

Squannacook Greenways, Inc.

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes

May 8, 2019

Attending:

Peter Carson, Mark Cram, Peter Cunningham, Ray Jackson, Steve Meehan, Cedwyn Morgan, Bill Rideout, Joan Wotkowicz

Guest: Paul Sebring

Review of Townsend Earth Day and Ecumenical clean-up

Bill reported 20 people participated in the clean-up on April 27, many of them new to the rail trail. Prior to the clean-up, Paul and Joan installed boards across the ties to make it easier to walk in the wettest area.

Around 26 large trash bags were stored at the Sebring household until trash removal on Wednesday. Paul noted that some new discarded tires appeared on the trail this week.

Mark and Steve reported lots of business at our Townsend Earth Day table, including many who were new to our project.

Plans for Groton River Fest

The event will be on Sunday, June 9 starting at 11:00. Pete Cunningham, Steve, and Bill will host our table. Joan will send Pete the flyer we made for Townsend Earth Day.

Review of meeting on fisherman's parking lot

Bill, Mark, and Stan Dillis met with Gary Shepherd to review the NOI plan for the fisherman's parking lot. Gary did not see any problems with the plan for the lot, but is concerned about signage, mainly vandalism. He requested a sign that says "This is not public property. Parking is courtesy of property owner. Please be respectful."

Townsend Notice of Intent

Pete Cunningham and Joan met with Dave Henkels and Lyndsy Butler of the Townsend Conservation Commission to review our NOI documentation. Steve, Pete, and Bill also gave it a final review.

Ducharme & Dillis gave us three copies of the wetland maps, two for the Commission and one for our use.

We submitted the NOI on Wednesday, May 1, which included two printed copies and one electronic copy of the form and all attachments.

Pete Cunningham hand-delivered the DEP copy to their Worcester office and mailed the fee to their Boston office. The Commission will not be able to close the hearing until DEP reviews and assigns a file number.

The Conservation Commission has scheduled our NOI hearing for May 22, 2019 at 8:00 pm.

The Commission sent us an official notice and published a legal notice in the Sentinel & Enterprise on Friday, May 3.

Joan mailed out 52 letters to abutters and will deliver Certificate of Mailing forms to the Commission this week.

Costs incurred:

- \$98.26 payable to the Lowell Sun for legal notice - Bill will mail a check to the Commission.
- \$104 for mailing notification to 52 abutters on the certified list - Bill will reimburse Joan.
- \$42.50 DEP filing fee - Pete has been reimbursed.
- \$67.50 Townsend filing fee - Bill will bring a check to the hearing.

Plans for the Conservation Commission hearing

Stan Dillis will attend. He said he can speak about the stormwater plan.

Cedwyn expressed a concern about addressing permeability of the installed material. During our meeting with Stan Dillis, we decided to remove the specific permeability calculations from our NOI submission unless the Commission asks for them. Joan will bring Bruce's calculations to the hearing.

Joan will send a copy of the NOI to all board members to prepare for the hearing.

Cedwyn noted that the plan for the fisherman's parking lot (Attachment C) shows the wattles buried three inches. He suggests that we clarify at the hearing that we will not be burying the wattles three inches, lest that become an expectation in the Order of Conditions.

Joan suggested we select a spokesperson who will redirect questions to the appropriate person. Steve will lead off with an overview.

Request for bids from construction contractors

Steve began drafting an RFP based on a model used for the Northern Strand Community Trail. He alerted us to decisions we need to make, such as our requirements for contractors and evaluation criteria for contract award.

As we are not a state or municipal agency, we have the flexibility to choose a winning bid without defining our criteria. But we should make the requirements clear in the RFP to make sure we get quality responses. Bidders should tell us about similar projects they have completed.

All requirements will have to be attached to the RFP, including the Orders of Conditions, MBTA requirements, etc.

MBTA requires that we submit the plan for their review two months before construction. We already sent the Groton OOC; we will need to send the Townsend one. Pete Cunningham suggested we get an acknowledgement of receipt.

Joan said the construction specifications will cover a lot of the details. Steve said the spec should be a thorough statement of work so there will be no misunderstanding.

Steve asked if we will post the request for bids or give it to specific people (we currently have four potential candidates). Pete Cunningham suggested we put it in the Central Register to cast a wider net.

