

Squannacook Greenways (pre-incorporation) meeting minutes

Apr. 28, 2011

Squannacook Greenways held a meeting on April 28, 2011 at the Nashua River Watershed Association in Groton. In attendance were Steve Meehan, Bill Rideout, Mark Cram, Pete Carson, Al Futterman, Joan Wotkowicz, Ray Jackson, Arthur Gadway, and Rollin Willis.

The first topic was negotiations with DCR. Peter Cunningham could not make the meeting, but had sent an email describing his conversation with Conrad Crawford. Conrad had said that DCR's legal department was working on other issues and had put negotiations with us temporarily on the back burner. Peter said he planned to write the new DCR Commissioner, Ed Lambert, directly in order to raise the priority of this project. The group discussed other approaches that might be tried, including asking residents on our email list to contact DCR. Al Futterman said he would consider bringing the matter up with State Parks and Recreation Director Priscilla Geigis.

Next the draft bylaws were discussed. It was decided the official name of our non-profit would be Squannacook Greenways, Inc. Also it was agreed to add a bylaw indemnifying the Board of Directors as proposed by Bill Rideout. Bill agreed to forward the text to Pete Carson, who will create a final draft. Also it was agreed to have the board of directors be able to change the bylaws with a 2/3 vote, rather than requiring a vote of the members.

The draft articles of incorporation were accepted without changes. It was agreed that once a new version of the bylaws was ready, Rollin Willis and Bill Rideout would send them out for review to lawyers they knew. The plan is to incorporate as soon as DCR indicates its ready to move forward.

We then spoke about engineering aspects of the trail. Mark Cram discussed a draft engineering report he is planning to send out to the full board before the next meeting. Mark has also been gathering estimates of the salvage value and disposal costs of the existing rail bed. We agreed that once the whole committee has reviewed that draft, we would then seek feedback from potential bidders. We agreed that Mark, Alfred and Bill would try to set up a meeting with Gary Shepherd, since he has expressed interest in the job. We would also seek out other contractors, including Iron Horse.

We talked about volunteer work that might be done on the rail bed to defray costs. Ray Jackson discussed his extensive trail building experience. Ray has led many volunteer groups doing trail building and maintenance. We also talked about the possibility of a course for volunteers, especially in the use of chain saws.

We discussed outreach efforts. Thank to Joan, we now have a single-fold brochure for general use. Townsend's Earth Day on April 30th will be attended by Bill and Mark and Ken Gerken, and Alfred will be at the MassBike table next to us.

We also discussed who might be willing to be officers after we incorporate. Bill Rideout agreed to send out links describing the various roles (president, vice-president, clerk, treasurer). We also discussed the various committees that might be formed. These include Publicity, Membership, Volunteer organization, Engineering, Grant writing, Town liaison (for example, working to make sure sidewalk is built in Townsend).

Bill Rideout mentioned that he had spent some money on rail trail t shirts and brochures. He said he

would submit the receipts to Al Futterman.

The next meeting was planned for Wednesday, May 26, 2011 at 7 pm at the Nashua River Watershed Association. This is intended strictly as a Squannacook Greenways meeting.

Bill Rideout