



Town of Topshfield

TOPSFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

Rail Trail Committee

Minutes of Committee Meeting November 19, 2007 8:00 PM

Members present: Gregg Demers, David Read, Joe Geller.
Visitors: Ralph Stump, Bob Morgan

1. Pemberton Rd. Meeting – Joe and Dave discussed their October meeting with 10 of the trail neighbors on Pemberton Rd. We were invited to the Riley's house as they wanted to hear directly from members of the Rail Trail Committee with a smaller audience that would provide an opportunity for questions. There were many questions and comments about the trail mostly related to privacy issues. Dave Read talked about his experience living on the Marblehead-Salem Trail. The Riley's, who have two small children didn't have any concerns about the trail further increasing the risk of child endangerment in town above and beyond that in any of the other public parks. Joe and Dave agreed to keep the group informed of any progress on the trail and get their input for design in the upcoming years.
2. Right of Way workshop: The Essex National Heritage Commission conducted a right-of-way workshop on November 1st. Representatives from all 8 towns interested in developing a trail and key people at Mass Highway were invited. The intent of the meeting was to go through the process of making sure the due diligence is done with regard to establishing ownership of the land where the trail may go and any easements that may need to be secured.
3. Bicycle Racks: Six bicycle racks acquired through the recent MAPC grant have been installed (4 at the Proctor School, one behind town hall and the last one at the Steward School. Paul Fontaine installed them but may move them a little farther apart when the ground thaws in the spring. For the record it was noted that Paul is an abutter to the trail at Grove St.. He's not opposed to the trail but has some general concerns about privacy.
4. Trail Designers: There are firms that specialize in the design and engineering requirements for trails and Joe will be seeking more information from some of the local firms on those issues.

5. The response letter from the CNI presentation to the Selectmen on Oct. 29 was approved unanimously. The letter is to be sent to both the Selectmen and the local newspapers.
6. Police Patrols on Trails: Joe and Dave confirmed that police patrols are no longer performed on the trails in the towns of Lexington, Marblehead and Salem as there haven't been enough incidents on the trails to justify them. Some of the towns may have started with regular police patrols but subsequently were cancelled due to lack of need.
7. Boarder to Boston Coalition: The 8 towns hoping to develop a trail are trying to set up a meeting to discuss progress and share issues in their own towns. The meeting will be scheduled for either December 13th or 20th. (Please note the December 20th meeting was canceled due to the snow storm – the group will try to get together later in the winter or early spring.)
8. Questions from representatives from the Coalition for Child Safety, etc.: Bob Morgan asked questions about where we are with planning and mentioned that at a recent meeting in Georgetown that he's heard a 25% design plan was discussed. We have heard that the 25% design won't be completed by Mass Highway until mid-2009, at the earliest. That process is expected to address some of the wetlands concerns and the crossings at routes 1 and 97.

The meeting adjourned at 9:05.

Respectfully submitted: Dave Read