

## **The Greenway is on the map!** *Second meeting enhances goals of river project*

**By Natalie Gelb Solfanelli**

On Sept. 22 LHVA hosted a second public meeting to report on the progress of the Lackawanna Greenway Plan and to solicit input from citizens and organizations.

Unlike the first public meeting held in August, where attendees convened in small working groups to address the topics to be studied, meeting No.2 provided specific information and feedback on the status of the study. Not only did it identify the geographic boundaries of the Greenway, but it also provided maps outlining the proposed alignment of the entire 40 miles of the Lackawanna Rive Heritage Trail (LRHT).

The spine of the Greenway is the LRHT along 40 miles of the Lackawanna River. The Lackawanna Greenway encompasses the entire LRHT, although the boundary of the Greenway extends north and west of the Lackawanna watershed for several miles to Stevens Point near where the D & H Trail will connect to trails in New York state. The Greenway includes the entire D & H Trail. At the Stillwater Dam in Susquehanna County, the D & H trail becomes part of the LRHT. The Rail-Trail Council of Northeastern Pennsylvania has been an excellent partner in this endeavor. The D & H allows equestrian use, as well as snow mobiles in the winter.

From the D & H Trail at the Simpson Viaduct, the LRHT will continue south on a small segment of the O & H Trail in Carbondale, through Lackawanna County, to the confluence with the Susquehanna at Duryea in Luzerne County. Although the LRHT is the spine, the Greenway encompasses a wider swath of land, lakes, streams and wooded areas. The Greenway extends from ridge top to ridge top, and it will includes parts of Wayne County. In response to public input, the plan will create a connection from the Abingtons to North Pocono.

Lackawanna is an Indian word that means "a stream that forks," as reflected at its confluence with the mighty Susquehanna in Luzerne County. The Lackawanna provided the means of transportation for native American Indian tribes. For hundreds of years it connected settlements along its banks. Today, it is the vehicle for LHVA to achieve its goal of reconnecting people and communities both culturally and geographically. In essence, the LRHT and the Greenway will create a linear park for enjoyment and interpretation. It is LHVA's hope and intent that various art forms along the trail will provide educational and spiritual enlightenment.

The LRHT not only provides recreational, social and wellness opportunities, but it also offers an alternative means of transportation for people between and among their homes and workplaces. It preserves and conserves beautiful natural

resources, offering and encouraging the opportunity to appreciate and enjoy nature. The river is a parallel water trail for fishing and boating. Much of the river has been renewed as a pristine waterway. This process has occurred both by nature and the hand of man, particularly the work of the Lackawanna River Corridor Association (LRCA).

Despite its relatively modest length and breadth in comparison to the Susquehanna, which flows through 22 counties and has 500 miles of waterway, the Lackawanna was the catalyst for the development of two important industrial cities, Scranton and Carbondale, and a multitude of communities that grew along its banks. It spawned anthracite coal mining, railroads, manufacturing enterprises for textiles and other products, such as glass and cigars, entertainment and athletic centers, and diverse ethnic communities and cultural traditions. This commercial activity led to the construction of magnificent architecture, including churches, courthouses, railway stations, civic centers and beautiful residential structures up and down the valley. Many of these buildings remain today. LHVA is conducting a cultural and industrial inventory to identify these important sites.

The Lackawanna Greenway will link at either end with the Susquehanna Greenway. This is significant as part of the mega-greenway project of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR). The Lackawanna Greenway is on the map! Go to [www.lhva.org](http://www.lhva.org) for more information.

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