

## SAUCON RAIL TRAIL OVERSIGHT COMMISSION MEETING

**Date:** Monday, October 28, 2013  
**Time:** 6:00 PM  
**Location:** Coopersburg Borough – Borough Hall

**Present:** Lower Saucon Township: Jerry Holum, Roger Jurczak, Jack Cahalan  
Hellertown Borough: Joe Pampanin, Cathy Hartranft  
Coopersburg Borough: None  
Upper Saucon Township: Peter Jarrett, Alan Cassaday

**Also Attending:** Linda Frederick, Terry Boos, Stacey Reid

### **I. Call to Order/Roll Call – Chair**

Roger Jurczak welcomed everyone and had all the representatives introduce themselves.

### **II. Public Comment (Related to Agenda Items below)**

Roger introduced Linda and Stacey and said they had met to work on the vegetation plan. Stacey said the plan is to move from an ambitious project to more manageable projects that are smaller in size. She said a pie shaped property off Reading Drive is one that was looked at. They are looking at restoration and enhancement of local flora and elimination of invasive species. They are also working on a walking path to look at birds. Linda said they are working on meadows and there are other examples available throughout the Lehigh Valley. Roger said each person brings expertise to the group. He said the initial scale was thought manageable over the entire trail. He said Reading Drive lends itself to being a laboratory area. With this experience they can multiply sites along the trail. He said there is a need to get more people to do cleanup along the trail. Jack said there are no plans for the property at Reading Drive beyond what has been done. He said additional work could come through the SRTOC and the watershed group and a landscape architect is available to do final plans. Jerry asked if Bingen Station can be brought into the plan. Terry said that during inventory, he can include previous uses. He said he was not aware of the Bingen site but that other items are occasionally found. Linda asked when. Jerry replied in the late 50s; it is close to where the parking lot is. Jack asked about the details of the location. He said a brickworks was found near this location also. Terry said it was the Bingen Brick Works. Jerry said he also saw a concrete box but doesn't know what it is. Terry said he would love to see the history angle. Roger said there was no cleanup from the time the railroad went private to when it went to us. Terry said that was a plantation planting probably started in the 30s but the trees could be younger.

### **III. Presentations / Trail Business**

#### **A. Rail-Trail Vision**

Roger said we have not done much on this to date.

#### **B. Website Updates – None**

#### **C. DVGBC Update**

Joe said Roger and he went to a Delaware Valley Green Building Council event on Oct. 17<sup>th</sup> to represent the SRTOC which had been nominated for a 'Sustainable Community' award. He said there were several categories of awards all related to green building or sustainability. He said the nominees for sustainable communities were LANTA, Emmaus Borough and Saucon Rail Trail and Emmaus Borough won. He said it looked like Emmaus had the edge because of the number of different initiatives the borough had taken and the length of time they have been doing this. He said he believes the SRTOC just needs to do what we are already planning to win awards like this and it was good to just be nominated for the length of time the trail has been open. Jack said the event was posted on Patch and Facebook. Cathy said it was Christine Mildner who nominated us. Roger said an element that went through the awards was involvement of others in the plans. He said an example was photovoltaic panels on the student center. He said students were encouraged to recycle water bottles and reaching out to students and other groups to participate in building cleanup. Jerry asked what green meant. Roger said reuse of materials. Joe said another example is alternate transportation can lower dependence on fossil fuels.

**D. Letter**

Roger said a letter was received from a woman who was concerned about rules pertaining to bikes on the trail are not being followed. He said the woman has suggested additional signs may be necessary to keep bikers to the right and bikers don't always warn when coming up from behind. Alan said he stopped two bikers who passed very fast on left without warning. He said it is dangerous not to warn and is also a courtesy. He said it is easy to have an accident happen. Peter said Maryland and Virginia seem to have a head start on this courtesy. Alan said many runners have headsets so won't be able to hear. Roger said mixing modalities is similar to bikes and cars on highways. Alan said people walk dogs on long leashes and can dart out easily. Jack said it is the same issue wherever you go. He said signage is not a solution. Roger said we put up signs to stop and dismount at crossings but 60% don't do it anyway. He said 10 or less people have been injured at crossing and these may not have happened if people followed the rules. Alan said cars don't often slow down. Jack said you can put up signs and people will do dumb things. Cathy said before putting up signs put up trail etiquette guides at the kiosks and do a media blitz through Patch and Facebook. Roger said maybe Steve and other bike shops could sell bells. Cathy said Facebook is good because the notification will go out to friends on posting. Jack handed out a distributed posting used in Florida as an example.

