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# ABSTRACT

Project Title Stowe Recreation Path  
Location From Stowe Village to Mt. Mansfield, parallel to the Mountain Road and the River

Describe in the space provided the important characteristics of the project, how it was developed, and how it is exemplary. This abstract will be among the materials distributed to members of the Selection Committee prior to their initial deliberation.

Worldwide, this is the year of the endangered Earth. Communities feel they can do little in the wake of the global greenhouse effect, disappearance of the ozone layer, or the burning of Brazil's rain forest.

Nationwide, The Report of the President's Commission on Americans Outdoors recommended the creation of greenways or "corridors of private and public recreation lands and waters." These fingers of green were to preserve open space close to home. The follow-up report, Outdoor Recreation in a Nation of Communities identified the local communities as the creators of these greenways.

Stowe, a small Vermont ski community of 3,300, built such a greenway. Called the Stowe Recreation Path, the planning started in 1977. In 1981, the Town hired a coordinator to work on this hiking, biking, jogging, walking, and cross-country ski path. In 1984, 2.7 miles of path were completed and this next summer 2.6 miles will be added to this river walkway. The 5.3 miles of path will include a total of 32 donated parcels of private land, 10 bridges, and be valued at close to \$1 million. How the townspeople accomplished such a large city feat and their willingness to encourage others to build greenways as a hometown response to the worldwide environmental problems are what make this tiny urban community an exemplary giant.

The Town of Stowe includes Main Street and the Village plus the seven-mile Mountain Road to Mt. Mansfield, Vermont's highest mountain. Parallel to the Mountain Road is the West Branch River. Between the road and the river are restaurants, shops, offices, and houses. The elementary and high schools are nearby.

Claire Lintilhac, a Stowe resident, was concerned about the safety of walkers and bikers on the winding Mountain Road. In 1977, she commissioned the Vermont Highway Department to design a bike path from the Village to the Mountain.

The plans sat idle until 1981, when the Long Range Planning Committee, under the auspices of the Stowe Area Association (the local Chamber of Commerce) asked the Selectmen to include on the Town Meeting ballot a request for \$10,000 to hire a Bike Path Coordinator. The townspeople approved the request, and Anne Lusk was hired by the Selectmen.

From 1981 to 1984, assisted by volunteer committee members, Anne Lusk worked with the Town to design the 2.7 mile path, obtain the 27 different deeds of easement, raise \$300,000, help prepare plans and specs, and supervise construction.

The townspeople responded with donated land for the path, suggestions for locations and construction, funds donated directly or through creative fund raising events and incredible community support. When the path needed benches, they were bought by path enthusiasts and installed by the local chapter of the Rotary Club. When the path needed cleaning, the Women's Club, Scout Troops, Rotary Club, and the townspeople turned out in forces. When the path needed spring flower planting, the wheelbarrow of day lilies, violets, and roses were brought to the path by Church groups, condominium developers, members of the Stowe Board of Realtors, children, and even the Governor of Vermont.

The result of all of this town caring and visitor generosity is the most spectacularly beautiful narrow park in the river valley behind the developed Mountain Road. To walk on the path is to enter a different world and many say the path is, "The best thing to happen to Stowe."

By popular demand, the path is being extended another 2.6 miles and the \$380,000 has been raised, five parcels of land donated, and construction started.

Stowe's path won a TAKE PRIDE IN AMERICA finalist award and a Land and Water Conservation Fund Award. The Town has encouraged other communities to build Greenways through Vermont television, radio, newspapers, magazines, and a state booklet, but so much more encouragement should be offered nationwide. That is why the Town of Stowe is seeking the Rudy Bruner Award. Through the Foundation's national and local coverage and using the grant, the small Town of Stowe could encourage other communities to develop their own beloved fingers of green.

# PROJECT PROFILE

**PROJECT PROFILE**

(Please limit answers to the space available on these pages)

Project Name Stowe Recreation Path

Location From Stowe Village to Mt. Mansfield, parallel to the Mountain Road and the River

Owner Town of Stowe

Project Use(s) Community greenway for walking, biking, cross-country skiing and socializing  
5.3 miles total \$680,000

Project Size (2.7 Phase I, 2.6 completed '89) Total Development Cost (\$300,00 Phase I, \$380,000 Phase II)

