

Saucon Rail Trail Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

**March 28, 2011
Upper Saucon Township**

Time: 5:10 PM

Present: Steve LaBrake, Hellertown Borough, Jack Cahalan, Donna Bristol, Jerry Holum, Lower Saucon Township; Tom Beil, Upper Saucon Township; Jennifer Wescoe-Shaninger, Coopersburg Borough

Jack Cahalan welcomed everyone and advised that Cathy Kichline from Hellertown Borough was attending a meeting in Easton; Dawn Kresge from Coopersburg Borough was ill and Frank Pazzaglia said he had another conflict and could not attend tonight.

1. Trail Development

Jack said that Cathy Kichline gave him an update on the status of the trail in Hellertown:

- The revised Intermunicipal Agreement, as revised by Upper Saucon Twp. has been sent to their solicitor for review and comment
- The crushcrete trail rail surface is not receiving a favorable response from Council. Their Public Works Director is getting cost estimates for #10 screenings
- The pedestrian crossing signage at Walnut and Water Streets has been staked out awaiting the contractor. Signal Services was to start work on Monday, 3/21 but due to the adverse weather last week is now scheduled for March 30th. It is estimated this will take 5 days to complete. Once complete, PennDOT will have to inspect before they can go operational
- The kiosk has been sanded and two coats of Tung Oil applied. Locks have been ordered and will be installed this week. Flowers planted as soon as weather permits.
- The Public Works Director received three quotes for fencing at bridge crossing over Saucon Creek. Awaiting one more quote for gate.
- Guardrail has been removed and will be re-installed upon completion of fencing and surface material

Jack said that the status of the trail in Lower Saucon Township is as follows:

- Fencing is up on the two bridges spanning the Saucon Creek
- Gates and bollards have been installed at our two road crossings
- The Township is actively pursuing the acquisition of the property on Reading Road for use as a trailhead access
- We are working with Hellertown Borough on a suitable surfacing material for the trail. We were working on a plan to use slag from the Borough and cover that with gravel, but we recently came across a crushed concrete mix that is very inexpensive. We put a test strip of it down by the Grist Mill in the Borough and everyone from the Township likes it. He understands from Cathy that her Council does not like it and they are looking into using another surface material. Steve said he rode on it with both his thin and wide tired bikes and it held up pretty good.

Tom advised that the Upper Saucon Township portion:

- Their Phase 1 portion of the trail from their Community Park north to the LST line is complete and the flashing light at Spring Valley Road will be installed in the near future
- They are planning on opening this section of the trail next week
- They are planning a ribbon cutting ceremony for the trail on June 11th
- Tom had copies of the engineering drawing for their Phase II of the trail which he said would not start construction until 2012
- He indicated that a developer had agreed to construct their Phase II in lieu of him paying his SALDO recreation fee

2. **Inter-Municipal Agreement**

Tom stated that he sent out the latest draft of the agreement with the changes recommended by the LST Solicitor incorporated into it. Jack said that he understands from Cathy that her Solicitor is reviewing it. Dawn advised that her Solicitor is also looking at it.

- Jack said that there are two issues that he wanted to discuss with the agreement. The first one is how the Commission will be funded under Paragraph 3c. His idea under this would be that each municipality would kick in an amount, say \$500 per year, to the Rail Trail treasury and these funds could be used by the Commission for such expenses such as secretaries, clerks, legal counsel, consultants, minor equipment & supplies, and for the website. There was a discussion on this but no consensus on how much this amount should be.
- Tom stated that the language in 3c was also put in there because we realized that any purchases that would be made for the rail trail would have to conform with municipal bidding requirements, etc. and that was something that we did not want the Commission to have to deal with. The municipalities will deal with those requirements.
- Tom indicated that any donations that:
 - Were made to the Saucon Rail Trail but not designated for any specific project or municipality would be split evenly amongst the four (4) municipalities
 - Were made that designated a specific project or municipality would be turned over to that project or municipality
- Tom indicated that the Committee should develop a catalog of items that individuals could donate funds for such as benches with a cost indicated for each of these items. He advised that the cost should be the exact cost for the item and that there be no additional charge placed on the donation for fundraising purposes
- It was noted that purchasing benches, trash cans, memorial plaques and other items off the state contract might be easier and less costly
- Jack indicated that there was a question about whether the commission members should be covered by the municipality's insurance? If they were they would be subject to requirements like completing the annual ethics disclosure form. Tom felt that since it was something that the municipality's did for their Planning Commission members, we should do the same for the Rail Trail Commission members
- Tom indicated that he would do a simple ordinance that would need to be adopted with the intergovernmental agreement

- There was a general discussion among the committee members on how the donation policy would work under these requirements

3. Rail Trail Rules & Regulations

Tom handed out a draft list of Upper Saucon Township Trail Rules and Regulations which was shared with his Board of Supervisors

- He indicated that they took the rules from their community park and modified them to cover the rail trail
- He pointed out that the trail would only be open from dawn to dusk as their park is
- Dogs and cats would be allowed on the trail on a leash. No other animals are allowed
- Smoking is currently prohibited in their park and will also be prohibited on the Rail Trail
- Horseback riding is also prohibited
- They added #15 which states that there shall be no trespassing on properties adjacent to trails, and/or harassment of owners, renters, or occupants thereof.
- Tom said they are looking into the proper signage to post along the trail to discourage users from going onto private property
- Jerry asked if LST would be posting similar signage? Jack said there were no plans to post signs along the trail
- Jerry said that paintball guns should be added to #6
- Donna said that horseback riding should be under #5
- It was agreed that motorized wheelchairs and Segways would not be prohibited from the trail
- Jerry felt there should also be a rule about not throwing stones

4. Historic Signs

Scott Pino from Eternal Products in Coopersburg showed a sample plaque made out of black marble that could be mounted on a pedestal 48” high and placed along the trail at the historic sites. He had gotten information from Jerry on the Meadows Road Bridge and had that etched into the marble. This product would run approximately \$600.

5. Other Discussion

- Jim Ravier from the Spring Valley Sportsmen’s Club said they are concerned about the public parking on their property to access the trail. How is this going to be handled? Jack said it will be handled on a case by case basis. We can open a dialogue with his club about these issues and discuss methods we will use to address these problems. We will block off all unauthorized access to the trail and will deal with violators on a case by case basis.
- Jack said that he plans on having one of his bike officers from the Police Department at the April 25th meeting to discuss how they will be patrolling the trail in LST
- Naomi Williams from Coopersburg said that she and her friend are geocachers and wanted to know if that was going to be allowed on the trail. Jack said that speaking for his Township, we allow it in our parks. We use the DCNR geocache request form and have anyone wishing to place a geocache fill out that form and it is approved by the Township.