**IV. Miscellaneous Business Items**

**A. Minutes of September 23 Meeting**

*Motion to approve minutes of Sept. 23 made by Jerry, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Peter, passed unanimously.*

**B. Financial Report, Sept. 30**

Jack said the only payment was to Stern Water. Peter asked Jack about the cost of installation. Jack said LST picked up the cost of installation. He said they had to install a manhole for the fountain and it seems pretty durable. Jerry asked if anything else was happening. Jack said the project is now phased out.

*Motion to approve September Financial Report made by Peter, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jerry, passed unanimously.*

**C. Bills to Pay (if any) – None**

Jack said there is a payment for the website coming up.

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

**VI. Commissioner Individual Statements & Updates**

Roger said he and Jack met with an Eagle Scout candidate about doing a project at LST trailhead. He said the scout is 16 and wants to do this soon. Jack said a gentleman also contacted him about a donation to the water fountain and if anything else comes up so is funding the Eagle Scout project. Jerry asked if it was copying the style in Hellertown. Roger said the structure is being copied but not the roof; it will be a simple roof. Jack said the man's name is Emmett Brown. Cathy said she did not have much to report but that the Service Electric building is moving along. She said the blitz on dogs and cleanup has seemed to work and the police ride the trail but there has been no direct involvement on this issue. She said grant applications won't be awarded until 2014. Peter asked about High Street. Cathy said Bethlehem is looking to the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission for funding and they already spent about \$500,000 on engineering. Peter asked how far it was from High Street to Saucon Park. Jack said about one-half mile. Roger asked what housing development was near Lynn Street Bridge. Jack said international modal would be open soon. He said there is another section above Bachman in the city of Bethlehem that the city does not own. Roger said there are at least two separate leases beyond Bachman and Clarke. Jack said he had nothing to report beyond the trailhead kiosk and that he is putting together some information for Steve to put on the website. Jack distributed a copy of a bicycle pump that could be put along the trail and said he is also looking into traffic counters and presented a printout of a type used in Illinois. Cathy asked how they distinguished between walkers and bikers. Jack said the sheet describes the devices as infrared. Cathy asked how much. Jack said he did not know but it would be good to get numbers so businesses can know how many people use the trail. Jerry said it is a good project for the partnership. Jack said we have not been able to get money for the trail. He said if we wanted to go to St. Luke's we would have data to show use. Jerry said there was a recent meth lab bust near the trail. He said he talked to an officer about whether the trail was

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used. Jerry also said he would like to see the bridge railings opened up to provide views. Peter said it would be easier to put a step there. Jack said a step was not recommended, that is was like putting up a ladder. Jerry said there were fences that he saw in other locations. Roger said he saw powder coated fencing in Europe also and it was more attractive than chain link fencing. Jerry said he will look into getting prices of material. Jack said we followed recommendation of engineering. Jerry said we need to do these things; it will get accolades. Peter said Joe Geib told him that progress at UST is slow and will progress next spring. Peter asked about road signs. Jack said that it was posted on Facebook that Joe, UST is working on that. Peter said that John Brunner is moving forward on plans for trail vision with SEPTA to California Road. He said it appears John is really moving it along but doesn't seem as motivated on the rail along Riegelsville, Quakertown. Peter said John's focus seems to be on the northern end which is good for us. Jack asked how the 5K and bike ride went. Cathy said without a hitch. Roger said the number of trucks in the parade was admirable. Peter asked about the Lutron 5K event. Jack said the Southern Lehigh Library run went very well. Alan said there were over 100 people. Roger said there was lots of 5K/10K activity this month. Jerry asked if scenic overview would be at commissions' expense or township expense. Jack said that LST and Hellertown put up the fence. Jerry said maybe we wanted to get started for budget time. Jack said the design and engineering would take us past the end of the year. He said LST and Hellertown each own one half of the shared bridge. Roger said we should just get some numbers to start.

**VII. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 7:25pm.

**Next Meeting**

November 25 @ Upper Saucon Township