**Application submitted by:**

Name Anne Lusk

Title Stowe Recreation Path Coordinator

Organization Town of Stowe

Address Stowe Recreation Path, Box 1319, Stowe, Vermont 05672

Telephone ( 802 ) 253-7758

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**Signature**

**Key Participants\***

Organization	Key person	Telephone
■ Public agencies		
<u>Stowe Planning Commission</u>	<u>Dea Brickner Wood</u>	<u>802-253-4091</u>
<u>Stowe Area Association</u>	<u>Tom Murphy</u>	<u>802-253-7321</u>
■ Developer		
<u>Town of Stowe</u>	<u>Paul Hughes - Adm.</u>	<u>802-253-7350</u>
<u>Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation</u>	<u>George Plumb</u>	<u>802-244-8713</u>
■ Professional consultants		
<u>LWCF funds</u>		
Architect		
Landscape architect		
Urban designer		
Planner		
Lawyer		
<u>Town Lawyer</u>	<u>Dick Sargent</u>	<u>802-888-2000</u>
Other		
<u>Engineer Phase I Charles Grenier Engrs.</u>	<u>Charles Grenier</u>	<u>802-244-6413</u>
<u>Engineer Phase II Pinkham Engineering</u>	<u>Bill Kules</u>	<u>802-658-5588</u>
■ Community group(s)		
<u>Stowe Rotary</u>	<u>Howard Carroll</u>	<u>802-253-7652</u>
<u>Stowe Women's Club</u>	<u>Gloria McLane</u>	<u>802-253-9630</u>
<u>Stowe Reporter</u>	<u>Trow Elliman</u>	<u>802-253-2101</u>
■ Sponsor		
<u>Lintilhac Foundation</u>	<u>Phil Lintilhac</u>	<u>802-244-8834</u>

\*Please attach an additional sheet, if necessary, to identify others who should be credited as having been instrumental in the development of this project.



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Urban designer _____	_____	_____
Planner _____	_____	_____
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1. Describe the characteristics of this project: the important aspects of the project's design, development, and public approval process. Indicate why these are exemplary.

Other communities have built greenways. Central Park is a notable early example. But the other greenways have been built with pre-planning and development budgets by structured organizations and with little general public input. It is unique for the small Town of Stowe to have built a greenway, but, more significantly, it is unique for how the Town built its greenway.

Design. A good path combines sun and shade, up and down, trees and open fields, and distant and close pleasurable sights. The Stowe Recreation Path combines all of those plus a meandering route, the West Branch River, ten cambered bridges, cultivated and wildflower beds, donated benches, views of Mt. Mansfield, privacy yet proximity to a good meal or lodging, and barns, corn fields, and cows.

Development. To see the project to completion, the Town of 3,300 plus the added visitors assumed the hierarchical positions of a non-profit organization or a company but filled each slot differently. The Town was the developer. The property owners were the planners. The townspeople and visitors were the advisory committee. The office was the Coordinator's kitchen table. The Board Meeting were held on the pages of the Stowe Reporter.

Public Approval. Rather than one or two deciding town votes, the path, from start to finish, requested broad and constant approval. From Claire Lintilhac, to the Long Range Planning Committee, to Stowe Area Association, to the Selectmen, to numerous Town Meetings, to donors of money and land, to constant publicity, to enthusiastic town wide maintenance, it was a project built by consensus.

2. Why does this project merit The Rudy Bruner Award for Excellence in the Urban Environment?

The Town of Stowe has built an incredibly beautiful, safe, river walkway for all ages and incomes, with amazing town-wide and visitor support, on miles of donated land, with volunteers to keep the path pristine and usable during the four picturesque Vermont seasons. The Town of Stowe has won awards for its community built path, and it would be honored to win the prestigious Rudy Bruner Award.

But there is something more significant than feeling self congratulatory about winning an award, something more singular about the Rudy Bruner Award.

The Bruner Foundation makes public the success and strategies of those exemplary communities. Through the national and local professional and popular press, with the publication of a book and a follow-up review volume, the Foundation allows one successful community to talk to other communities. This communication could go from local, to state, to federal, to state, to local in the form of written and rewritten case studies, but the enthusiasm is lost in the translation. With the Rudy Bruner Award, the telling is direct and allows for the community spirit to show.

Knowing the perils to the environment and the findings of Reagan's two committees which favor paths built by communities, these greenways are conclusively desirable and something an urban community can actually do, for all of its citizens present and future. The Town of Stowe will use the award and even the grant to tell others all of the secrets.

3. What were the significant dates of the project's development and when was it completed?

The path was conceived by Claire Lintilhac as a safety feature for the Mountain Road. In 1977, she commissioned the Vermont Highway Department to design a Bike Path. These plans sat until 1981, when a Coordinator was hired by the Town to see if it was feasible to build a path. In 1984, construction was started and completed for the 2.7 mile path. In 1986, the Path Coordinator was hired again by the Town to work on Phase II. Construction for the 2.6 mile Phase II will be finished in 1989 thus completing the safe "glorified sidewalk" first envisioned.



4. What urban issues did this project address? Were there important associated issues that this project did not address?

Recreation, preservation of open space, public access, availability to all ages, backgrounds and incomes, low maintenance, adjacent parks and picnic tables, beauty, multi-purpose, community involvement, safety, handicapped accessibility, usable four seasons, nearby parking, affordability, socially supportive, beneficial to the environment, town-wide participation, available as a wildlife habitat. These are words that would go on a wish list of any urban project, and they are all embodied in the Stowe Recreation Path.

