



Town of Topsfield

TOPSFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

Rail Trail Committee

Minutes of Committee Meeting January 21, 2008 8:00 PM

Members Present: Joe Geller, Gregg Demers, Dave Read, Nancy Luther

Guests: Bob Morgan, Dave Smith, Roy Baessler, Dave Anderson, Mark Gallagher

Old Business:

1. Outstanding minutes were approved for the following meeting dates:
 - September 17, 2007
 - October 2, 2007
 - November 19, 2007
2. Bike Racks: The bike racks the TRTC helped secure funding for at the Proctor school were installed. One of them may need to be moved after the spring thaw.

New Business:

1. Topsfield Expo: In an ongoing effort to get more information out to the public about the trail, the Committee discussed participating in the Topsfield Expo this spring. There hasn't been an Expo in two years but there will be a 2008 Expo held on Saturday, March 29th. The Committee will most likely set up a table like we do at the Fair and we should also consider setting up a slide show displaying pictures of the trail.
2. Rail Trail Informational Forum: Another way to help get the word out on the trail and as importantly separate fact from myth about the project is to have a traditional style debate by proponents and opponents of the trail. The forum was suggested at the Oct 9, 2007 selectman meeting and will be carried live on Topsfield Access cable television.
3. ENHC progress report: The \$2000 grant from the Essex National Heritage Commission requires a progress report be submitted. Dave R. had heard they were dropping that requirement. Joe will look into this and if still required will write a report. The report will be brief as we have not spent any of the funds.

4. Mass Highway letter: A letter written to the selectman of all 8 towns by Mass Highway was received and stated that the Border to Boston Trail from Salisbury to Danvers has been one of the non-motorized transportation projects selected for 25% design phase funding has been review at Town Hall. There is no commitment of construction funding at this time. An article in the TriTown Transcript also referred to the letter.
5. Fontaine letter: A letter from the Fontaines on Grove Street requesting tress and bushes be planted as a barrier to the trail and their property and about the possibility of more trash along the trail after it's developed was received at Town Hall. This specific area will be addressed during the design phase for the trail.
6. Design Bids for Phase 1:
 - a. Mark Gallagher who is a civil engineer reviewed the bid package and he made some valuable suggestions that would be incorporated into the request for proposal (RFP).
 - b. The Trail alignment around the tot lot will be part of the bid specification.
 - c. Trail surface will be crushed stone (sometimes called stone dust)
 - d. There was a discussion about what constitutes 25% design
 - e. The bid process usually takes a minimum of 60 days.
 - f. Several firms who have experience designing and building trails were discussed as they would most likely bid on our project:
 - i. Neve-Morin
 - ii. Fay, Spofford and Thorndike
 - iii. VHB
 - iv. Weston & Sampson
 - v. Alta Design and Planning
 - g. Next steps were to have Phil Knowles and Dave Bond review the package before it goes to Roberta.
 - h. The committee voted unanimously to solicit bids for the design process for phase 1 of the project.
7. Informal meeting with Bob and Cathy Morgan and Joe on the street: Joe wanted to clarify if Bob mentioned seeking legal action again the Town or Committee. Bob clarified that he said he was trying to avoid legal action over a comment that was printed in the paper about trees planted on the right of way instead of his property. Bob said once he realized the trees were in the wrong place that he replanted them. Joe wanted to clarify another of Bob's comments mentioning 'there will be serious confrontation' if the committee did not print a retraction to the tree planting accusation mentioned in the article so he is not defamed. Joe said the committee would have to go into executive session at a later date to discuss this request.

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted: Dave Read