



Town of Topsfield

TOPSFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

Rail Trail Committee

Minutes of Committee Meeting March 28, 2011 – 8:30 PM

Members Present: Joe Geller (chair), Dave Read, Roy Baessler, Gregg Demers and Katherine Carlson

Guest: Bill Rositter

1. **Old Business:** Minutes from the December 17, 2010 meeting were approved unanimously with no changes.
2. **Trail Condition:** The trail seemed to fair the rough winter very well. Many cross-county ski tracks were visible from Route 1. Dave picked up some trash near the trail-head that had blown from the highway and Bill cleaned up a small section near Washington St. Dave also planted some grass seed around the fence posts that we finished in November to help prevent erosion.
3. **Essex County Trails Association meeting:** ECTA has asked the TRTC for an update on our project at their next meeting on April 12th. Dave will put together a few slides and attend the meeting.
4. **National Grid update:** National grid has presented us with a draft license to review. They prefer to start with a 5 year license with the towns of Topsfield, Boxford, Georgetown and Newbury and then work together for a longer term lease. Gregg will mark up the first draft of the license and Dick Gandt will also be able to work on it with him after town meeting is over. After the license is approved and signed by the Selectmen this we'll be able to perform maintenance on the northern two miles of the Topsfield Linear Common.
5. **Iron Horse Preservation update:** Joe G. has had several email exchanges with Joe Hattrup of IHP and he said he would be in touch with Lana Spillman of the Conservation Commission about restarting the project his spring. Gregg spoke with Bill Manual, our environmental consultant and he will mark from Maple St. to the Wenham town line for where siltation barriers would be needed. His cost for this work will be approximately \$300.
6. **Rt. 97 crossing design:** Joe presented a map of the area which showed an easement that an abutter has near the intersection so we'll have to push the crossing slightly south. Once the exact location of the crossing is agreed to by the Traffic Safety Committee, Roy will arrange for a cross-walk to be painted. Joe will ask for a traffic count of the area. Eventually we may install as Cross-Alert system at the intersection which will cost approximately \$13,000.
7. **Storage Shed location:** Roy and Dick Gandt have been discussing the location of the storage shed and Roy will stake out an area under the trees between the two playgrounds. Roy encouraged everyone to down to review and send him comments as this location was not final.

8. **Discussion of Priority list:** Roy facilitated a discussion of all the current projects along the trail. Each was listed and assigned a rough cost estimate and the committee members noted their priorities on the list. Dave will then take the list and calculate the averages to determine the overall priorities for the committee to focus on and in what order given our remaining funds which Joe provided. The project list is evolving but as of this time includes at least:
 - a. Building a storage shed to house mower
 - b. Painting crosswalks at Summer St and Route 97.
 - c. Completing the approaches at the Ipswich River Bridge
 - d. Route 97 Crossing: survey and Cross Alert system
 - e. Completing Phase 2
 - f. Starting Route 1 to Maple St. section
 - g. Further knotweed eradication
9. **Strawberry Festival Planning:** Joe reminded the group that we would again have a table at the town's annual June event to help continue public outreach for our project. The date will be June 11th so save the date and let Joe know times when you could man the booth.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 pm

Respectfully submitted, Dave Read