The path has become the social center for the Town. Mothers meet to push baby strollers side by side. Kids gang up to head to McDonald's or a swimming hole. Wheel-chair users share the path at the same pace as the Sunday strolling tourist families.

The path not only covered every important associated issue, it kept going one step better. The fund raising was so evident, the local contractor bid below cost just to get to build the path. Visitors to Stowe take contribution envelopes home to places as far away as California and send them back to Stowe with a path contribution. Letters, poems, drawings, and best wishes are always found in the envelopes that contain donations. Finally, Stowe has worked to tell other communities they, too, should build a greenway.

5. Describe the financing for the project. Was there something particularly unique or innovative about it?

When Stowe started funding its Recreation Path there was little federal grant money available. For the \$300,000, 2.7-mile Phase I, \$118,000 Land and Water Conservation Funds were obtained. For the \$380,000, 2.6-mile Phase II, \$60,000 Land and Water Conservation Funds were acquired. The remaining funds included grants from the Lintilhac Foundation, \$84,000 and later \$50,000. Town funds were \$42,000 Revenue Sharing for the 2.7 miles and \$20,000 Revenue Sharing and \$120,000 general tax revenue for the 2.6-mile extension. That left a remaining \$53,000 for Phase I and \$130,000 for Phase II to be raised privately.

Rather than view the necessary fund raising as a chore, Stowe residents had a good time coming up with creative ways to raise the money. Pieces of the path were sold, \$2 per inch, \$45 per yard through chains, rods, and links. Parties included a Valentine's Day Dance where past prom kings and queens were recrowned and everyone wore what they wore in high school. The Greenways Gala Black Tie Dinner Dance and Auction raised \$40,000 in one night and featured Peter Duchin with the guests including three governors and Dr. Ruth. Local jelly makers donated percentages of their wares. Bike derbies were held. Tennis tournaments gave their proceeds to the path. Burma Shave signs on the cross-country derby race course rhymed that evening's featured fund raising dinner.

6. What were the goals of this project? How well were they met?

Claire Lintilhac, a Stowe resident, wanted a safe route for walkers and bikers on the Mountain Road. A shoulder path was first considered but proved unsatisfactory for the connecting roads and driveways made it unsafe, the cars on the road were too proximate, and the plowed snow would have covered it in the winter.

When the Town took on the challenge of building this alternate pedestrian path, it was known that the Town could never raise enough money to fund construction and pay for the land. The location off the road would have to be at the whim of the donating property owners.

Viewed by many as just a utilitarian safe route, everyone was delighted when the path turned out to be Vermont postcard material. The riverside setting, the dappled sunlight, the adjacent farm fields, the miles of shade trees, and the arched bridges have made this preserved open land the social center of town. It gave a heart back to this community through creative fund raising, consensus gathering, maintenance participation, broad appeal, tourist and local equality, and, in the end, a pretty place to meet.

## PERSPECTIVE/Developer

This sheet is to be filled out by the person who took primary responsibility for project financing.

If possible, answers to all questions should be typed directly on this form or a photocopy. If the form is not used and answers are typed on separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds. The length of answers should be limited to the area provided here.

Name Paul W. Hughes

Title Town Administrator

Organization Town of Stowe

Telephone ( 802 ) 253-7350

Address P.O. Box 248, Stowe, VT 05672

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Signature

*Paul W. Hughes*

1. What role did you or your organization play in the development of this project? Describe the scope of involvement.

The Stowe Area Association--the Town's Chamber of Commerce--had formed a Long Range Planning Committee to study Stowe's most pressing issues. They decided that it was time to go forward with the plans commissioned by Claire Lintilhac in 1977 for construction of a bike route paralleling the Mountain Road. In 1981, the Committee and the Board of Selectmen asked the Town to appropriate \$10,000 of General Revenue Sharing funds to hire an Administrator for the project. The request was approved, and in the summer of 1981 Anne Lusk was hired. Her job included publicity, fund raising, designing and locating the path, acquiring land through deeds of easement, coordinating the work with Town departments, and reporting to the Selectmen on the path's progress. After deeds were obtained and \$300,000 raised, the Town hired an engineer to prepare plans and specifications and to supervise construction along with Anne Lusk. The Selectmen and the Town Clerk/Treasurer established a separate account for the project and paid bills through that account. Similar work is now underway on a \$380,000 extension of the original path.

2. What, if any, modifications were made to the original proposal as the project was developed? How did they come about?

Originally, plans called for a bike route along the shoulder of the Mountain Road, the 7-mile road that runs from the Village up the mountain. Because the traffic is so heavy, driveways so numerous, and snow plowed onto the shoulders during the winter, those plans were replaced with one that saw the path follow the same general route but in the river valley, behind the buildings. The path was originally called a Bike Route, but the name was changed to the Stowe Recreation Path as the number of users increased and cross country skiers added still another season.

