/reuse; leave packaging at the store, recycle (especially items with hazardous ingredients or components); compost.
- 6. Reduce air travel and red meat consumption. These are said to be the two most carbon-intensive of our activities.
- 7. Get involved. Vote. Give. Support environmentally responsible businesses and people.

The excitement and sense of purpose that come from collaborating for meaningful progress is transformative. In this particular situation, “progress” can be defined as working to reverse the creeping accumulation of CO2 pollution in our atmosphere.

– Patrice Gillespie, *Commissioner*



CT NEMBA VOLUNTEERS IMPROVE TRAILS AT TOWN FOREST

Early in 2009, the Connecticut Chapter of the New England Mountain Bike Association (NEMBA) approached the Wilton Conservation Commission (WCC) with hopes to establish a Trail Ambassador Program at the Wilton Town Forest. The purpose of the program is to encourage involvement from the mountain biking community to maintain, educate, and promote sustainable trail access and to enhance the experience for all trail users. The WCC was excited to partner with NEMBA volunteers and the Trail Ambassador Program was formed.

The Trail Ambassadors have completed several projects in Town Forest including repairing a dangerously eroded section on the orange trail, building a 12-foot wooden bridge off of Pin Oak Lane on the blue trail, various rock armoring projects throughout the park, cutting back branches encroaching on trails, and installing a 40-foot walkway in a muddy area on the blue trail. Trail Ambassadors can be identified by their bright orange shirts and are more than happy to assist or answer questions for anyone out on the trails. Building on the success at Town Forest, NEMBA is hopeful that the Trail Ambassador Program can be extended to other parcels of land managed by WCC.

– Dave Francefort, *CT NEMBA*



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Give a gift that keeps on growing — and that adds to Wilton’s beauty. With the holidays approaching, consider gifting a tree in Wilton Center to celebrate a loved one. For more information, contact the Environmental Affairs office, 563-0180.