

SAUCON RAIL TRAIL OVERSIGHT COMMISSION MEETING

Date: Monday, March 23, 2015
Time: 6:05 PM
Location: Lower Saucon Township Council Meeting Room

I. Opening

A. Call to Order: Peter Jarrett welcomed everyone

B. Roll Call: Lower Saucon Township: Roger Jurczak, Jerry Holum, Jack Cahalan
Coopersburg Borough: Linda Minarik
Upper Saucon Township: Peter Jarrett, Diana Inglis, Joe Geib
Hellertown Borough: James Hill, Steve LaBrake

II. Public Comment/Citizen Non-Agenda Items - None

III. Public Comment/Related to Agenda Items Below – Jack introduced Bob Sterling who is a Lower Saucon Township resident. Bob donated toward the signal project and is a volunteer at the Railroad Museum of Pennsylvania. Bob was invited here tonight to see if he could assist with the signal project.

IV. Presentations/Trail Business

A. Vision/Future Plans

1. Springfield & Richland Township Update

Jack said that John Brunner sent out an email about an upcoming PHTN meeting on March 31st at West Rockhill Township at 7 pm. Peter said he will be attending the meeting. Peter said that John Brunner told him that they have meetings set up with the East Penn rail company that leases the track from SEPTA.

2. Bethlehem Greenway Update

Steve said that he was not able to make it to the public meeting on March 10th and there are no other updates.

B. Trail Improvement Projects

1. Reading Drive Trailhead Nature Path

Jack said that there is no update.

2. Signal

Roger said that he, Jerry and Pete met on Saturday at the Grist Mill. We had gotten the signal components down off the pole around Thanksgiving and then the deep freeze hit us. We have one of the lights disassembled inside but the temperature inside the building is around 35 degrees and they were not able to work on it from December through February. We plan on taking more of the parts apart and identifying them through sketches and/or photographs. We then have to get estimates for sandblasting and painting. We wanted to verify tonight what the SRTOC saw the mission to be on this project. Tom Henshaw felt that the pole could be cleaned up with some wire brushing, sanding, primer and painting. On the component parts we probably will have to get them sand blasted to ensure a good finish. Jerry asked if we were going to do some electrification of the signal. Jerry said that he thought that a solar panel could be used to provide the power to light the five (5) lights in the signal. Bob Sterling said he may be able to get some of this information at the Railroad Museum. Jack gave him photographs of the signal to take with him. Roger said that they will continue to disassemble the component parts so that they can be cleaned and painted. The internal pieces of the old electrical system are not reusable. They will remove them but diagram where they went, etc. so if a decision is made in the future to electrify the signal there will be plan on how to do that. In the meantime they can replace the lenses with aluminum disks painted in the appropriate signal color. Jerry said that he has been in touch with some people about replacement parts and he was told that there may be some at the UST landfill that were taken down when Preston Road was extended. Peter said that it would be good to have some type of work schedule. They could use someone with photography skills who could take notes.

Roger said they did purchase a grinder to take some of the parts apart. Jerry asked where the money would come from for the signal? Would it come from donations only or the SRTOC general fund? Jack said that we are fundraising for the signal refurbishment and so far we have raised \$1,300 with Bob Sterling's contribution. There is an additional \$800 that was donated to the SRTOC for no specific, including a \$100 donation that Jerry made. Jerry said that was for the signal. If you add this \$800 to the \$1,300 you have \$2,100 that could be used for the signal. Jack said if Jerry was referring to the \$11,547 balance in the SRTOC treasury and if this group wants to make an expenditure out of that and it's not for administrative expenses for the SRTOC like website, taking minutes, mailings, etc., Jack said in his opinion that would have to go back to the four governing bodies for their agreement on making the expenditure. Jack suggested that for additional publicity we could ask Josh Popichak and Paul Bealer to visit you down at the Grist Mill for photos and a story about the project.

3. Mile Markers

Roger said that there was no progress.

4. Trail Clean-up April 25th

The email from Cathy Hartranft about the trail clean-up was distributed. Steve said that he heard from Cathy today that she had gotten a request from a Cub Scout group asking if they could participate in the clean-up. Were they too young? Jack said that the Township doesn't allow anyone under 18 to participate unless they have adult supervision. He said that they have Brownies doing some weeding at one of the parks but the clean-up could get into some heavy stuff like we picked up last year down by Meadows Road. Steve said that he would be concerned about them picking up glass and jagged metal, etc. Steve said that he will tell her the answer is no. He will update the SRT Facebook page and say that no one under 18 is permitted unless they are with an adult.

5. Water Street Park Renovations/Boulders

Peter said that Dr. Frank Pazzaglia from Lehigh looked at the boulders that are along Water Street and said that they are from locally quarried limestone and contain excellent examples of the geology from long ago and he recommended that as part of the Water Street Park upgrades that 15 of them be put into a grouping near the trail with an interpretive sign.

C. Petzold Memorial 5K

Joe said the Petzold Foundation submitted a Special Event application for their 2nd annual 5K run/walk on 9-20-15. The race will originate in Upper Saucon's Community Park and turn-around just before the UST/LST border. It's on a Sunday morning and there will be no impact on their park. The application was approved unanimously.

D. Website/Facebook Updates

Steve said that people are reporting on trail conditions on the Facebook page which is good. There are 1,800 likes on the Facebook page. There hasn't been any changes made to the website. Jerry asked if we ever thought about polling trail users on the Facebook page? Jack said that the Saucon Valley Partnership will be renewing a subscription for the Survey Monkey survey program which could be used by the SRTOC to survey trail users.

V. Miscellaneous Business Items

A. Previous Meeting Minutes – February 23, 2015

Peter said we don't have the minutes from the last meeting.

B. Financial Report

Jack said that the balance in the SRTOC fund at the end of February was \$11,547.93. We did waive the municipal contributions again for 2015. There were no receipts and the only expense was a payment of \$50 to 110 Front Street for website upgrades. The Donation Report shows \$2,250 in contributions. The reports were approved unanimously.

E. Bills to Pay (if any) –

None

VI. Commissioner Individual Statements & Updates

A. By Municipality - None

VII. Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m. Next meeting April 27th at Hellertown Borough