

SAUCON RAIL TRAIL OVERSIGHT COMMISSION MEETING

Date: Monday, June 24, 2013
Time: 6:05 PM
Location: Coopersburg Borough

Present: Lower Saucon Township: Jerry Holum, Roger Jurczak, Jack Cahalan
Hellertown Borough: Joe Pampanin, Charles Hampton(6:15), Steve LaBrake(6:20)
Coopersburg Borough: Tim Paashauss, Sharon Porter
Upper Saucon Township: Peter Jarrett, Allen Cassaday, Susan Anderson, Joe Geib

I. Call to Order/Roll Call – Chair

Roger Jurczak called meeting to order; Joe Pampanin took roll call

II. Public Comment

Roger noted that he received an email from John Brunner regarding trail signage that the Appalachian Mountain Club has a program to cover 50% of the cost of qualifying signage. There are rolling applications deadlines with the last one being June 1st but there may be opportunities for SRT in the future if we can align any of our plans. Allen asked where the group meets. Peter said they meet in Milford Township. Roger mentioned the various potential routes where the trail would be extended, to the Bethlehem Greenway for example. Peter mentioned the Highlands trail and a meeting between Richlandtown & SEPTA and future possibility of linking Veteran's Park north to the SRT but Springfield is not yet involved and there are no formal discussions at this point. Tim and Peter both made mention of how nice the Perkiomenville Trail is.

III. Presentations / Trail Business

A. Trail Vegetation Planning, Recommendations (Penn State Master Gardeners)

Charles Hampton reported that the meeting at the Library was poorly attended and there was not much to follow up on from that meeting. Roger said he talked to Erin that 'Water Stewards' are working on design of informational signage. Also there is less participation than expected on invasives and it will take all summer to do mapping. Allen asked what they do. Chuck answered that they identify and catalogue plants and that it is arduous work. Roger said it would be helpful to prioritize the plantings and schedule to deal with invasives.

B. Website

Steve had no update. Jerry asked to get an update on the number of hits on the website. Steve will get the information. Steve asked Jack about billing for recent updates to the website. Jerry said the committee did not approve ongoing support. Jack said it seems like it is being done as a favor. Steve will make sure no significant modifications would be made without approval. Jack recommended that a service agreement could be agreed upon and written up. Steve mentioned there were a few updates that currently need to be done to the maps. Jerry mentioned the recent sightings of potential rabid animals in Hellertown and asked if this should be noted on the website. Steve has already made this information available on Facebook.

C. Update on LST Trail Head Construction

Jack gave an update on the new facilities at the Reading Dr. Trail Head. The toilets needed to be moved to a different location than was on the plans since the space in reality was not as large as plans showed and screening would not be possible in planned location. The toilets are getting a lot of use already so a second has been added in the area. Picnic benches are on the way. LST will be able to use DNR funds to fully fund and complete the drinking fountain. The fountain has been ordered and will be installed when it arrives.

Steve made motion, 2nd by Allen to approve installation of water fountain; motion passed unanimously.

D. Update on UST Trail Construction

Joe Geib gave an update that the trail base is complete but the fence installation is progressing slower than expected, construction to be completed by mid-August. Station Ave. trail Head is constructed and UST is working with an Eagle Scout to do a kiosk there. Peter asked about Passer Rd. crossing. Joe said it will be like any other crossing. PennDOT was OK with lower speed limit to 30mph. Station Ave. will be handed over to UST so there will be more flexibility on crossings. Joe presented an updated map of the trail from UST engineering. Roger said there was previous discussion about diverting bikers to dismount & walk through tunnel. Joe said he can move some of the signage forward to help get word out earlier. Allen said it would be a good idea to keep bikes off the steep slopes in the area and also there is loose stone there. Joe said it is slated to be paved next year but will discuss with public works the possibility of rolling the section earlier. Steve said we should extend the mile markers along the new section of trail. Peter asked if Living Memorial Park should be marked Coopersburg.

E. Update on Living Memorial Park

Tim gave an update on the park that several parking spots have been added and a barrier to prevent cars from entering onto the park. Peter asked about the direction of the trail through the park. Tim answered that you could use either direction. Peter said signage could be used to guide people to parking from loop. Tim said he could coordinate with UST. Roger asked Tim if he could get an idea for signage at Trail Heads. Jack said it is problematic on state roads but agreed that signage to direct people to trailheads would be beneficial but that it should be consistent and to apply to PennDOT with a single application. Jack would be willing to work on joint application for signage.

F. Email / Public Feedback

Joe Pampanin said he received positive feedback about the trail from Ed Gallagher, a professor at Lehigh. Ed seemed interested in when the trail would be extended further. Joe replied to Ed by email that UST is currently working on extend a section south and that there are future plans to extend north to Bethlehem Greenway but that is a longer time frame. Jack mentioned that a woman put a notice of lost keys on the Facebook page.

IV. Miscellaneous Business Items

A. Minutes of March 25 Meeting

Upon motion by Mr. LaBrake, seconded by Mr. Jarrett, the minutes of April 22nd were unanimously approved.

B. April, May Financial Reports

Upon motion by Peter Jarrett, seconded by Allen Cassaday, the April and May Financial Reports were unanimously approved.

C. Bills to Pay (if any) – None

V. Public Comment / Citizen Non-Agenda Items – None

VI. Commissioner Individual Statements & Updates

A. By Municipality

- Jack said an historic marker for Ehrhart's Mill has been approved and will be installed at Old Mill Crossing soon.
- Tim said Landis storm sewer construction is in the works but not sure how it will turn out. Road options being discussed at council. Pinebrook may get developed sooner so Coopersburg is looking at that section of ROW.
- Steve said he was approached by an individual about a donation for use on the trail, possible train depot. There may also be an Eagle Scout volunteer. Jack said he has a kiosk in mind that could be constructed. The signal at gristmill is another option. Roger asked Steve to try to

determine where the donor's interests are. Jack offered to work on an advert/promotion for fundraising for projects.

- Mr. Jarrett said when south terminus becomes end of trail parking would likely be insufficient. Tim replied that six spots have been added for a total of 25 and trees would have to be removed to add more. Peter asked about ownership of Living Memorial Park. Tim & Joe explained how the oversight works. The trail is in UST but Coopersburg volunteers assistance because it is near the park.
- Jerry said there is no apparatus for measuring the success of the trail. Use has increased significantly this year from last year. Jack said counters are used on some trails, individuals can manually count on their own or use events like Farmers Market to do surveys.
- Chuck said 5k race was well attended. Roger said race exceeded the 250 entrant goal.
- Peter said individuals placing 'For Sale' signs facing the trail.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:40 pm.

Next Meeting

July 22 @ Upper Saucon Township