

Friends of the Columbia Greenway Rail Trail
Minutes of the Meeting on September 16, 2014

Roll call: Clerk, George Hart - members present: Mark Cressotti, Diane Genereux, Joe Giffune, Al Guagliardo, George Hart, Demetrios Kanavaros, Jeff LaValley, Bob Pac, Don Podolski, John Tassinari

City Engineer: Mark Cressotti - trail is moving forward with landscaping; bridge rails next week; ribbon cutting on 10/10/14 at 11:00AM, suggest to hold it at East Silver St.; no money yet for North section; a public hearing/info meeting on the \$2 million extension, which doesn't include the Main St. bridge; he and Jeff L discussed TIP money/dates/CMAC money/Gateway Communities Grant/city will designate money for North section for a ramp to Sibley Ave.; ramps on the extension to Hedges Ave. and Stop and Shop; discussion of added access ramps; current section is called South Part 2; no real estate taking for extension, but with lighting and landscaping; bridge will be through girder beam (similar to what came down); will send Jeff the design of the Main St. bridge; punch list for contractor of South Part 2 in next 2 weeks; fencing is lower; will reach out to property owners before extension; \$2 million is coming from DOT and must be used by June 30, 2015; need a neighborhood meeting asap after money is confirmed; Jeff L said the G & E is interested in installing an air pump and repair station.

Motion to accept the minutes of our 6-17-14 meeting was made and seconded, vote passed

Treasurer's Financial Report: represented by Joe G – golf tournament money is not fully done, but it is not in the range of \$4,000 - \$8,000; we are starting to spend; income in 2014 is drastically down('13 income was \$20,000, income in '14 is \$14,000; expenses are comparable; big change was decline of number of golfers and decline of board members participating in bringing in golfers; will do budget and frame goals; PDF request of copies from Joe G; Jeff L said we'll talk more regarding fundraising.

Reports of Directors:

Al Guagliardo/Director of Advancement: none

Joe Camilleri/Co-Director of Education & Research: absent, presented by his intern Russell Hatim from WSU: planning to do a survey to see how people are using trail; reviewed on hard copy handout and asked to send it to Russell's contact info after Jeff L sends it to us; asked about how we advertise and Jeff L explained all.

Don Podolski/Co-Director of Education & Research: posted in spring regarding transportation issues (he shared all on a hard copy handout); noted the Great River Ride registration is ahead, but none for the 3 shortest distances, asked us to share the info and for volunteers; will send a link online; John T will post it on our website.

Bob Pac/Director of Maintenance: many items on a hard copy handout; count of 981 users on Sunday from 7AM to 7PM; noted that on 10/18/14 there is a meeting at Eno Hall in Simsbury of MA and CT to review NY trail; contact Jeff L if interested in attending.

Diane Genereux/Co-Director of Planning & Development: none; Jeff L will reach out to MJ Bull re interpretive signage

Nancy Kotowitz/Director of Programs & Events: absent – Jeff L said golf was an OK event and the up and down in 3 years is typical; watch for alternative event in October.

Old Business:

- Historical signage: contract, 2-3 panels (will check with G. Lopez)
- Memorial gifts: past family member, Jeff L sent possibilities to us; ideas: stone monument could clutter rail trail; could install benches (cost of \$700-800 each), with installation and maintenance of about \$1,500 each; Joe G suggested plates on bricks and need to have a conversation with Mark C; Diane G asked about advertising; others suggested bricks for a memorial at a patio
- Video detection and trail counting: Don P explained and gave a handout regarding a data camera (about \$1,000 per and would need 2-3 units which count numbers/direction/types of users); Jeff L suggested to search for grants or donors; he'll get actual pricing; purpose is to get trail count at any time so FOCG could report to state.
- Mural naming: vote on name; sign is 7 feet off ground to 11 feet high; showed picture on handout; will happen this fall.
- Geared up: cancelled by executive decision and will continue in May.

New Business: Jeff L

- Maintenance requests: A. Mirror at Harvest Moon Ramp – discussed; need Mark C input so tabled to October meeting; Don P said that when he was in the hospital, the nurses said kids get hit riding in crosswalks. B. Bicycle racks downtown: need them at Big Y – any ideas? Don P mentioned assorted national facts; we need to do a presentation with businesses.
- Website – graphic design intern: tabled to Oct.
- Advertising on website: tabled to Oct.
- Bike tours: tabled to Oct.
- Safety and security: done earlier in this meeting
- Ribbon cutting ceremony: Jeff L contacted assorted dignitaries; it will be 10/9 or 10/10/14 at 11:00AM and will be released in press; Don P will give names of MA Bike; also PVCP and associated groups.
- Community requests: A. participate in Bon Ton Community Days; FOCG board members need to sell a number of booklets – do we want to do this? Last time we made \$200 with a lot of effort. B. enter a team in the YMCA Cycle-for-a-Cause fundraiser and/or have an info table. Demetrios K will coordinate our team to enter on Nov. 8 from 8:00AM - noon. C. Purchase an ad in the Chamber Directory: it went out to 3-400 organizations/businesses; 1/8 page is \$200; motion made, vote taken, passed.

- Upcoming elections/planning: Bob P will return; Hannah G is off; 7 at-large and expand to 9 so we have 4 or 5 new each year.
- Phase 2: Jeff L – we need to offer the community to attend meetings and to improve public outreach (South Phase 2 was only attended by 1 family); we need to ‘beat the band’ and ‘driving the bus’ is needed; Jeff L was distressed at Ward 2 representative and we need to advocate/do stewardship that we need reps.
- Questions and discussion regarding board members and participation of community; Jeff announced his departure at the end of 2015 and that we need to plan to hire or recruit new leadership.
 - Motion made to adjourn, seconded, vote passed

Next meeting on 10/21/14 at 6:30PM