

**Dryden Rail Trail Task Force and Friends
Minutes of the June 14, 2018 Meeting
Freeville Village Hall**

Attendance: David Fogel, Alice Green, Marie McRae, Judy Pierpont, Steve Winans, David Bravo-Cullen, Bob Beck, Andrew Siefert, Nelson Hogg, David Keifer, Todd Bittner, Susan Ashdown, Dan Lamb, Russ Nelson

Convened at 7:04 pm – Bob Beck

Additions to the Agenda:

Talk about maps

Trail clean up help by equestrian group

Two girl scouts want to build and donate benches

Minutes of May meeting approved

Trail clearing at Mt Pleasant Rd – Bruno

Bruno spent two weekends in a row at this section. On the first weekend he was assisted by Milo Richmond and Dean Russo with chain saws. This section hadn't been used for decades because it was so overgrown and blocked by huge piles of dirt. Second weekend Buzz Dolph brought an excavator and Bruno brought a bobcat and they cleared the rail bed, moved the piles of dirt, spread it out along the path, and opened up the whole section. Bob said it's a dramatic change. Value of time and machines was about \$5,000.

Dairy Day Report – Bob and Alice

The Rail Trail had a booth at Dairy Day that garnered more interest and resulted in 15 new signups for the list serve. A new cut out cow with the new logo was displayed in Times Square as part of the Dairy Day celebration.

Village of Dryden – Bob

Bob met with Mike Murphy, new Mayor of the Village, to forge some new coordination on the trail. He will meet with the Village Trustees this week. They followed up on the talk about flashing light crossing signs at the last task force meeting. It's necessary to work with NYS DOT to secure crossing for Route 13 where the new section joins with the Schug Trail. The trail also crosses Elm St. north of Route 13, which is where the old RR station was located. The portion of the RR property is wider there, and is owned by the village. The hope is to have some parking, a kiosk with history, and benches there. David BC mentioned it would be good to make a connection from Greystone Drive onto the trail.

Easements Report

DEC agreement at the Game Farm.

Dan said we are not getting any signals that our Volunteer Stewardship Agreement will not come through. The town agreed to offer 60 acres in the Town (the Parke/Dabes tract) to open up to bow hunting. Todd said that Cornell lawyers are talking about what might be involved in helping to manage the hunting there.

Marie asked for clarification of why Sportsmen's Groups have pushed back on the trail traversing the Game Farm. Todd and Dan said this partly comes from the fact that this is the last existing Game Farm in NYS and the trail is perceived as a threat to its existence. In fact, they said, the Rail Trail group intends for the trail to support the Game Farm operation.

Hillside Acres Connection

Diann Ziegler and Rick Kugler, and Chip Ray (owner of Hillside Acres) have requested a connection from this mobile home community onto the trail. This requires crossing Cornell property along the edge of a field. It happens that CU is in the process of swapping some land use with the Game Farm along the compost road. CU would retain use of that strip along the edge of the field for maintenance access. CU Real Estate is amenable to having that access strip shared with trail users, after proper agreement between CU and Hillside Acres.

Gary Sloan

Lawyers are still discussing the easement through his property. It is necessary to have this before we can sign the grant contract with NYS Parks. Dryden can't get reimbursed for any money spent till that contract is signed. Bob is trying to get the Sloan easement expedited. Eventually the plan is to deed the trail section of this property to the Town. Bob has met with both town lawyers to go over the easement attestation process.

Brown Dog, LLC (Vanguard Press), former Wilcox Press

Corporate owners in PA will have a board of directors meeting in July to consider the easement. Todd said the connection from Route 13 will likely require more than the 33 feet that we have an easement for now.

Hanson Aggregates and NYSEG easements

These are moving forward.

Herrmann Property next to Glenn Swan Property

Efforts to contact them again are underway.

Equestrian Group from Brooktondale (Saddle Up for Jesus)

Want to use the trail from Schug section to Freeville. They are offering to do a monthly clean up. Chris said problem will be rutting up the trail by the horses' hooves. Marie said this depends on the surface and how many horses: signage cautioning about wet conditions could help. The rule is that bikes yield to horses. Bob said he read that stone dust is good for both horses and cyclists. Todd said at CU natural areas stone dust is working well, especially mixed with some portland cement. Alice noted another equestrian mentioned that there must be room for horse trailers in parking/pull off areas. Dan had a challenging experience with a novice horseback rider when he was biking between Freeville and Dryden.

Girl Scouts who want to build two benches

Laurelei and Katy Hollister, Dryden 8th graders from Freeville Village, plan to build these from wood as a Scout project and donate them to the trail. They've posted pictures on line.

Signage designating Roads at Crossings

Russ distributed a 3D-printed road sign proposed to name roads at crossings. Bob said we want to have maps (with a standardized scale) at road crossings, each showing 2 ¼ to 2 ½ miles, enough to show the next intersection in each direction. Todd distributed copies of a set of 2 ½-mile maps (Suggest the maps should be square). Questions include what should be the background color, what info to include on each map, e.g. geographic info, bathrooms and amenities nearby. By straw poll, most felt the satellite map was most useful. Todd will

work with Diane to tweak colors, fonts etc. These maps will appear at the 13 crossings along the trail.