The plans as drawn by the highway department in 1977 went too close to some private homes, and from 1977 to 1981 some new buildings had appeared where the path was to go. Also, some property owners worried about the path's location on their land. Anne Lusk met with each property owner and, working with a blank map, had the owner draw in where the path should go on his property. In this way, the new path location was decided entirely by the land owners.

3. What was the most difficult task in the development of this project?

Obtaining the necessary land to build the path. The cost of building the path with the 6 bridges was a high \$300,000. If the Town had had to buy the land, the path would have been too expensive to build. Raising the money was difficult and took time, but obtaining the land from 27 different property owners and acquiring a total of 60 signatures (some of the property was owned by several people) took considerable patience and perseverance. That the land was obtained to the satisfaction of the property owners was proven on the extension. The 5 property owners for the \$380,000 path extension understood the value of the path, and generously gave their land to the Town.



4. What tradeoffs and compromises were required during the development of the project? How did your organization participate in making them? With hindsight, what would you now do differently?

The path location was dictated by the property owners and, in some cases, the path went close to the river. Flood damage resulted from the West Branch, the river with temperamental flows from the Mountain. If more money had been available for extensive rip rap, or the terrain had allowed for a different location, perhaps the flood damage to part of the path might not have occurred.

Second, other groups in town, such as the Recreation Committee wanting a swimming pool, felt in competition with the path. For the path extension, the Recreation Committee and the Recreation Path Coordinator closely coordinated their efforts so they did not harbor feelings of competition.

Finally, signs were stolen along the path. They had been designed to be theft-proof and were attractive with the hope that people would be less apt to steal something nice. People took tools to the path to steal signs. Plain signs of painted plywood have been installed and not stolen. Regretably, the new signs lack the richness of the original signs.

5. What about this project would be instructive to developers?

- time schedule
- steps taken and in what order
- employees required and their job description
- cost breakdowns
- list of supplementary material on how to build a path
- list of organizations willing to help from a national level and state level
- funding sources for Federal funds
- breakdown on how to do publicity
- explanation of how to garner public support
- description of how to deal with a less cooperative property owner
- details of how to build an attractive path
- analysis of deciding the path location which best serves the community

6. If five years from now you were to judge this project to be still successful, what characteristics would be most relevant to you?

- number of users
- maintenance of the path by the Town and care given to it by the locals
- favorable publicity and letters to the Editor
- existence of extensions or connectors either built or in the planning steps
- general support by all ages, all incomes, visitors and locals
- questions from other communities requesting information to build similar paths
- stories done about the path
- benches, flower gardens, and special personal care given to the path by local groups
- events planned for the path such as the Stowe Cross Country Derby
- continued use in all seasons
- cooperation and helpful suggestions from the different user groups to continue shared use of the path

## PERSPECTIVE/Community Representative

This sheet is to be filled out by someone who was involved, or represents an organization that was involved, in helping the project respond to neighborhood issues.

If possible, answers to all questions should be typed directly on this form or a photocopy. If the form is not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds. The length of answers should be limited to the area provided here.

Name Howard K. Carroll Title President

Organization Stowe Rotary Club Telephone ( 802 ) 253-2161

Address P.O. Box 1149 Stowe, VT 05672

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Signature Howard K. Carroll

1. How did you, or the organization you represent, become involved in this project?

The Stowe Rotary Club has been involved with the Stowe Recreation Path Project since it's inception. Being the community's only service organization, the club recognized the benefit to the community that a Recreation Path could provide and felt it our responsibility to assist. During the first phase of the path project, Rotary financially supported the project, backed fund raising activities, and hosted a presentation by the Path Coordinator, Anne Lusk. This was followed by a favorable article published in the Rotary Newsletter. For the past two years, the Rotary Club has sponsored and paid for a summer intern position to both provide a job for a high school senior and to ensure maintenance and up keep of the path. During phase II of the project, Rotary continued its assistance by giving a sizable donation and continuing to help in fund raising activities. The club also donated benches along the pathway, participated in the annual Spring Green-up, and generally has been supportive of the path project throughout the community and region. Lastly, we recently helped sponsor the Path Coordinator's trip to an international conference at which she was a featured speaker on the subject of how to create greenways and walkways.

