

Friends of the Columbia Greenway Rail Trail
Minutes of the Meeting on September 17, 2013

Roll call: **Co-Clerk, George Hart** - members present – MJ Bull, Joe Camilleri, Mark Cressotti, Diane Genereux, Joe Giffune, Al Guagliardo, George Hart, Jeff LaValley, Bob Pac, Don Podolski, Chris Stegr, John Tassinari

Motion to accept the minutes of 6-18-13 meeting was made: vote passed

Old Business

- (1st item...Jeff, please add as I missed it – sorry)
- Awaiting word re Phase II of trail; concerns re extended date; Jeff said Mark Cressotti had told him we received extension of grant money.
- Maintenance request: status of mowing is that it is not as frequent (once all summer) on access ramp to Colony Circle; discussion of what FOCG should do to make it a priority and if we should spend our money to help; Mark C said to repeat our efforts of contacting DPW and the mayor, then if no response to call him; Joe G asked if we should contract some aspect of maintenance, Mark said to work out a relationship; Joe G wants to move forward in a more constructive manner and we should have a formal presentation at the DPW meeting (to be held on the 2nd Tuesday in 3 weeks at 7PM at the Westwood office); Mark C said it's reasonable to do that after calling 1st.
- Bike racks outside Atheneum: Jeff noted _____?____ (sorry I missed this item) items with PJ Miller; Mark C said to contact PJ.
- Status of ordinances: with MJ (no details – sorry again)
- Our initiative is to work on downtown: to educate regarding bikes by posting on sidewalks, newspaper articles and signs – to be carried out by George H, Eric H, Bob P and Don P.

Reports of city Departments:

- City Engineer, Mark Cressotti – still working on Columbia Greenway South; phase II spur is no longer included, but will take the property next to Commercial Distributor property (not to be built upon) so in the future the position is to look at a ramp to East Silver St. This is being held up by the Cross St. litigation regarding the park and because of city's misuse of property (the Cross St. field) until DCR settles; numbers on Western Ave. is multi-use trail is not possible due to money at this time, so only an on street lane for bikes at this time, and there will be another public meeting on Oct. 23 at 7PM at South Middle School, then an official state meeting of Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP); city is also undertaking Westfield river levy to run east and west; Chris S asked if we can send mail to govt. agents (R. Neal); Jay Queenin said it is a long process.

Reports of Directors:

- Jeff: events - 1. Great River Ride on Oct. 14, 2. YMCA sent an invitation to FOCG to participate in 'Cycle for a Cause' fundraiser and he explained that it is on stationary bikes, they are asking for sponsorships of \$100 to \$2000 with description of benefits (signs and other publicity); Joe G asked if we have supported other non-profits and Jeff said yes, Joe G said there are benefits to us if we get to table at the event; Don P said we should have items such as this in our budget, 3. Valley Gives Day on Dec. 12 is an online initiative and end of year appeal; contact John T if anyone has entries for the website; there will be another nominating committee meeting in Oct.
- Joe G: signs for Bear Scouts; Al G asked to coordinate with Southwick Rail Trail.
- Mike F: absent – Jeff reported for him that we are just shy of \$25,000 (\$15,000 was from this year's golf tournament; stated that we should give report at every meeting
- Al G: all golf tourney vibes were positive (food, etc.); two special donors were successful (as listed on his written handout); post tourney meeting in the next 2 weeks, Jeff will send a full detailed report; next year's goal is to hire an intern (PE or Sports Management major) to teach him golf so he can play!
- Don P: the 26th year of the Great River Ride needs volunteers, truck or van needed to help deliver water, see his online announcement., spread the word, now at 110 riders; bikeability assessment: draft copy was emailed, we may want to include Western Ave. and volunteers are needed (Diane G agreed to help); Oct. 4 is the New England Bike/Walk Summit in Providence, RI – George H, Jeff L and Don P expressed interest in attending; other items listed on a handout; motion was made to pay the entry fee of \$40 for the 3 above was made and vote passed.
- MJ B and Diane G: got final copy of the historic signs; goal before our next meeting is to hire sign creation; expressed possibility of creating signs throughout town with directions to get to the trail.
- Next meeting on Oct. 15 at Church of Atonement at 6:30pm
- Joe G said we should create a financial committee to create a budget and Jeff will ask Mike F to convene a meeting of this committee which includes Mike F, Joe G, MJ and Kate.
- Bob P added that on Sept. 8 he got a count of 1 bike every minute on the trail and on the following Sat. he counted 3 snakes!
- Jay Queenin expressed interest in fundraising and govt. items due to experience in AG office.
- **Motion to adjourn** was made: vote passed