

Squannacook Greenways meeting notes

8/24/11 7:00 pm

Nashua River Watershed Association, Groton, MA

Attending: Peter Carson, Peter Cunningham, Mark Cram, Alfred Gadway, Bruce Easom, Ray Jackson, Steve Meehan, Cara Sanford (AmeriCorps/NRWA), Bill Rideout, Joan Wotkowicz

Letters of support – The group discussed letters of support we wanted to use to help convince DCR Commissioner Lambert of our credibility, and to support our DCR grant. Cara Sanford noted that Elizabeth Ainsley Campbell not only was willing to write us a letter of support, but she would also help to ask others for such letters. Peter Cunningham noted that Bob Hargraves was working on a draft template letter that we would each use the basis for our own letters requesting these letters of support. It was agreed that this template letter should make it clear that we were requesting the letters be sent to us, not directly to Commissioner Lambert. The idea is that we will gather all these letters of support into one hopefully impressive document. Bill Rideout noted that we would really like the theme of each letter to be our group's determination, persistence, and commitment. We would like these letters to be signed hard-copies on official letter head, not electronic versions.

We updated the list of potential letters, and who would be responsible for each one:

1. Elizabeth Ainsley Campbell – NRWA (Al Futterman)
2. State Rep Sheila Harrington (Bob Hargraves)
3. Former State Rep Bob Hargraves (Bob Hargraves)
4. State Senator Eileen Donoghue (Peter Cunningham)
5. State Senator Jen Flanagan (Peter Cunningham)
6. Congresswoman Tsongas (Peter Cunningham)
7. Congressman Olver (Al Futterman)
8. Senator Brown (Bob Hargraves)
9. Senator Kerry (Al Futterman or Elizabeth Ainsley Campbell)
10. Ed Yaglou - Wachusett Greenways, Chairman of MCRT task force (Bill Rideout)
11. Colleen Abrams - President, Wachusett Greenways (Bill Rideout)
12. Groton BOS members (Peter Cunningham)
13. Edward Torcoletti and Bruce Colburn, DCR (Joan Wotkowicz)
14. Emily Norton, Friends of Willard Brook (Ray Jackson)
15. Liz Fletcher - Mason Railroad Trail (Al Futterman)
16. Charles Martin - president of the New Hampshire Rail Trails Coalition (Bill Rideout)
17. Bob Plamondon – Chairman of Townsend BOS (Steve Meehan)
18. Tom Michelman, President of the Friends of Bruce Freeman (Bill Rideout)
19. Montachusett Regional Planning Commission (Bruce Easom)
20. Steve Winslow – Bill Rideout
21. Trail organizations Ray Jackson has worked with (Ray Jackson) (Trailwrights, Society for Protection of New England Forests, Friends of the Wapack, DCR, etc)
22. Jennifer Ducey (formerly Shemowat) and John Hendrickson – FST (Bill Rideout)

Bylaws and incorporation plans – Pete Carson made changes to the proposed bylaws as suggested by Rollin Willis's friend. Pete separated directors and officers, and added an article on how dissolution could occur. Pete will send an electronic copy to the group soon. Bill Rideout said we would send this final

version to Gene Rauhala to see if he had any final comments. We discussed the incorporation timetable, and decided that incorporation as soon as possible would increase our credibility with DCR. We discussed our relationship with NRWA, and the decision was that we should be two closely-allied but separate organizations. Bill Rideout said that he would run this by Al Futterman, and if Al also agreed this was the best path, Bill would try to officially incorporate Squannacook Greenways, Inc. before our next meeting. Bruce Easom indicated that he would like to be included as a member of the Board of Directors, and Bill Rideout said he would send him a copy of the biography document so Bruce could add his section.

Ayer abandonment update – Peter Cunningham gave us an update on the abandonment of our spur through Ayer. Peter said he had spoken with Robert Burns of PanAm, who said the abandonment was on hold in case the new tenant of the PolyOne building wanted rail service. We decided that it would be fair to say in future discussions that “PanAm has expressed interest in abandonment of the line through Ayer depending on the results of the rental of the former PolyOne facility.”

DCR grant proposal update – Joan Wotkowicz noted she needed further information to continue writing the DCR grant proposal, due Oct. 1, 2011. Bill Rideout noted that he and Mark Cram are working to set up a meeting with Gary Shepherd, but that vacation conflicts made it difficult in August. Bill is also working to set up a meeting with an environmental firm that deals with permitting. Joan expressed interest in attending both those meetings. We discussed whether we would submit the DCR grant for this cycle or the next. The consensus was that submitting it this cycle was preferable, but that we would make that decision at the next meeting. Pete Carson volunteered to photograph as issues along the rail bed that might need to be included in the grant application.

Moving Together meeting – Bill Rideout noted that the Moving Together conference will be held Wednesday, Oct 12, 2011 in Boston. The cost is \$60/person. Bill has already signed up. The url is <http://baystateroads.eot.state.ma.us/movingtogether/index.html>. This is the premier rail trail meeting in Massachusetts.

Human Powered Vehicle Festival – The human powered vehicle festival will be held in Ayer on Sept. 17, 2011. Alfred Gadway noted that last year he had attended, and the focus seemed to be on alternative bicycle design. We decided it was not a good fit for our group to officially attend.

The next meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, September 14 at 7 pm at the NRWA.