

Taunton River Trail Committee

Summary of the Meeting of June 28, 2011 Held at the Boyden Center, 1298 Cohannet Street, Taunton, MA

(Please mark your calendars: The next meeting of the Trail Committee will be held on Tuesday, July 26th at 10:00 am at the Boyden Center. Committee meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday of the month at 10:00 am at the Boyden Center.)

Present:

Scott MacFaden, Wildlands Trust

Sean Provencher, MA Department of Conservation and Recreation

Bill Napolitano, Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District

Adam Recchia, Southeastern Regional Planning and Economic Development District

Carolyn LaMarre, Taunton River Watershed Alliance

Richard Shafer, Taunton River Watershed Alliance

Priscilla Chapman, Mass Audubon

Jamie Fosburgh, National Park Service

Ronald Medeiros, landowner

Alfred Lima, Taunton River Watershed Alliance

Main Points of Discussion:

- **Application to the MA Recreational Trails Program:** Can DCR apply for funds from a program that it administers? The published guidelines seem to allow it, with caveats. This issue needs to be clarified with the program staffer, Amanda Lewis. Projects need to include a construction component, a finished trail. If Iron Horse constructs the trail, what would we apply for? Possibilities include amenities, permitting, signage and line markings, among other ancillary items. Iron Horse could be the match. Grants range from \$2,000 to \$50,000, on a reimbursement basis only. Some entity would need to front the working capital. Scott mentioned that the Fields Pond Foundation could provide matching funds; they like trail projects. The application deadline is October 1st.
- **Expediting the construction of a trail:** Sean suggested that the Committee reach out to the director of DCR's Southeast Region to discuss the option of Iron Horse Preservation constructing a soft trail on the ROW owned by DCR. DCR needs to take the lead on how and when the trail is to be constructed.

- **Land-banking discontinuous sections of the ROW:** Sean mentioned that DCR would look favorably on land-banking in certain instances, depending on the situation. Having a plan helps. He discussed the situation with Jennifer Howard of DCR and she had concerns about managing such properties. Ron Medeiros described properties that he owns that could continue the recreational trail south of the DCR ROW.
- **Taunton Municipal Light Plant ownership of ROW:** TMLP owns a section of the ROW in the vicinity of its plant north of where the Three Mile River enters the Taunton. TMLP also appears to own the ROW of the spur that traverses from the main line to Warner Boulevard.

Aquaria's MEPA permit requires that it keep its property open for the passage of wildlife. Dick mentioned that where the ROW was cleared for Aquaria, the rails were removed.

- **NE Capital Corp.:** Sean said that his search has reached a dead end. Since the 27-acre parcel is wet and floodplain, it might be best to leave it alone; it is not in any imminent danger of being developed. Carolyn suggested that we determine what the original will says. The corporation is probably defunct.
- **How the project complements the Taunton Wild and Scenic River plan:** Jamie mentioned that what we are doing now ties in with Wild and Scenic goals and planning. He suggested that we prepare an application to the NPS Rivers and Trails Program and get it in the queue. We need not necessarily seek Heritage Corridor status for the Taunton, he said, since W&S designation essentially does the same. What the W&S needs is funding from Congress.

Follow-up tasks:

- Al will contact Amanda Lewis to clarify whether DCR can be an applicant to the Recreational Trails Program.
- Al will contact Brian Shanahan, DCR Director of the Southeast Region, to familiarize him with the goals of the Taunton River Trail and seek his guidance on how we can work cooperatively with the SE Regional Office on this initiative.
- Sean, Ron, Scott and Dick will conduct a site visit in late July to Ron's ROW properties to scope them out and assess the issues that DCR will need to consider prior to an acquisition.
- Dick and Al will meet with the TMLP to review the ROW that they own and to open a dialogue with them concerning possible use of their ROW for a recreational trail. Dick will schedule the meeting.

- Al will prepare an application to the NPS Rivers and Trails Program for the review of the Committee at the July meeting. He will invite Charlie Tracy to the meeting.