

**Minutes of the Rail Trail Committee  
Wednesday, July 24, 2013  
7 PM at the Mansfield Airport**

**Present:**

Kathy Ebert-Zawasky  
Denny Goodrich  
Scott Holman  
Karen Kenter-Potty

Sandy Ollerhead  
Jackie Schmidt (SRPEDD)  
Bill Napolitano (SRPEDD)  
Bill DeSantis (Engineer from VHB)

- I. The meeting was called to order by Karen Kenter-Potty at 7 PM
- II. The minutes of the previous meeting (7/10) were accepted.
- III. Path Design and Construction Presentation –Bill DeSantis
  1. Bill gave a brief overview of how the costs for bike paths were calculated as well as the factors that could potentially add to the costs.
  2. Bill showed us the sight distance of the crossings on North Washington St and said that the northern crossing had good sight distance. On the southern crossing as you are going north on the trail the sight distance is a little bit of a concern—Bill thought you could come off the trail a little closer to the curve and that would help. The sight distance at the intersection with 123 was fine from both directions.  
Bill showed us examples of road crossings on other bike paths. Some he felt were good examples of paths that provided safe crossings by having effective signage and controls to slow riders and let them know they were coming to a roadway crossing such as:

Cape Cod Rail Trail

(note the s-curve which slows riders)



He showed examples which have flashing beacons that only flash when someone comes along the trail and trips an infrared detector. They flash yellow on the roadway, red on the trail approach. He talked about Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacons (like the one at Taunton court house)

which he said are found to be very effective. These have led lights and can be solar run.

When asked about LEDs in pavement like at UMASS Dartmouth, Bill commented that DPW usually doesn't like these.

He also showed us examples of trail crossings that he felt were based on "perceived risks" with overdone signage and excessive blocks such as:

Shining Sea Pathway



3. Parking needs to include ADA spaces. Bill couldn't estimate how many we would need in Norton because it's based on trail usage which is based on population density around the trail. Bill N. said it was fairly easy to calculate based on census records. Bill D. also recommended restricting parking on side streets.
4. Mansfield trail is just under 12 feet which he thought we could do for Norton as well. Pavement life is roughly 10-12 years due to oxidation. When asked about the damage on the edge of the Mansfield trail Bill said the way to avoid that was to make sure no vehicles drive along the edge. This will be something that needs to be considered when plowing in the winter. In response to the question about the damage along the Amherst trail, Bill explained that tree caused the damage. However, the Amherst trail is only 8 feet wide and the trees are right along the path—Norton should have less issues because of the clear-cutting that Mansfield already does for the sewer line. Drainage can be easily provided using swale ditches. Once every 2 years DPW would have to clear out ditches.

Gravel surfaces are a good option through conservation land (accessible to emergency vehicles and wheelchairs). It would absorb some water and get potholes so it would need to be regraded every 2 years or so

Wachusett Greenway trail (total granular surface) has volunteers who keep on top of filling in potholes and regrading on regular basis.

Permeable pavement requires a lot of maintenance. It has to be kept clean as it is prone to clogging and therefore doesn't work well on trails.

Boardwalk would definitely be more expensive. Cost would be a little less if helical screws were used which would hold the weight of emergency vehicles.

5. Bill said it was our choice whether we plow the trail. Some trails plow, others leave the snow for winter recreation. If we left the snow we would need to have the vehicles necessary to access the trail in case of an emergency. Bill N. suggested checking with Mansfield since they may have a contingency plan for accessing the sewer line in the snow in case of a main break. They may have equipment that we could use in an emergency.
  
6. Bill said our biggest hurdle is going to be getting past negative public opinion and people's fears. He talked about the difference between bike education in Europe versus the U.S. When asked what we could do to help with bike education in Norton, Bill suggested a course through the League of American Bicyclists. He said if we take the online portion of the course at [www.bikeed.org](http://www.bikeed.org) he would be willing to come to us for free to run the on-bike sections of the course. We would just need to get a group together and find an available parking lot. Once someone takes the course, they can become an instructor. Denny commented that this would be great for our committee to do to show that we are promoting bike safety. Bill also suggested visiting the website for the League of American Bicyclists for other bike education information including slide shows. He shared some statistics from this organization about accident rates.
  
7. Q and A: When asked about the cost increase the first time around in Mansfield, Bill explained the process is much different now. Projects are now bid by the state as opposed to municipalities so estimates are more realistic and process is much better now. Also, inflation costs are now built into the estimates. Jackie also said that they are talking about getting rid of the required 10% match. This would mean we would only be responsible for paying for design costs and the right-of-way and the right-of-way is owned by Mansfield which means it's all set.

#### IV. Meetings with Department Heads

Sandy spoke with Lieutenant Jackson of the Norton Police about their concerns. They didn't really have any concerns and were in support of project.

Sandy also met with Lee Azinheira and Mark Cook at Mansfield DPW who were very positive about the bike path in Mansfield. They said that

everything they do for the trail is just part of their regular maintenance schedule. They couldn't estimate time or cost involved because it was so minimal.

Karen has tried to contact Mansfield Police but not been successful reaching anyone. Jackie said they have some contacts at Mansfield police and she would see what she could do.

V. Updates on Subcommittees

We've had two people reach out to offer to help put brochures into different businesses. Denny is going to connect with them to give them the brochures that he has.

Jackie says she has a ream (500 papers) of glossy paper that is ours to use for more brochures and flyers.

Kathy is going to update the flyer with a couple of changes (change the email address and add a line about joining our email/supporter list). It was decided that we make 25 copies of the flyers and 200 of the brochures, saving the rest of the paper for later.

VI. L.L Bean Update

Denny reported that he met with the regional manager for L.L. Bean and he was very interested in supporting the project. The regional manager has a certain allotment of money that they may be willing to give to the project. There was discussion about asking for donations of prizes for the scavenger hunt. There is also the possibility that we can apply for bigger sums of money through the L.L. Bean corporate offices, possibly getting donations toward the design cost of the path. Kathy said that she would look into this further while Denny is going to pursue getting donations from the regional manager.

The meeting adjourned at 9PM

The next meeting will be Wednesday, August 14th at 7 PM at the Mansfield Airport.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandy Ollerhead