

Squannacook River Rail Trail Funding Exploration Committee (Townsend)

Minutes of Public Meeting of Nov 18, 2010 (Approved Dec. 16, 2010)

Location: Town Hall, Groton, MA

Time: 7:00 pm

Members Present: Steve Meehan (Chairman), Bill Rideout (Secretary), Mark Cram, Bill Martin, Hirk Fortin

Members Absent: None

Attendees: Peter Cunningham, Russ Murray, Pete Carson (Groton committee), Al Futterman (NRWA), Ken Gerken, Joan Wotkowicz, Alfred Gadway

The meeting was called to order at 7:09 pm. The first topic was a follow-up on our negotiations with the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). Peter Cunningham discussed his recent conservation with Conrad Crawford. Conrad told Peter that DCR Commissioner Rick Sullivan had given a favorable opinion of our proposal and wanted to move ahead and begin negotiations. Peter said that he wanted to set up a meeting as soon as possible.

The next topic was the future of the present town committees. The negotiations with DCR will need to be done as the newly-forming 501c3, and so we decided to keep the number of attendees from each committee below the level of a quorum to avoid open meeting issues. We discussed when to make a report to each board of selectmen and possibly terminate the town committees. Al Futterman recommended waiting until negotiations went further before dissolving. Bill Rideout volunteered to start writing a draft final report. It was agreed he would send it out before the next meeting, but that any editing would be done at the next meeting.

Mark Cram noted that he had been sworn in to replace Ken Gerken on the Townsend committee, so the Townsend committee again has five members.

Bill Rideout reported that he had spoken with Karen Chapman about meeting with the Townsend Conservation Commission. She said that due to the schedule, it would likely be January 2011 before she could put it on the agenda. Al Futterman volunteered to attend that meeting, and also noted that he had forwarded the environmental and engineering study done by Faye, Spofford and Thorndike to them.

Bill Rideout discussed his interactions with Townsend town administrator Andy Sheehan. Bill had sent Andy an email informing him of the committee's official support for the alternate sidewalk route in the Townsend Harbor area. Recently Andy had emailed back, stating that he was concerned about the potential costs associated with possible land takings for the sidewalk. Bill Rideout discussed his efforts to get confirmations from the various landowners that they would be willing to have a no-fee taking for the sidewalk. Bill Martin stated that he would be willing to have a no-fee taking on his property. Bill Rideout noted that it was planned to have the sidewalk discussed at the next Townsend Board of Selectmen meeting on Tuesday, Nov. 23, and so he hoped to have completed his discussions with all stakeholders by then.

The Townsend minutes for Oct 14, 2010 were unanimously approved after being amended. The next meeting was scheduled for Thursday, Dec 16, 2010 in Townsend . The meeting was adjourned at 8:03 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Rideout
Secretary, Squannacook River Rail Trail Funding Exploration Committee