

SAUCON RAIL TRAIL OVERSIGHT COMMISSION MEETING

February 25, 2013, 6:00 PM

Upper Saucon Township Building

5500 Camp Meeting Road

Center Valley PA 18034

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL- Roger Jurczak, President

Present were: Steve LaBrake, Vice-President, Hellertown Borough
Pete Jarrett, Upper Saucon Township
Susan Anderson, Upper Saucon Township
Joe Pampanin, Hellertown Borough
Chuck Hampton, Hellertown Borough
Cathy Kichline, Hellertown Borough
Jack Cahalan, Lower Saucon Township
Joe Geib, Upper Saucon Township

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

- a. Lee Weidner of Hellertown was present to speak about the obscene amount of dog droppings he has picked up along the Saucon Rail Trail near his house. On one outing, he disposed of 26 droppings left by other dog owners. He wanted to express his disgust with the fact that some dog walkers do not pick up after their dogs. He also noted that in Hellertown, it is a \$150 fine. On another note, there was yet another ATV incident on the Trail on February 14.

3. REORGANIZATION

- a. Election of President: All the members of the Saucon Rail Trail Oversight Commission voted to allow Roger Jurczak to remain as President for 2013, citing the great progress and momentum Roger has brought to getting the Saucon Rail Trail on track. This motion was made by Steve LaBrake, seconded by Chuck Hampton, and approved by all.
- b. Election of Vice President: Pete Jarrett was elected Vice President, on a motion by Steve LaBrake, seconded by Susan Anderson, and approved by all.
- c. Election of Secretary: Joe Pampanin volunteered to be Secretary. Motion for his election was made by Steve LaBrake, seconded by Pete Jarrett, and approved by all.

4. INFORMATION ITEMS

- a. Resignation letter from Sara Pandl: Roger Jurczak thanked Sara Pandl for her service to the Saucon Rail Trail Oversight Commission, and requested that a letter of thanks be sent to her.

5. PRESENTATIONS / TRAIL BUSINESS

- a. Upper Saucon Township Saucon Rail Trail Phase II Update: Joe Geib informed the Commission that the Township was successfully awarded the \$230,000 grant from Lehigh County for Phase II of the Saucon Rail Trail. The two parties need to finalize the grant agreement before the contract for construction is awarded. Upper Saucon Township anticipates having the Trail completed by the summer. Meanwhile, the Township, their engineers, and DCNR are still working on some plans for trail improvements at the Upper Saucon Township Community Park – another project with grant funding. Joe anticipates this to be finished closer to the end of summer.

- b. PA Highlands Trail Update: John Brunner of the AMC provided an update on the Highlands Trail. Currently, there are two proposed routes through eastern PA for the Highlands Trail, and one of them incorporates the South Bethlehem Greenway and the Saucon Rail Trail. Additionally, the Bucks County Commissioners recently made the southern extension of the Saucon Rail Trail part of the Official Bucks County Bike Plan. This will provide rail-trail access north of Quakertown towards Coopersburg. Bucks County already has a consultant on board to do a feasibility study and look at alternate routes. There is a kick-off meeting on the Bucks County portion on Tuesday, March 26.
- c. Website: not much to update, except for a request to add new historic photos (provided by Pete Jarrett), and include information about the water fountain fundraiser.
- d. Reading Drive: the plan has been approved by DCNR and is ready to go. Access to the site and the Trail will be closed off for about 2 weeks during construction.

Lower Saucon Township and Hellertown Borough met recently to discuss a joint plan for mowing and other seasonal improvements along the Trail. Lower Saucon Township recently obtained a water trailer to use on the trail to spread water and keep the dust down on the Trail during dry periods.

- e. Vision Map: Roger recently met with Erin Frederick and other PSU Master Gardeners to discuss native plantings and maintenance. Erin will be inviting more PSU Master Gardeners to help out on the project, to provide oversight. Erin will do a GIS map of the Trail, and provide GPS coordinates for specific project areas and installations, based off a walk and visual survey of the trail and its current vegetation. She will also look to host a seminar to help refresh the Master Gardeners about invasives, and some of their dos and don'ts. Pete Jarrett has concerns about invasives that encroach over to private land, and if it is a fruitless effort to fight invasives that may be fostered on adjacent private land. Roger feels that momentum and outreach will help control invasives.
- f. Water Fountain Donations: to date, \$580 received.
- g. Spring Valley Sportsmen Club Spring Shoot: April 14, 12:00 – 5:00 PM. They Club will post signs behind their property along the Trail prior to the event. Notice will also be on the website and in the kiosks. There will also be a Pathways to Progress event in Hellertown Borough on April 27.

6. MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS ITEMS

- a. Minutes: The minutes from the November 26 meeting were approved on a motion by Steve LaBrake, seconded by Pete Jarrett, and approved by all.
- b. 2012 Year-End Financial Report: Hellertown Borough paid their dues in February, and was not reflected on the report. Coopersburg Borough paid their 2012 and 2013 dues at one time. Steve mentioned that the fund balances are growing, without being put towards and projects. He would like to use some of the accumulated funds for plantings or professional planning services to help further beautify the Trail. Roger suggested that some funds be put towards the Master Vision Plan and our wish list, as well as possibly restore some of the historic railroad equipment.

7. UPDATES BY MUNICIPALITY

- a. Hellertown Borough: Cathy unveiled plans for a renovation of Water Sreet Park, to take place in 2014. The new plans include better spots for the Farmers Market vendors, bathrooms, a convertible basketball court / ice skating rink. Hellertown Borough would like a letter of support from the Saucon Rail Trail Oversight Commission.
- b. Upper Saucon Township: Joe discussed plans to do a joint feasibility study with Coopersburg Borough on the Liberty Bell Trail. They requested funds from the Lehigh County Community Revitalization grant program, and will be seeking matching funds from DCNR. Upper Saucon Township would also like a letter of support from the Saucon Rail Trail Oversight Commission.
- c. Lower Saucon Township: The Old Mill Bridge has been renovated, and will be rededicated on April 17. The Township also performed minor drainage fixes at the Meadows Road crossing.

8. NEXT MEETING- March 25, Lower Saucon Township
Meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM