



Town of Topfield

TOPSFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

Rail Trail Committee

Minutes of Committee Meeting February 24, 2009 – 8:00 PM

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

1. **Old Business:** Minutes from Feb. 18th, 2009 were unanimously approved
2. **Knotweed Eradication:** The Committee discussed how best to deal with knotweed during Phase I - particularly the section near Summer Street. A combination of methods were discussed. Katherine reported that based on discussions with the Nature Conservancy that the best time to apply herbicide is in August, when the plants are storing up energy in their roots before winter (process is called translocation). This will result in plants transferring herbicide into their roots - which has a high success rate in killing the plant. Other options for knotweed control are having goats eat the plants and cutting the individual stocks. Within the footprint of the path, the idea of installing an HDPE plastic barrier (like used on landfill covers) was discussed. The possibility of using geotextiles (heavy felt) with the HDPE or by itself was also discussed. Gregg agreed to research costs on both barrier options.
3. **Phase 1 Construction bids:** The construction bid process was discussed. To date, 26 contractors have picked up the Request for Proposal. Contractor bids are due back on March 4th. Roy circulated a budget summary spreadsheet for items not included in the contractor specifications with cost information for each of the 4 Phase 1 segments. He will add in the contractor bid information once they are available.
4. **Main St. crossing:** Various options and approaches for the trail's alignment and crossing Main Street were discussed. Two options were presented - one involves making two new curb cuts along the trail alignment, the other involves connecting the existing curb cuts at the corners of Grove/Main and Park/Main with a crosswalk. We may need to slightly reroute the trail around the pear tree on that corner. Joe agreed to discuss the options with the Topsfield ADA compliance officer (Jennifer Collins-Brown) and the DPW (Dave Bond).
5. **Park St. section:** Options for separation of the Park Street parking area and the trail were discussed. This section will need some sort of barrier along the 450' stretch. Of the 5 options

discussed the Committee generally favors some type of fencing over a chain option as that is harder to see than a wide piece of heavy wood. We are considering several options including a log and post split rail fence (like near the tennis courts/tot lot) or a fence constructed with 2x10 pressure treated wood and square posts. Dave agreed to research pricing options for the log and post or split rail fence.

6. Rail Removal: Rails will need to be removed between the parking lot and Summer Street. The current plan is to remove the rails using volunteers and donated services of heavy equipment. We'll need to get rid of the knotweed to see exactly where the rails are in some locations. Joe has a contractor in Rowley willing to take up the rails and he will take the lead on developing this plan.

7. Phase 1 task list: Roy distributed an updated list of the tasks the committee is taking which will be updated regularly as the project proceeds.

8. Library Exhibit: The Main Street Committee has reserved an exhibit room at the library and has requested items from the Rail Trail Committee to put on display. Joe asked for any pictures of the Rail Trail that committee members may have.

9. Next Meeting: scheduled for Tuesday, March 10th to review the contractor bids.

Meeting adjourned: 10:45 PM, respectfully submitted: Gregg Demers and Dave Read