



TOWN OF SWAMPSCOTT

RAIL TRAIL DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

ELIHU THOMSON ADMINISTRATION BUILDING
22 MONUMENT AVENUE, SWAMPSCOTT, MA 01907

MEMBERS

RYAN CONNER, CHAIR
MARCI BENSON, VICE CHAIR
KIM NASSAR, CLERK
MICHAEL HAMILTON
MARY ANN O'NEILL
ALEXIS RUNSTADLER
RALPH SOUPPA

MAY 9, 2018 MEETING MINUTES

Time: 7:00pm – 9:00pm
Location: Swampscott Town Hall, Second Floor Conference Room, 22 Monument Avenue
Members Present: K. Nassar, M. O'Neill, A. Runstadler, R. Souppa,
Members Absent: R. Conner, M. Benson, M. Hamilton
Others Present: Pete Kane, Julie Surette, additional public attendees (2)

In light of Mr. Conner's and Ms. Benson's absence, Ms. Runstadler nominated Mr. Souppa as interim Chair for the May 9, 2018 meeting, which was seconded by Ms. O'Neill.

Mr. Souppa opened the meeting at 7:06pm.

REVIEW AND APPROVE MINUTES FROM 04/12/2018

The Committee reviewed draft minutes from the April 12th meeting. With no questions or comments from the Committee, Ms. Nassar made a motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Ms. Runstadler, and unanimously agreed to by the Committee.

DISCUSSION

Mr. Souppa opened the discussion by asking for comments from Committee members regarding the Trail Alignment Presentation on April 12, 2018 and the Site Walk on May 4, 2018. The Committee discussed their feedback, and unanimously agreed that the following recommendations should be made to Stantec:

1. All access options related to Neighborhood Road should be submitted to the Board of Selectman for their consideration.
2. The Committee recommends that Stantec consider a smaller trail width in specific areas where mature trees or wetlands would be impacted by a 10 foot wide trail.

3. Whenever possible, reforest the edges of the trail with appropriate native trees where mature trees need to be removed.
4. Evaluate the possibility of raising a portion of Walker Road to improve crossing safety, reduce vehicle speed and reduce the degree of cut required.
5. Consider a pedestrian scale bridge as an option to a bridge rated for vehicles at Paradise Road.
6. Six inch caliber or greater trees should be marked on the 25% preliminary plan which Stantec will provide to the town.
7. With respect to the Middle School parking lot, the Committee would like Stantec to consider the alternate route submitted by Mr. Souppa by way of a marked map (see below for additional detail).
8. The Committee has concerns with the switchback option at Walker Road, and encourages Stantec to consider a straight path option.

In addition, the Committee discussed the access point at Neighborhood Road, with Ms. Runstadler inquiring if the trail could have a non-ADA access point. Mr. Kane responded that if the town were seeking federal funding the entire trail would have to be ADA accessible, but the town is not seeking federal funding in this case. Mr. Kane noted that the Committee should engage the Commission on Disability on this point, and perhaps determine if anyone who lives in close proximity to Neighborhood Road requires an accessible entry point.

The Committee also discussed the width of the trail, with Mr. Kane noting that the Department of Conservation and Recreation (“DCR”) requires such trails to be 10 feet in width in order to qualify for DCR grant funding.

Mr. Souppa presented Committee members with a marked map of the Middle School parking lot which displayed an alternative to the trail going through the middle of the upper and lower Middle School parking lots. A copy of the marked map is included with these minutes. The Committee agreed that Mr. Souppa’s alternate route should be submitted to Stantec for consideration. Mr. Kane noted that the alternate route would require reworking the entrance to the tennis courts. Ms. Runstadler expressed concern regarding the percentage of wetlands impacted, with Mr. Kane responding that the project is well under the percentage limits.

Ms. Surette inquired if the Conservation Committee weighs in on the trail plans and Mr. Kane responded that if the trail construction is within 100 feet of wetlands, then the Conservation Committee will be involved.

Noting that there is a waterway that runs from the Middle School to Humphrey Street, Ms. Surette inquired as to where the path will be located. Mr. Kane responded that the path will run alongside the waterway, on the abutter side. Ms. Surette noted, and Mr. Souppa agreed, that the non-abutter side of the trail would be more scenic. The Committee then discussed the possibility of an unofficial spur to the trail running along the non-abutter side. There is an easement already in place, and signage could be used to direct trail users towards the scenic route. The abutter side would remain ADA compliant, and the existence of the spur could potentially draw users away from the abutter side. The Committee and Ms. Surette discussed the flooding which occurs along Nason Road, with Mr. Kane noting that a conduit will be placed to deflect flooding in that area.

The Committee engaged in a discussion regarding the neighborhood meetings with Trail Neighbors to review the preliminary design plan. Ms. Runstadler suggested that a drop-in style meeting be scheduled, with tables set up for each neighborhood. The Committee discussed further, ultimately determining that scheduled meetings with each abutting neighborhood would be more effective. Ms. Runstadler suggested providing the design plan to trail neighbors in advance to facilitate meaningful discussions, which was unanimously agreed to by the Committee. Mr. Kane noted that the neighborhood meetings would likely be scheduled for late June/early July, pending receipt of the preliminary plan from Stantec. Neighborhood meetings will be open only to neighbors in that specific neighborhood.

Ms. Surette inquired if additional town representation will be available at the neighborhood meetings, noting that trail neighbor questions regarding land acquisition which arose during the Trail Alignment Meeting on May 4th went unanswered. Mr. Kane noted that he raised the question of holding a meeting with trail neighbors regarding the acquisition process with the Town Administrator, who will in turn raise the question with the Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Kane will draft the Committee's feedback and share it with Mr. Conner and Ms. Benson in light of their absence.

OTHER BUSINESS

There being no other new business before the Committee, Mr. Souppa asked if there were any questions or comments from attendees. No additional comments or questions were raised.

NEXT MEETING

The Committee briefly discussed scheduling the next meeting. Mr. Kane will contact Stantec to get a sense of when the initial (25%) design plan will be available, which will drive the next meeting date.

There being no further business before the Committee, Ms. Nassar made a motion for the Committee to adjourn, which was seconded by Ms. Runstadler and unanimously agreed to by the Committee.

Meeting adjourned at 9:10pm.

K. Nassar

Clerk, Rail Trail Design and Construction Advisory Committee