2. What were the major issues from the community's point of view?

The issues were many and as diverse as the nature of this complex community. They ranged from the obvious issues of where to locate the recreation path and how to fund for its development to the more intangible issues of how to develop community support for the project. Mundane issues such as who can use the path and for what purposes and how to maintain it were issues that, while originally thought simplistic, turned out to be much more involved. Then there were the issues of negotiation with property owners for rights-of-way and easements, determining the access from the various private properties in town to the path, liability, and establishing a mechanism to ensure the continued support, upkeep, and maintenance of the path. Lastly were the environmental issues that ranged from the State's permitting process to dealing with a recreation path that is subject to seasonal flooding and has varying requirements during each of the four seasons in this resort community.

3. What other community organizations or institutions, if any, were involved? What relationship did they have to the project?

The Stowe Recreation Path Project crossed all lines in this community and there was probably not a single organization within the community that did not participate to some extent. To summarize some of the major participants in the process, we were joined by the Stowe Women's Club, the Stowe Area Association (which serves as our Chamber of Commerce), the Stowe Community Church, the Stowe Winter Carnival Committee, the Stowe Area Board of Realtors, the Stowe Cooperative Nursery, the Stowe High School, and the Stowe Elementary School. Each of these community organizations participated in a significant measure. For example, students at the Stowe High School financially purchased a "piece" of the path. The Winter Carnival Committee also donated a bench to the path and held a fund raising event, the proceeds of which were turned over to the path project. Major support, both in the form of funds and administrative assistance, was received from the Stowe Area Association who rightfully saw the major benefit the path could provide to the resort based community.



4. If there was a public review process, did you or your organization participate in it? Describe your involvement.

Throughout the public review process, key Rotary Club members spoke on behalf of the path at Town Meetings and other public forums throughout the community. As you would expect in a small town, general community support is an informal process where word of mouth and individual contact plays a major role. The Rotary Club was able to fulfill that aspect of the public review process most easily as our membership of 70 business and professional leaders of the community, all of whom were 100% behind the project, had numerous opportunities in the course of their daily work and social environment to be supporters of the project.

5. From your perspective, how has this project made the community a better place to live? Please be as specific as possible.

The Town of Stowe is a typical, rural, New England community that has a central village as its core and the town developed along rural routes of access. Being a resort-based community, most development naturally occurred along the road to the major ski complex. The path generally follows that major line of communication which happens to coincide with the major river in town. Consequently, people now can walk, ride a bicycle, enjoy the out-of-doors, and most importantly, socialize on a path that leads from the heart of the village to the stores, businesses, and houses along the way and eventually reach the mountain. Before the path existed, one always had to be in an automobile to get anywhere in the community. Now, people meet on the path to walk side by side and talk. The path has given this town something to be united about which has cut across all brackets of income, age, place of residence, and at the same time, has preserved the spectacular, previously private river bank for all to enjoy during all seasons of the year.

6. If a community group interested in doing a similar project came to you, what advice would you give them?

The first thing I would say is to ensure that you obtain a properly motivated and highly qualified coordinator who is willing to give the large number of hours the project will require. One must involve the entire community in an open fashion so as to encourage participation from the entire population. It is a process of cooperation in which everybody must be in support of the project for it to be the success that ours has been. Ideas, when donated, should be rewarded and the property owners from whom you seek easements or rights-of-way across their property should be brought into the planning process at a very early stage. Naturally, the local newspapers are an endless source for articles and publishing letters. You will need clever fund raising tactics, recognition opportunities, and will spend an inordinate amount of time generating personalized correspondence to people for their ideas and their contributions. Lastly, I would advise anyone interested in doing a similar project to not let go of an idea if it runs into difficulty. If you want your path to go in a particular place and there is a road block before you, all energy should be expended to overcome the obstacle and allow the path to go where mother nature really intended it to be to optimize the aesthetic beauty and realize its greatest potential.

7. Why do you think the project should win this award?

A well placed recreation path in a dynamic community which has been properly located and so constructed as to take people where they want to go, while enjoying the best of the natural features of the area, would seem to be the best possible gift a community could give to today's generation and, more importantly, for all the generations to come. The path preserves the environment, in a small way aids in reducing the Green House Effect by putting people on feet rather than in automobiles, provides recreation, and allows all to gain a better appreciation of the outdoors and the four seasons that New England enjoys. Since we created our path, we have received wide-spread national and international publicity on our success. We feel we have a story to tell, and that if other communities were to be exposed to what we did, and how we did it, we think the Stowe model might be applicable to many more who have the scenic and environmental potential to accomplish the same kind of a recreation path as we did.



## PERSPECTIVE/Professional Consultant

This sheet is to be filled out by those professionals who worked as consultants on the project, providing design, planning, legal, or other professional services.

If possible, answers to all questions should be typed directly on this form or a photocopy. If the form is not used and answers are typed on separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds. The length of answers should be limited to the area provided here.

