

Taunton River Trail Committee

Meeting of March 28, 2011
Held at the Boyden Center, Taunton, MA

Present:

Tim Mello, MA Department of Conservation and Recreation
Bill Napolitano, Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District
Carolyn LaMarre, Taunton River Watershed Alliance
Alfred Lima, Taunton River Watershed Alliance
Adam Recchia, Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District
Jeff Carter, MA Department of Conservation and Recreation
Kelly Whitmore, The Trustees of Reservations
Priscilla Chapman, Mass Audubon
Shaun Provencher, MA Department of Conservation and Recreation

Main Points of Discussion:

- DCR is in the early stages of planning for the Sweet's Knoll property. The planning will be conducted by the Resource Management Planning Team.
- Original SRPEDD plan for the Taunton River Trail was for a 13-mile trail, from Somerset to Taunton.
- The Taunton River Trail (TRT) is on the 5-year Regional Transportation Plan, which qualifies it for state funding.
- There is about \$1.2 million available in the SRPEDD region for DOT Enhancements funding.
- The project proponent (DCR or the towns) would need to fund the project's full engineering design costs, which are about 10% of trail construction costs. Design costs range from \$70,000 to \$120,000 per mile of rail trail.
- To be eligible for funding, a project needs to go on the region's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). To get on the TIP, a project must be fully designed. The region's TIP is committed for the next 3 years (although projects on the TIP sometimes stall, opening up opportunities).
- Other sources of funding are the MA DCR Greenways and Trails Program, CMAQ and the NPS Rivers and Trails Fund.
- The committee determined that a regular monthly meeting was desirable and that a Tuesday morning at 9:00 or 10:00 am would be a workable meeting time.

Follow-up tasks:

- Al will invite Paul Jahnige, Director of DCR's Greenways and Trails Program, to the next meeting of the committee (the meeting will be scheduled around his availability or will be by speaker conference call).

- Carolyn will research the owners of the right of way in Dighton and Somerset; she will coordinate with Scott McFaden, who has previously conducted some research on ROW owners.
- Carolyn will also research how to contact NE Capital Corp., who owns a critical parcel on the river abutting the rail trail.
- Kelly will speak with Dighton representatives on the status of the preparation of the town's open space plan and on getting a Dighton representative on the committee.
- Al will prepare a draft of a vision statement describing how the Sweet's Knoll property fits into the larger concept of the Taunton River Trail and Greenway. It will be reviewed by the committee and sent to Jeff Carter.
- Al will coordinate with the committee on which Tuesday morning of the month will be the best time to meet.