

# TOWN OF MIDDLETON

## Rails to Trails Advisory Committee

Minutes of meeting – 1 November 2012

Fuller Meadow School -7 PM

Present: Scott Cameron, Hector Quarti, Frank Twiss, Rodney Pendleton, Thomas Martinuk, Leo Jones, Steve Weitzler, John Stanwood  
Absent: Brad Swanson, Stephen Friend, Derek Fullerton, Matt Greenfield, Todd Moreschi, Scott Downs

1 - With quorum established, the Committee reviewed the minutes from the meetings of 27 September and 13 October. The former were approved, and the latter's last paragraph was amended as indicated below in red:

*“General discussion items:*

- *Need to reach out to community for volunteer to build website. See Danvers Trail website at <http://www.danversrailtrail.org/>*
- *Guest speakers from Topsfield and Danvers at upcoming meeting?*
- *Length between Town Line Danvers and Route 1 to be excluded from this project. Scope of work will now be from Town Line Danvers to Town line North Andover. Consideration to be given later on whether or not to do the same with the short stretch between Gregory Street and Danvers Town Line.*
- *Next meeting date has not been determined.*
- *Possible consultation with conservation commission representative(s)”*

2 – A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the trail hike of 13 October, particularly as it applies to:

- a. Close attention should be paid to protecting the environmentally sensitive northern sections of the trail from Essex Street through Sharpners Road. Being made up of mostly wetlands on both sides of the trail, with a number of connecting ditches across it, and including animal life habitats, it will be a challenge to find an adequate compromise solution that satisfy all the interested parties.
- b. Also the section from Gregory Street through Webb Street includes a number of crossings that should be improved to a level suitable for a multi-purpose trail. Either footbridges of proper width and/or ramps should be considered as possible solutions at some locations. Other locations may necessitate stretches of the finished trail to run alongside roads and/or streets, or bypass obstacles through narrower paths.
- c. An interesting approach was used on the Danvers Trail over its wetlands. It was to build 4 feet wide wooden walkways supported by 4x4 timber piles driven deep into the swamps bottom. Starting with crossing the Ipswich River and Webb street, and continuing with assuring an ecologically adequate solution to the Northern sections, our project presents a number of more challenging problems to solve than the Danvers trail.

3 – The use of the word “phases” continues to be objectionable, since it may lead to a justification for loosing interest or momentum in the work to be done, therefore the committee reiterated its decision of September 27 of avoiding using the word as much as possible. The project shall be proposed, planned, financed, and executed in accordance to an “all inclusive Master Plan”. This

plan may include areas or “sections” of work that would be carried out sequentially and following the initial Master Plan principles.

4 – Accessibility to the trail was evaluated in detail. The Northern and Southern ends (Gregory Street crossing and Sharpners Road), offer very limited capability for providing parking and accesses suitable for its construction and end use. Along the trail however, there are a number of places where such accesses are available now (Howe-Manning School is probably the best).

5 – Funds to finance the project may be available from the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation under their Recreational Trails Grants Program. Ranging from \$2,000 to \$50,000, these funds are allocated annually for a variety of trail related projects such as protection, construction, and stewardship. The deadline for applying is February 1, 2013. A taskforce made up of R. Pendleton, H. Quarti, and J. Stanwood was set up to work on this project. A progress report on their work is to be presented to the Committee at the next meeting in December.

6 – It was decided to build a website to be used as a focal point where interested parties could obtain information on the progress of our work and also make suggestions about it. Whether or not it would be more convenient or feasible to organize the website as a branch of the Town of Middleton or as a separate entity, it would be decided after some preliminary work has taken place. J. Stanwood is the leader of this effort.

7 – The possibility of joining Facebook was also evaluated. For the time being, this undertaking is to be kept confidential since there are public relations issues to be resolved before we become completely public (Danvers Electric?). J. Stanwood is to start preliminary activities on this area.

8 – The committee approved to commence work on developing an official name for this project, a mission statement, and a logo. Because of his strong connection with the Masconomet School, R. Pendleton is in charge of these tasks.

9 – Having discussed all agenda items, a motion to adjourn was made, seconded, and approved. The meeting ended at about 8:20 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Hector Quarti  
Secretary