Name William M. Kules, P.E. Title Chief Engineer  
Organization Pinkham Engineering Associates Inc. Telephone (802 ) 658-5588  
Address 431 Pine St., Maltex Building, Burlington, VT 05401

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Signature *William M Kules*

1. What role did you or your organization play in the development of this project? Pinkham Engineering Associates (PEA) was the Engineer hired by the Town of Stowe to develop construction plans and specifications, acquire all necessary and appurtenant permits including local, State, and Federal, oversee the construction and contract administration, observe the construction phase and prepare an as-built right-of-way plan for recording easement acquisitions. William Kules, P.E. was project manager responsible for project supervision and coordination with the Recreation Path Coordinator. Mr. Kules is a resident of Stowe, actively involved in community affairs and a strong supporter and dedicated user of the first phase of the project.

2. From your perspective, how was this project intended to benefit the urban environment? This project is an excellent example of how an urban area can be used to benefit a community yet still be preserved in its natural state. The path preserves significant and attractive farm land and riverbank areas for public access. Prior to construction the river was hidden behind years of scrub growth and accessible only across private property. Resident and tourist, walkers, runners, bikers, etc., which vary between 3,000 and 10,000 people had only the busy and dangerous State Highway #108 to travel. The path with its numerous bridges and access points provides a safe and convenient pedestrian traveled way away from the heavy traffic and busy inter-sections.

3. What is your impression of the project's impact on its surroundings and people in the project area? Do you have data that document its effect? Attach supplementary material as appropriate. The first phase of this project was extremely successful. Travelers of all ages can be found along the path during all seasons of the year and at all times of the day. It has become a place for social gathering, business meetings and recreation activities. The business i.e., restaurants, stores, motels, located adjacent to the path benefit by the ease of pedestrian access. Customers can frequent their facilities without having to travel the State Highway.



4. What trade offs and compromises were required during the development of the project? How did your organization participate in making them? With hindsight, what would you now do differently?

All the property easements along the path were donated by the landowners. Their greatest concern was not to lose the usefulness of their land, as a result their desired location of the path was along the top of the river bank. This location was not practical in all areas. Considerations for path location involved aesthetics, grade, alignment, cost, view, access, impact and property owners requests. The path location was finally determined by the Engineer walking the area with the property owner and the Recreation Path Coordinator and discussing each design consideration, and its effect on the location of the path. As a result of this field visit the trade-offs were a combination of the path being near the river, being in the trees, being in a pretty area, having a spectacular view and being cost effective.

5. How might this project be instructive to others in your profession?

Other communities may develop similar paths or Greenways since the President's Commission on the Great American Outdoors recommends this type of development. This project has been a learning experience in developing an efficient and effective project approach. Critical areas to be aware of and avoided if at all possible are wetlands and flood hazard areas. This project experienced both situations which required an Army Corps of Engineers permit and Federal Emergency Management Agency concurrence. A project approach in layman's terms in dealing with both of these agencies would be a benefit to future Engineers, Selectmen, Town Administrators and other developers of similar projects.

6. If five years from now you judge this project to be still successful, at what characteristics would you be looking?

Success for this project would be based on the amount of use the path was getting, the integrity of the design and the potential for further expansion. The amount of use would be evaluated by number of users, type of users, time and season of use and age and ability of users. The integrity of design would be based on cost of annual maintenance, changes to design and added improvements. The potential for future expansion would be a result of its popularity and use and the interest to extending and developing Greenways in other areas of the Town.

## PERSPECTIVE/Public Agency

This sheet is to be filled out by the staff of public agencies who were directly involved in the financing, design review, or public approvals that affected this project.

If possible, answers to all questions should be typed directly on this form or a photocopy. If the form is not used and answers are typed on separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds. The length of answers should be limited to the area provided here.

Name Dea Brickner-Wood

Title Community Planner

Organization Town of Stowe

Telephone( 802 ) 253-4091

Address P.O. Box 248, Stowe, VT 05672

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Signature Dea Brickner-Wood

1. What role did your organization play in the development of this project?

See Attached

2. Describe what requirements your agency made of this project? (Such as zoning, public participation, impact statements, etc.)

3. From your perspective, how was this project intended to benefit the urban environment? Describe how, if at all, the intentions changed over the course of the project? What trade-offs and compromises were required? How did you participate in making them? With hindsight, what would you now do differently?

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4. Describe any data you have that document the impact that this project has actually had on its surroundings and the people in the project area. Attach supplementary material as appropriate. If no data are available, what is your impression of the project's impact and what have you observed that supports that?

5. What about this project would be instructive to agencies like yours in other cities?

6. If five years from now you judge this project to be still successful, at what characteristics would you be looking?

## Narrative for Questions 1 through 6

Question 1: What role did your organization play in the development of this project.

The Planning and Zoning Department staff and the local citizen boards (the Planning Commission and Board of Adjustment) provided information, analysis and approvals throughout the development of the recreation path project. The department provided locational maps, detailed maps for property owners as well as property owner information, traffic data, adjacent land use and development data, design suggestions, and assistance with obtaining other permits.

