

SAUCON RAIL TRAIL OVERSIGHT COMMISSION MEETING

Date: Monday, February 24, 2014
Time: 6:00 PM
Location: Hellertown Borough

I. Opening

- A. **Call to Order:** President Peter Jarrett called the meeting to order.
- B. **Roll Call:** Lower Saucon Township: Roger Jurczak, Jack Cahalan
Hellertown Borough: Steve LaBrake, Richard Staffieri, Cathy Hartranft
Coopersburg Borough: Linda Minarik
Upper Saucon Township: Joseph Geib, Peter Jarrett, Alan Cassaday

II. Public Comment (Related to Agenda Items Below)

None.

III. Information Items

- A. **Officer David Petzold Memorial 5K Run/Walk** – Joe Geib explained that Officer Petzold was an Upper Saucon Township police officer killed in the line of duty. The run is expected to be held on Sunday, September 21. The route is from the Upper Saucon Park to the township line and back. The run has been approved by Upper Saucon Township's Park and Recreation Board.
Upon motion by Mr. LaBrake, seconded by R. Juracek, the commission unanimously approved the Run/Walk as outlined in the application.

IV. Presentations/Trail Business

- A. **Rail Trail Vision** – Nothing to report.
- B. **Website Updates** – Nothing to report.
- C. **Trail Vegetation Planning/Mapping** – The proposed nature path will be discussed at Lower Saucon Township's Environmental Advisory meeting on March 11th.
- D. **Eagle Scout Project** – Emit Brown and Roger Juracek are working on this project which will be a kiosk. It is expected to be completed by summer 2014. Jack indicated the commission received a \$1,200 donation toward this project.

E. Trail Improvements Projects

- i. **Geology Proposal** – Roger advised that he has been in touch with Frank Pazzaglia who is the geology professor at Lehigh about him bringing his students out sometime this year to clean up the rock outcroppings that are in several locations along the trail. He feels that if they could be cleaned up they could be feature points to show the geologic formation of the trail. What he has in mind is to bring out a group of his students prior to the greening up of the trail this spring to take out small shrubs and trees that have grown up on the rocks and power wash the rocks to eliminate dirt and mold, etc. The area he is looking to do initially is between the Old Mill and Bingen Road crossings. There is a cut there where there is a low stone wall. The commission proposed to include educational signage explaining the significance of the outcroppings. Work is expected to be completed in mid-March. Jack will check to see if the outcroppings are on private property or within the ROW. All agreed this would be an incredible asset to the trail. Steve questioned whether the new High Street bridge structure will impede the outcroppings that are directly under the current bridge. Cathy will provide proposed plans to Frank to take a look. Roger will get in touch with Frank and coordinate with Township.
Upon motion by Mr. LaBrake, seconded by Mr. Jarret, the cleaning and identification of the outcropping was unanimously approved.

- ii. **Nature Path at Reading Drive Trailhead** – Peter said the handout from the LST Planner indicates that there were some concerns with the plan proposed by Terry and the master gardeners such as ADA surface, location, width of the path. Jack said the trail starts in the

picnic area which is also a concern. The EAC did not have this report when Terry discussed his plan at their meeting. Jack said that he has since discussed this with the EAC Chair and she agrees with him that this should go back to the EAC for further discussion. That is scheduled for their March meeting.

- iii. **Visually-Appealing Wire Fencing along Bridges over Saucon Creek** – Peter said that they have a report from the Township planner on the proposal that we made and from what he read they are saying that the existing fence is not strong enough to hold the fence sections that we proposed and that in order for it to be safe new footers would have to be placed. Jack said that there are concerns about whether it would compromise the stability of the existing fence. Jack said that the existing fences that were put up there were done based on the recommendation of the engineers and if we are proposing a change to them he has to be able to tell the Council that the public will be just as safe with it as the previous fencing. Peter provided the commission with photos of the fencing along the Perkiomen trail which is basically wire cables strung from post to post. Jack said that if you want to go to the next step and bring in the engineers, you have to go to the Council and get their blessing for this idea so you can move ahead with the design and cost issues. Cathy discussed the proposed replacement fence with Hellertown Borough Council, who indicated since the existing fence has been designed and certified safe by engineers, there is no need at this time to replace the fencing. Hellertown Borough council suggests the new proposed fencing be installed at such time as it is needed in the future. Steve will post a Facebook poll to see if there is interest from the public to replace the fencing. No action taken.

V. Miscellaneous Business Items

- A. **Previous Meeting Minutes, January 27, 2014** – Upon motion by Mr. Juracek, seconded by Mr. LaBrake the minutes of January 27, 2014 were unanimously approved.
- B. **January Financial Report** – Upon motion by Mr. Juracek, seconded by Mrs. Minarik, the January Financial Report was unanimously approved. Jack also presented the donation report which shows a \$500 donation from Timothy & Pamela Enot toward the refurbishment of a signal and a \$600 donation from Joseph Trapasso toward the Eagle Scout kiosk.
- C. **Bills to pay (if any)** – Jack presented an invoice in the amount of \$240.20 for the annual meeting advertisement. Upon motion by Mr. LaBrake, seconded by Mr. Cassady, the commission unanimously approved the invoice.
- D. **Other** – Steve questioned whether, in the future, the municipalities would approve a single snowmobile track or snow blow a path for the use of cross country skiers. Jack indicated no motorized vehicles, except for maintenance vehicles, are permitted under the lease agreement. Peter attended the AMC meeting for the proposed Highlands Trail. It was very well attended by municipal officials. A discussion was held among the members how better to inform bike riders that there are many safe places to park your bike in Hellertown. Steve will take pictures to place in kiosks. Steve will also work with Jerry to proceed with the plans to refurbish one signal. Peter inquired whether the commission would like to invite a speaker knowledgeable of local railroads to a future meeting. It was the consensus of the commission that this would be an interesting topic.

VI. Public Comment / Citizen Non-agenda

VII. Commissioner Individual Statements & Updates

None

VIII. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:08 p.m.