

Squannacook Greenways, Inc.

Board of Directors Meeting Minutes Wednesday, March 2, 2022

Attending: Rick Bailey, Pete Carson,
Mark Cram, Peter Cunningham, Dan Hager,
Tim Palmer, Bill Rideout, Joan Wotkowicz

Guest: Linda Mack

New member of Board of Directors

Bill introduced Linda Mack, who agreed to join our board starting on April 1, 2022 after she leaves her position at CFNCM.

Townsend Shared Streets application

Bill and Vincent DeSalvo, Townsend's new grant administrator, submitted a 2022 application for funding to build a sidewalk along Route 119 from the Harbor Church to the lights at South Street. Bill presented the proposed project at a public Zoom meeting, which was recorded and posted on the town's YouTube site. He obtained a project estimate from Stantec (formerly FST), who did our engineering study.

Joan reported that items purchased from the 2021 Shared Streets grant have been coming in. Benches, bike racks, repair stands, and signs are in storage at the town garage. The highway and parks departments will install in spring. Three historic signposts pointing to the rail trail and other parks and trails near the center of town have already been installed.

Construction update

Ties have been removed from Harbor Church to the culvert in Gary's field. Dirt is stockpiled for filtering and James is building up the sand base.

Peter will ask Dave Paulson for an extension to put down stone dust.

Canoe launch project on Harbor Pond

Joan submitted a grant application to the Wild & Scenic Stewardship Council, who awarded us

\$4,000 to improve the canoe launch at Harbor Pond. We asked for \$2,500 for consultant and fees for permitting and \$1,500 for construction equipment, materials, and labor. If we don't need the consultant, Bill may ask if we can expand the scope to include the parking lot work.

Trail stabilization at Harbor Church

Bill and Joan met with James Gates, who pointed out that the transition from the rail corridor to the path through the parking lot needs to be built up with a crushed stone base to support the stone dust. He wants to curve the trail with a gradual slope as it turns toward the parking lot.

Also, James recommended an infiltration ditch across the lower parking lot to catch runoff, which should address concerns about the infiltration capability of recycled asphalt pavement.

Permitting for Harbor Church projects

Joan conferred with Dave Paulson and submitted a request for NHESP to review if the work at Harbor Church is consistent with our 2018 determination. Dave seems to think the wide open area near the church poses less risk to turtles, so there's a possibility we can work past March 15.

Joan also submitted a request to the Townsend Conservation Commission to amend our Order of Conditions for the projects. Bill and Joan met with the Commission for a site visit today and we are scheduled for a public hearing on Wednesday, March 9th, 2022 at approximately 7:30 PM.

Status of ARPA funding

Bill submitted the required paperwork for our \$100K earmark and the money should show up

soon in our checking account.

Status of grant applications

Grants won but pending:

- Groton CPA: \$30,000 (Phase 3)
- Wild and Scenic: \$4,000 (Canoe launch)

Grants applied for, awaiting result:

- MassTrails: \$96,000 (Phase 3)
- Bruce J. Anderson: \$12,000 (Phase 4)
- CFNCM: \$15,000 (Phase 4)

We also hope for additional ARPA money through Senator Cronin. The last phase of construction will be the most expensive, so we will need all of these grants.

Historical Society bridge repair

The Society wants to repair the bridge nearest the Reed Homestead. We would work with them on the permitting. Per Jessica Consolvo, Townsend Conservation Agent, if the bridge is for a different use than the rail trail, it needs a new NOI. Joan will discuss further with Jessica whether the bridge could be considered part of the recreational trail.

Meehan bridge project

Stan Dillis conferred with Dave Paulson about the area flooded by beavers along Old Meetinghouse Road. He sent us a draft Road Improvement and Bridge Replacement Plan and said most ideas for minimizing fill in the FEMA Flood Plain seem impractical and expensive. He sent a photo of a raised metal mesh walkway, which is the best idea he found.

It would be easier if the town could take over the project of improving the town road—for example, if the Fire Department / EMS needed to upgrade the road for public safety.

Townsend Earth Day

April 23 at North Middlesex Regional High School parking lot. We'll host a table. Joan will prepare handouts announcing the trail is open to Harbor Church and including a map and

information about the next sections to be built.

Other events/publicity/outreach

We will plan another ribbon cutting for the second phase. We'll also host an event when the canoe launch is finished, hopefully with support from Nashoba Paddler.

As a reminder, CFNCM is hosting a social at the Groton Inn on March 31 from 5:00 to 7:30 PM.

Ideas for public work days:

- Harbor Church fence. Bill and Joan met with Tabor and Ryan from Townsend Historical Society, who would like a fence between the parking lot and the rail trail.
- Fence at the abutter property (~100 ft.) of the couple with vision and mobility impairments. This was requested back when Steve Meehan and Joan visited them.
- Tree planting near Depot Street. Dan suggests red maples, white pines, and other transplants from our property. We could also purchase some cultivated trees such as disease-resistant elms. Spring (April–June) is best, so this may be an Earth Day project.

Financial report

Bill reported that with \$100K coming in from ARPA, which will go back out as payment to Shepco for the current construction.

Review minutes

A motion to accept the minutes from our February 1, 2022 meeting was seconded and approved unanimously.

Next Meeting

Squannacook Greenways will hold our next rail trail meeting on **March 30, 2022 at 7:00 P.M.** via Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Wotkowicz, Clerk

Squannacook Greenways, Inc.