Steve asked if we should ask for a bulk price. Cedwyn pointed out that a contractor might subcontract parts of the project that we might be able to do ourselves for a better price, so we should ask for a price breakdown. We will need to break down the tasks.

Cedwyn suggested we include a payment schedule, under which the contractor can submit a requisition upon completing specific milestones. There may be a mobilization fee up front.

We discussed imposing a penalty for not finishing on time, but that could work against us. It is critical that work is performed between November 7 and March 15.

Construction specifications

Joan has been updating the specifications originally written by Mark. She split the specification into two documents, one for construction contractors and the other for volunteer projects. She added a list of the Orders of Conditions, Best Practices, ADA, etc. that must be followed.

In the contractors volume, she added sections for staging areas and the Harbor Church easement. In the volunteer volume, she added sections for wattles, bricks, signage, kiosk, etc.

Purchase and installation of wattles

Joan has an additional set of the ten wetland maps from Stan Dillis for our internal use. These are large (24x36") maps that show the precise locations for placing wattles.

In our DCR grant application, we estimated 8,000 linear feet of wattles at \$1.61 per foot (\$12,880), 2,000 stakes at \$0.20 each (\$400), and 120 volunteer hours to install. Mark obtained this pricing from SM Farms Erosion Control in Fitchburg.

Peter Patkauskos from Ducharme & Dillis calculated 8,496 feet of wattles in Townsend, which includes a one-foot overlap every 25 feet. (That's more than 350 wattles!)

Stan Dillis advised us to begin ordering stakes in advance, as suppliers may not have that many in stock.

Cedwyn said we should be able to slice the biodegradable mesh after construction and spread the hay to leave the wattles to degrade in place.

Project timeline

Steve asked if we could make a Gantt chart or Microsoft Project timeline. Pete Carson offered to work on building a project plan. Joan will send Pete an initial list of 10 tasks to get started.

Volunteer work days for clearing brush

We will start as soon as we get our OOC, beginning with cutting brush where the wattles will be placed, and then moving on to clearing anything else we can handle. We will lay the cut brush just outside of the walkway and leave high brush in the buffer zone.

We need to make sure we meet all requirements of the OOCs and MEPA permit for timing of brush clearing.

Steve has given a heads-up to two Townsend boy scout troops about volunteer opportunities. Pete Cunningham will send Steve contact information for Groton scouts.

We might look for assistance from a professional bricklayer when it's time to build out the kiosk areas.

Signage

Bill proposed that we buy one or more signs to announce "Squannacook River Rail Trail coming Nov 2019" or "Future home of Squannacook River Rail Trail" to be put up after we get the Townsend OOC. He showed an example of a 4x4 foot double-sided sign costing ~\$150, which we could use at Depot Street. We would need a permit for the sign.

After discussion, we decided to table the sign for now.

Joan and Paul hung large "No Motorized Vehicle" signs on trees along the rail trail on either side of Meetinghouse Road and behind the substation near Sterilite. They noted that there has been a lot of ATV traffic.

We have three more large signs, two of which will be installed near Crosswinds. We also have some small metal "No Motorized Vehicle" signs available.

Fundraising and financial report

Bill reported that Ducharme & Dillis billed us \$72 for copies of the wetland maps. Insurance will cost the same as last year.

Joan noted that we expect to hear about the DCR grant in about a week.

Meeting with Police Chief

Don Klein met with Townsend Fire Chief Mark Boynton and obtained a letter, in case we need it.

Bill spoke with Townsend Police Chief Rick Bailey, who said he will patrol for ATVs once the trail is built. He will also write a letter of support in time for the Conservation hearing.

The Police Chief encourages us to install bollards to prevent vehicles from entering the trail. He suggests we use locking bollards with a combination that we can give to the fire and police departments. We need to clearly alert people that a road crossing is ahead.

Paul suggested flexible reflective fiberglass trail markers ahead of the bollards to prevent accidents.

The Police Chief also asked about overhead clearance for an ambulance, which needs 11 feet. Mark said that he laid out 12 feet of clearance in the specifications.

Review of meeting minutes

A motion to accept the minutes from our meeting on April 10, 2019 was seconded and passed unanimously.

Next Meeting

Squannacook Greenways will hold our next rail trail meeting on Wednesday, **May 29** at 7:00 PM at the **Groton Legion**.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Wotkowicz

Clerk, Squannacook Greenways, Inc.