



Town of Topsfield

TOPSFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

Rail Trail Committee

Minutes of Committee Meeting April 19, 2011 – 8:30 PM

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

Guest: Pete Hayes

1. **ECTA presentation:** The Essex County Trail Association held their annual meeting in the Gould Barn on April 12th and Dave was invited to give an update of the Topsfield Rail Trail and larger Border to Boston Trail effort. In 2009 the Topsfield Rail Trail committee received some funding from ECTA to redeck the Ipswich River Bridge.
2. **RR Tie Removal:** There will be a meeting next Thursday to discuss removing the rail road ties to ensure all of the Conservation Commission requirements are met. Joe G., Roy, Lana Spillman, Joe Hattrup from IHP and Bill Manuell, our wetlands consultant will be present. They will determine what siltation barriers will be needed and go over the scope of work with the Rail Trail Committee and IHP.
3. **Route 97 Crossing:** Joe and Dave staked out the route 97 crossing by the canoe landing which shows a proposed intersection of the trail with the highway. In that section the trail will parallel route 97 for 100 feet or so to move the crossing to a more perpendicular one to minimize the crossing distance rather than going so far with the linear right of way that followed the tracks which is at a greater diagonal angle and results in a more dangerous crossing as the trail users spend more time on the road. The next step is for the Topsfield Safety Committee to review the plan. Joe will get Police Chief Hagland and Dave Bond of the Highway Dept. to come out to look at the area. If the Safety Committee approves then Roy will have the cross-walk painted with long-lasting thermoplastic paint. We will also need to get some boulders to be used as barriers to help protect trail users for the 100 feet or so that the trail parallels route 97 at the intersection.
4. **Shed update:** The School Committee still needs to approve the proposed shed location between the playgrounds at Proctor School. When built Roy prefers to use Hardy board clap boards on the exterior of the shed.
5. **Grant updates:** The U.S. Congress will be attempting to implement a rescission of funds that are not committed. The government is leaving it up to the individual states as to which programs these funds will come from. Some funds might actually be released from this action as the states may want to distribute as there may not be any funding next year.
6. **Strawberry Festival planning:** We will continue our community outreach to get word out about the trail so will have a booth set up at the festival on Saturday June 11th. Volunteers should contact Joe for those who can do 2 hour shifts and set-up or pack-up.

Meeting adjourned at 9:55 PM,

Respectfully submitted: Dave Read