Question 2: Describe what requirements your agency made of this project? (Such as zoning, public participation, impact statements, etc):

As noted in #1 above, the Town was involved in all stages of this project's development. The project received local zoning permit review and approval from the Planning Commission and Board of Adjustment. This approval was conducted in a public hearing process, which is open to all citizens. In order to receive local permit approval, the project successfully fulfilled requirements such as the appropriateness of the proposed use as it related to the Town and Village Zoning Ordinance and Municipal Plan, the impact of the project on the flood plain area and river access, and the suitability of project design, parking, access points and landscaping.

The project also successfully completed permit review and received permit approval from the State Development Review Process (referred to as Act 250) from the Regional State District Environmental Commission Office; the town Planning Commission supported the project in the State permit process. Permits were also secured from the Army Corps of Engineers. Considerations in the state permit processes included protection of endangered species in the flood plain areas, minimal alteration to the flood plain area, and rip rapping along the river.

The Town showed its support for the project again during the March 1987 Town Meeting. During this annual meeting, the Town's budget is reviewed and voted on by the citizens of Stowe. The town requested funds for the completion of the Recreation Path; this request was supported in this public meeting.

Question 3: From your perspective, how was this project intended to benefit the urban environment? Describe how, if at all, the intentions changed over the course of the project? What trade-offs and compromises were required? How did you participate in making them? With hindsight, what would you now do differently?



The Stowe community is a mix of both new and long time year round residents, and seasonal tourists visitors. Stowe has retained a strong sense of community identity through the retention of some of its traditional community characteristics (such as a strong farming base, and community spirit and volunteerism) while it has grown into a vibrant four season tourist economy. This mix has produced a community which has both rural and urban characteristics. The community's long and short range planning goals and activities must incorporate the needs of both permanent residents and resort activities. The Recreation Path has proven to be a project that has served and benefited both of these aspects of Stowe.

The path's location has addressed the environmental planning concerns of the community's river areas. The path has assisted in preserving a band of land around the river from future intense development. While allowing for a low impact use and preserving this rural river bank area, it has provided access to walkers, bikers, joggers, skiers.

Traffic is a primary planning consideration for the Town and Village. The path has provided a safe pedestrian access along one of the busiest roads (Route 108 or the Mountain Road); this road serves an area of intense "highway-tourist" development and is the main access road to the Mount Mansfield ski area. The path parallels the Mountain Road for seven miles, starting in the center of the Village.

The path was originally planned as a bike route along the Mountain Road. The proximity to the road presented problems such as winter shoulder access due to snow pile up, safety, and unattractiveness of the route. The alternative route, along the river (yet generally parallel to the road) provided a more scenic, safer path. The trade-off with this alternative was the need to secure deeds of easements from 29 property owners to put the path on their land in the river valley, instead of using highway right of ways.

Planning and Zoning Department staff and citizen board members assisted with identifying land owners, terrain difficulties, access points, river location, flood plain areas, and offering location alternatives based on the personal history and knowledge of many long time board members.

Question 4: Describe any data you have that document the impact that this project has actually had on its surroundings and the people in the project area. Attach supplementary material as appropriate. If no data are available, what is your impression of the project's impact and what have you observed that supports that?

In 1987 the Town and Village Planning Commission initiated a major revision of the Municipal Plan with a series of four citizen forums; these forums were held in June 1987, and were called "Stowe, Now and in the Future". The meetings were well attended by residents of the community. The meetings were designed to be interactive; each evening had a planning topic for citizens to consider

in a structured small group setting. The first forum focused on "Community Identity". In small group brainstorming sessions, citizen ideas on "What do you like most about Stowe" were recorded. The recreation path was specifically mentioned in several small groups as one of the benefits to living in the Stowe community. Other related comments included community involvement, volunteer spirit and Stowe's scenic beauty. The recreation path has highlighted Stowe's community commitment and scenic beauty.

The Planning Commission has incorporated the citizen comments into the new draft Town Plan. The draft Transportation Chapter (4/88, see attached) reflects the citizen comments that were recorded during the forums. The Goals, Policies and Proposals relating to greenways in the new Plan reflect the success of the current path project. The path is used by many people (local and tourist), in all seasons. The involvement of citizens in making the path a reality has contributed to Stowe's sense of community commitment and citizen participation in decisions and actions.

Question 5: What about this project would be instructive to agencies like yours in other cities?

Material has been assembled which helps in "transferring" Stowe's successful experience to Vermont communities as well as other communities across the country. A step by step guide has been developed; also available are maps with extensive information on flood plains and property owners, traffic considerations and access points. The Planning and Zoning Department receives frequent calls from other community planning offices as well as regional planning offices requesting information on Stowe's path.

Question 6: If five years from now you judge this project to be still successful, at what characteristics would you be looking?

