

## **Friends of the Columbia Greenway Rail Trail**

### ***Minutes of the Meeting on December 16, 2014***

**Roll call: Clerk, George Hart** - members present: David Carlin, Mark Cressotti, George Hart, Demetrios Kanavaros, Jeff LaValley, Bob Pac, Don Podolski, John Tassinari

Jeff stated that Open Meetings laws will be followed.

Approval of Consent items: minutes - only notes of 11/18/14 due to no quorum, motion to approve/seconded/vote passed.

**Reports of City Officers - City Engineer: Mark Cressotti** – the Columbia Greenway’s next section bids are out and pre-bids are due 12/22/14 with bids opening 1/6/15; have received the \$2M grant; discussion of the G & E taking over a portion and mayor applied for \$.5M for the north side section; this phase is a small section (with bridge and tunnel); Jeff L asked about Western Ave and Mark said another public hearing is planned to put it at 25% design; Bob P asked about gas pipeline on the trail – will it go into paved sections of the trail? Mark said there is no intent to disturb existing paved sections; Bob P asked not to include another question in the minutes (his question is not included here); Mark stated that no bridge can be sacrificed because it is an emergency access and the Mayor is in full support of this; Dave C asked about possible upgrades to the lights on Shaker Rd.; Jeff L and Mark C responded that upgrading these lights is being considered; Demetrios K asked if they’ll stay the same color, Mark said consideration is being given to adding lights/stripping/road “roughening” treatments; John T mentioned that the fence at Shaker Rd. is high and lowers trail users sight and visibility; Jeff L said there would be an evaluation period and he will send notes.

Public Participation: Rick Saloomey expressed interest in getting involved with FOCG group because of his cycling passion and living close to the trail!

Reports of Board members – Jeff L:

- Valley Gives results: \$500 in '11, \$900 in '12, \$2000 in '13, \$1030 in '14.
- The mural on New Horizon Bicycle is up; decided not to use plexiglass cover because it is high quality paint and height is enough; LED lights are being installed.
- Mark Fenton is coming in April or May; a tentative budget for this of \$5000-\$7000 to be announced in January.
- Joe G will post the Treasure’s report soon.

- Don P: attended meetings (State Bike/Pedestrian Committee) and the state wants Westfield trail connected to the Manhan trail! At a Planning Board Advisory meeting at WSU: they are doing a survey on a Saturday at the Rinnova Building; discussion with Bob Plasse and WOW regarding the theme for downtown for 2015 is Bicycle Friendly; gave a handout of bike events for the year as a mix of paid and free, all bike theme; will involve Chamber of Commerce; Mark C said digital mapping of availability of facilities and events for bicyclists and trail users; also mentioned a CT ride from New Haven to Westfield this year with an end of ride event.

**Old Business** – Russ H gave survey results; Mark C asked his take and he said safe lanes are needed; Mark C and Russ discussed survey and results; Bob P asked what do we do with this info? And Bob P said we should have a plan to attain bronze status as a bike friendly community; Don P said it would give us greater access to grant money; Jeff L asked Russ what we should do with the survey results? Russ said it is a starting piece to give us a voice; Jeff L asked him to do a basic write up for us and said THANK YOU!

- Jeff L reviewed 3 names of new board nominations: \_\_\_\_\_? [Jeff...please fill in]

- Bob P asked about the table we have at the Rinnova Building and Jeff L said we're selling FOCG merchandise without paying or staffing.

- Jeff L reviewed conversation regarding using Rinnova Building as office, workshops, meetings, etc. for FOCG.

- John T asked about brick fundraiser: Jeff L said the grey areas of financials need to be clarified in 2-3 months; Mark C said we can start planning now and install during construction (sell now, install later in the appropriate location); Don P said he'd get information of what other communities have done.

- Dave C said to wait until January for elections because he is leaving and thanked us for what we've done in our strategic plan and how we are moving forward with more connections!

- Mark C said his past hearing feedback was that DOT was impressed with number of attendees, the full support, and the FOCG support, and even DEP was impressed with the support!

Motion to adjourn, seconded, vote passed.

Next meeting is January 20, 2015