

**Friends of Columbia Greenway Rail Trail, Inc.  
Meeting Minutes  
September 17, 2019**

**Call to Order**

Acting Chair

**Roll Call**

Clerk

- |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Acting Chairman - Carmel Steger | <input type="checkbox"/> Dir. Of Membership – Donna Green                   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> At Large – Bengt-Olaf Schneider   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vice Chair – open                          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dir. Of Education – Don Podolski        | <input type="checkbox"/> At Large – Bob Hamel                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Treasurer – Joe Giffune                    | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dir of Resource Dev – Jonathan McHatton | <input type="checkbox"/> At Large – John Tassinari                    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clerk – Chris Steger            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> At Large – Reenie Hamel                 | <input type="checkbox"/> At Large - Dan Call                          |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dir. Of Maint – Bob Pac         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> At Large –                              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Mark Cressotti – City Engineer    |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dir. Of Maint – George Hart     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> At Large – Carolyn Cacolice             | <input type="checkbox"/> Kevin Bard - WPD                             |
| Nancy Kotowitz  | Paul Cacolice   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Kate Phelon – Chamber of Commerce |
| Dan Kotowitz  | Timothy Nixon   |   |

Meeting called to order at Westfield YMCA at 6:30 pm.

Visitor Presentation to Board:

Nancy and Dan Kotowitz brought a sample of a bike rack for locking bikes. They proposed donating six racks to FOCGRT to use as decided by the Friends. Dan also mentioned he is working on a bronze plaque using the FOCGRT emblem. Further discussion tabled to next meeting.

Previous meeting minutes: Don moved to approve, seconded by Jonathan. Motion passed.

Reports of City Officers (Mark Cressotti)

Central Section – bids have been submitted and came in \$1 million dollars over projected. Time line currently means there could be a spring 2021 opening for the central section of the rail trail.  
Western Ave –Western Ave East public hearing was positive. Design is continuing for the east section which includes Lloyd’s Hill.  
Westfield River Levee - 25% design complete. City received several grants for levee trail design.

Kevin Bard  
No report

Acting Chair (Carmel Steger)

Kevin Bard is new Westfield Police Dept. Community Policing Officer. Carmel to reach out to Kevin. Treasurer’s report is not available but attempting to contact Joe Giffune for an update. Board member liability insurance has been reinstated. Suggestion was made to have a Berkshire Insurance representative talk at a

meeting about what the liability insurance covers. The Stop and Shop manager is interested in making rail trail related improvements to their building. Mark agreed to follow-up with the manager for more information.

Vice Chair  
Vacant position

Director of Planning and Resources Report  
Attended Western Ave public hearing. Mass Bike has grants for up to \$500.  
Jonathan to find out more information about process.

Director of Maintenance (Bob Pac/George Hart)  
Report previously distributed. Last trail count was a historically high number for rail trail traffic. Traffic count correction factor is coming in at about 2.9 x counter number. Esplanade Vandalism is increasing. 47 bricks have been sold so far. The Hedges Street tunnel is continuing to vandalize. Discussion about how Southwick stopped tunnel vandalism. Looking for feedback from Dan Call on this at next meeting.

Director of Education  
Participated in the Western Ave trail public hearing. Santiago's wants to buy bike racks and have them installed in tree belt in front of their restaurant. Mark agreed to see what process is in place with the city to install bike racks on public property. Don agreed to send the final two mayoral candidates the four questions from the meeting's agenda (see New Business) for answers to be posted on the Friends web site and Facebook page before October 15. Don to send Chris the approved complete streets and open space plans for distribution to FOCGRT board members. Don will have a table at the Westfield Pumpkin Fest and has offered a spot to FOCGRT if members want to participate.

Treasurer's Report (Joe Giffune)  
No report.

Director of Membership  
Membership report was emailed to FOCGRT members.

Nominating Committee  
Still in need of a Treasurer. Bob has volunteered but is not available until next year. Vice chair position to remain open pending a nominee.

At Large:  
No comments.

Old Business:

New Business:

Trail use information for mayoral candidates:

1. Do you support a Complete Streets Policy for the City as endorsed by the Planning Board 2/2/16 Public Meeting and would you seek its adoption?
2. How would you encourage the integration of bicycles and pedestrians into the downtown traffic mix by use of Bike Lanes, Sharrows, Bike Boxes and Bicycles May Use Full Lane Signage where applicable?
3. How you support Goal #3 of the City's 2018-2025 Open Space Plan, (Goal #3: An intermodal city-wide transportation network linked to the open space and recreational fabric, and which supports the community's identity) along with the recommended action Action 3-3: Connect to neighborhoods, city attractions and destinations with marked routes, bicycle parking facilities, share the road signage/sharrows, and "cyclist use full lanes" signage where applicable.
4. Do you support hiring a specialized professional consultant to develop a formal Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan as recommended by the Planning Board's Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Advisory Committee in 2016?

Next meeting is Tuesday, October 15, 2019 at the Westfield YMCA.

Motion made to adjourn meeting by Jonathan, second by bob, motion passed. Meeting adjourned at 8:05 pm.