The benefits of the path are evident now, and will continue to be evident in the future. The users of the path are the primary measure of success: number of users, diversity of age, and the variety of activities are a few indicators of success. The path has already been incorporated in several special events such as the annual Stowe cross country ski derby. Future success will be evident in continued community financial support for maintenance and possible additional areas (such as pocket parks and scenic overlook areas), continued support from service organizations (Rotary Club, Boy Scouts, Woman's Club), continued information requests from other communities, and general public support through letters and volunteer and financial contributions.

**PERSPECTIVE/Other**

Name Dr. Philip M. Lintilhac

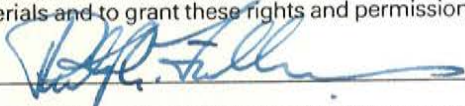
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Signature 

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1. What role did you play in the development of this project?

My Mother, an older driver with less than perfect eyesight, complained that pedestrians on the busy road up to the ski area in Stowe were dangerously hard to see, especially in poor driving conditions. She conceived of a parallel path, whose function was to get pedestrians off the highway. This became something of an obsession with her, and with the establishment of our family foundation she was able in 1987 to commission an initial engineering study by the highway department. The present "Rec-Path" pretty much reflects the plan produced by that original study. All of her original efforts, including the engineering study and our initial grant towards the construction of phase I, were done anonymously.

2. From your perspective, how was this project intended to benefit the urban environment?

My Mother's original intent was simply to get people off the road. Her idea was to have a path which was strictly parallel to the main highway, but as the plan came into focus it became apparent that for many reasons, legal and otherwise, the path would have to be routed away from the main road at a number of points. It was because of this that her original conception of a safety path evolved into more of a bike path and recreational path. It was, in fact, only with guarantees to her that it would still serve to get people off the highway that she was willing to continue to underwrite the project. In retrospect however, it is clear that it has been the recreational uses of the path which have breathed life into the project and made the path an integral part of the Stowe community.

3. Describe your impression of the impact that this project has actually had on its surroundings and the people in the project area. Describe any data that support your conclusions.

The path is used extensively for jogging, walking, and recreational bicycling in the summer; and for cross-country skiing in the winter. It seems to be universally accepted by the townspeople as whole. In truth, it provides new vistas and a new perspective on the town which even the oldest residents can appreciate. It provides a more pastoral impression of the town and our lovely valley than does the main highway. It provides a safe place for even the littlest tots to bicycle, and its scale and occasional sharp turns discourage the high-speed bicycle racers who prefer the main road anyway. With Stowe's summer business beginning to outdo its winter business, the "rec-path" has opened up a whole new aspect of the valley for public enjoyment.

4. What trade-offs and compromises were required during the development of the project? Did you participate in making them? With hindsight, what would you now do differently?

The main trade-offs, from our perspective, were those planning decisions that required parts of the path to be routed away from the highway. However, it is those stretches of the path away from the main road which have given it its unique perspectives and vistas, and also a feeling of solitude. Concerns about crime along sections out of sight of the main road have not materialized because of the constant flow of traffic along the path. People do not tend to hang out in one section of the path. They tend to use the whole path from end to end. People come in from the surrounding communities, with their kids and bicycles, specifically to enjoy the Rec-Path from end to end. What we originally saw as trade-offs which diluted the original intent of the project have thus proved to be major benefits accruing to the project and the town as a whole.

5. What can others learn from this project?

Beyond the lessons of community cooperation and direct contribution to a good project, the main thing that other communities could learn is that a seemingly impossible engineering project, beset with a myriad of legal obstacles in the form of rights of way and reluctant landowners, can in the end be an entirely positive force, providing a totally new experience of an area which can be enjoyed by even the oldest residents. The proof of this is the eagerness with which the community as a whole has contributed its resources and enthusiasm in order to extend the path farther up the valley. Our own involvement as a foundation has thus been somewhat diminished because the momentum of community involvement has taken over. This is a happy circumstance. The other lesson is that a project such as this needs a forceful and energetic spokesperson, which has been Anne Lusk's role in our community. She organized the fund-raising drives and coordinated the various federal and state agencies and funding sources. This project would never have made it off the drawing board if it had not been for her efforts.

6. If five years from now you judge this project to be successful, at what characteristics would you be looking?

I believe that the success of the Rec-Path five years from now will be judged by its upkeep. If the path is allowed to fall into disrepair it will indicate that people are somewhat less enthusiastic about what it contributes to their lives than they are now. The time will come when the path will have to be resurfaced, riverbank stretches will have to be shored up, damage will occur to benches, etc. If the town continues to see the path as a positive resource which enriches everybody's experience, then these challenges will be met and dealt with effectively. Otherwise the path will be viewed as just another burden on the resources of the town, and it will be allowed to deteriorate.