New Trail Logo Stickers

Diane had bumper sticker logos printed by Cornell print shop (high-quality vinyl at \$1.50 each). The Friends of the Trail can use these for fund raising. Dan said the state has now allowed towns to create a mechanism for receiving charitable funds, and he will look into this possibility. Bob said some business donors of equipment, materials and time do want to claim this for a tax deduction. Judy has volunteered to write thank you notes. Alice will make sure that the Supervisor and his secretary are ready to send official confirmation of donations when donors ask for them.

Benches

Design committee recommended benches from the Roudebush Company in Indiana, with boards made of solid recycled plastic (from milk cartons) and heavy steel frames. There was a question about whether to use plastic or lumber for the boards. A local company, Aardarc Welding in Brooktondale, submitted quotes for a prototype frame and assembly with treated lumber, at the request of Deputy Highway Superintendent Chris Clauson (see attached summary of quotes for 10 and 25 benches or frames only from Roudebush and Aardarc).

Susan said maintaining the benches could be a bonding activity. Leopold benches are anchored with a cable or chain. The Schug trail benches have stood up well.

Chris T-H said the committee recommended Roudebush benches because they offer a maintenance-free solution and could be assembled by volunteers. And the Indiana company offered frame-only pairs for less than half the price of the local company.

Todd suggested getting two samples that could be offered for the memorial bench to Stephanie Gardner. A common way of pricing donation cost for such a bench would be doubling the cost including installation. E.g. If it cost \$400 add installation cost and then double it.

Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Grant application

Todd reminded that the Trail got a Strategic Tourism Implementation grant from the County to study options for crossing Route 13. Barton and Loguidice (B&L) were selected as the engineers, and they expect to supply the study report in time for the final TAP grant submission deadline in August. Todd suggested moving forward with the pre-application, due next week, using placeholders for those numbers.

He reported new information about using state multi-modal transportation funding, currently earmarked for part of the trail project by State Assemblywoman Barbara Lifton. After some research by her staff, it's become clear that this money cannot be used for the 20% local match required by the TAP grant. And NYS Assembly officials indicated that the only aspect of the trail project that could be direct funded by the multi-modal funding is the highway crossing.

A table with possible options for putting together funding for the crossing was circulated. There are other possibilities for raising the local match. The county has prioritized this trail,

and urged the project to apply for another tourism grant for capital projects. Todd will investigate the level of a possible grant, and whether it might even be renewable.

Todd and Bob are researching with Department of Transportation (NYSDOT) and OPRHP whether a portion of the NYS Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation grant may be applied as local match towards the Town share of the TAP grant

Todd said the task force can get good feedback from the NYSDOT by going through the pre-application process, and it will be possible to do some “course corrections” if necessary with new info from B&L, in time for the final application.

Alice said that Bruno Schickel was unable to attend the meeting, but asked to her to convey his stand opposing submitting the TAP grant pre-application at this time. He believes: 1) it is premature to apply for the Route 13 crossing when there are still easements to be secured; 2) the Town should not pay for the match from taxes 3) if built before the trail is fully complete, the bridge could discourage further fund raising and securing the final easements. Task Force member John Kiefer was also absent, but earlier expressed similar reservations.

Susan stated her support for applying for the TAP grant. Alice said her own opinion is that the timing is right to apply for the grant because 1) the Route 13 crossing is the most difficult challenge for trail funding and there’s no certainty that TAP money will be available later 2) the first Rail Trail TAP application as not approved, but was highly rated, and DOT officials encouraged submitting a new one; 3) County Planning Dept. and County Transportation planners have supported the task force to pursue this grant and encouraged an application for county tourism dollars as part of the match.

Dan added that the Town Board is actively working on instituting a recreational impact tax on new development in the town, which could help replenish the recreation reserve fund, should it be needed for part of the local match.

Vote to proceed with the TAP pre-application

Approved by all seven task force members present: Susan, Chris, Judy, David, Steve, Bob and Todd. Bob and Todd will prepare the application for NYSDOT pre-review by the due date next week.

Adjourned at 9:23 pm

Next meeting set for 7-9 pm Monday July 16 in Varna Community Center

Respectfully submitted by Alice Walsh Green

Trail Bench Quotes (6/18/2018)

The Roudebush Company

10 benches @ \$325 each x 10= \$3,250
Shipping freight is \$550
Solid recycled plastic boards
Volunteers assemble them here
Total \$3,800 (**\$380 per bench**)

Frame pair only @ \$125 each

25 benches @ \$315 each x 25= \$7,875
Shipping freight is \$625
Solid recycled plastic boards
Volunteers assemble them here
Total \$8,500 (**\$340 per bench**)

Aardarc Welding

10 benches @ \$434 each x 10= \$4,340
Local pick-up
Treated lumber
Pre-assembled
Total \$4,340 (**\$434 per bench**)

Frame pair only @ \$363.40 each

25 benches @ \$403 each x 25= \$10,075
Local pick-up
Treated lumber
Pre-assembled
Total \$10,075 (**\$403 per bench**)

Frame pair only @ \$332.40 each