

GEORGETOWN RECREATION PATH COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

May 24, 2012 7:00 PM

Town Hall – 2nd Floor Meeting Room

Meeting Opened: 7:06 pm

Committee Member Attendees: (x indicates attendance)

X	Jeff Wade, Chairman (JW)	X	Bill Hastings, member (BH)		Bill Munroe, member (BM)
X	Chris Roop, member (CR)	X	Richard (Dick) Paganelli, member (RP)		

Guests: Howard Snyder, Georgetown Town Planner (HS), John Van Schalkwyk, Newbury Trail Committee, John Hendrickson, FST, Jessica Strzepek, Abutter, Patricia Huckery, MA Fish and Wildlife, Leslie Harriman

League of Essex County Sportsmen’s Clubs: Tom Walsh, Vice President Bob Pasquale, Bob Young, Chuck Casella

Parker River Clean Water Association (PRCWA): George Comiskey, President, Yvonne Buswell, Secretary, Marlene Schroeder, Director

Abbreviations and Terms: FST - Fay, Spofford and Thorndike, WMA – Wildlife Management Area, ConCom – GT Conservation Commission, ENF – Environmental Notification Form

Minutes Approval:

Correspondence:

- 1.

Meetings Attended:

- 1.

Discussion:

1. League of Essex County Sportsmen’s Clubs: Tom Walsh, Bob Pasquale and other members of the League presented information to help the committee understand concerns of the League and hunters. They are in favor of the trail and recommended measures that can be taken to ensure compatibility between hunters legally accessing wildlife areas, League property and other private property from the trail, and other users of the trail. The following are some of the key points.
 - a. Educating non-hunters about gun laws
 - b. Signage notifying users when they are near hunting areas
 - c. Signage, consistent with firearms laws, indicating carrying of loaded guns is permitted for licensed hunters
 - d. Signage indicating access to Crane Pond WMA is from Thurlow St.The Committee was thankful for the input, which provided a better understanding of the issues to be addressed and requested the League to provide accurately worded text that could be used for this purpose. Tom Walsh will work with the League to provide the verbiage. The committee agreed to take this under advisement and noted that they will need to review with National Grid and town departments.
2. Trail impact at abutter property at 10 Mill St.: Jessica Strzepek indicated that access from their house to their barn was possibly on the ROW. They were about to replace a fence in the same area and wanted to know whether the trail would impact where the fence or access could be located. Based on the survey maps (posted on the town web site) it did not appear that there would be a conflict though the exact locations should be investigated further by the owner.
3. Parker River Clean Water Association: George Comiskey and Marlene Schroeder presented concerns of the association’s regarding impact to the ecology of the area. Both the committee and Association agree that the trail runs through unique and beautiful areas. Providing access to more users needs to be balanced with protection of the natural assets. Some of the key points are:
 - a. “Don’t put a highway through the woods.” Consider the type of surface material to be used to preserve the “greenway” character of the areas the trail traverses.
 - b. Preserve vegetation and wildlife habitats in the area, especially for the endangered turtle species.
 - c. Minimize and manage storm water runoff, recognizing the role of vegetation in this function.The committee will collaborate with the Association as the project progresses.
4. Patricia Huckery, MA Fish and Wildlife: Pat Huckery is manager of the Crane Pond WMA and therefore an abutter. She presented a number of concerns, particularly related to plans for the interim trail. This will change the usage of the trail

before the full environmental permitting process has been completed as part of the trail design being done by FST. The primary areas of concern are between Mill St. and Thurlow St. as well as north of Wells Ave. Specific issues are:

- a. Disturbance of turtle nesting habitat and wildlife in wetlands areas
- b. Need for changes to uncontrolled access in certain areas that needs to be completed prior to opening the trail to additional users
- c. Need for formal environmental review prior to change of usage

The committee was thankful for the opening of a dialogue providing clarification of the concerns. The committee has always and will continue to comply with the necessary provisions of the environmental review process. We are currently working with the Concom on the permitting process. FST is expected to complete the 25% design at the end of June this year and the ENF will be submitted at that time. This will open a 30 day period of public review and comment.

Other:

Adjourn: 9:20 pm

Scheduled Committee Meetings (2nd fl. meeting room), 7PM 6/14 (basement), 6/28, 7/12 (basement), 7/26, 8/9, 8/23, 9/13, 9/21, 10/11, 10/25, 11/8, 12/13 (basement)

Other Meetings: