

Friends of the Columbia Greenway Rail Trail

Minutes of the Meeting on December 15, 2015

Clerk, George Hart - roll call: members present: MJ Bull, Mark Cressotti, George Hart, Demetrios Kanavaros, Jeff LaValley, Bob Pac, Don Podolski, Jay Queenin, Chris Steger, Sandy Sorel, Alice Flyte

Jeff L read open meeting laws.

Motion to approve November meeting minutes and Dec. agenda: moved, seconded, vote passed.

Public participation - Erica, Connor & Doug Neylon-Jones: “thank you for the Rail Trail and it is being used by Connor who has questions” -

1. are we going to have the same bridge at Main St.? answer: no
2. asked about the bridge at Orange St.? answer: yes
3. are we keeping the power line poles? answer: yes
4. could we please put fencing on Tin bridge, South Meadow bridge and other bridges because of safety? answer: not on all, only on those over a road
5. are we going to build bridges on Chapel St., Thomas St. and Orange St.? answer: yes
6. are there any volunteer jobs I can do? I’m especially interested in construction and horticulture! answer: yes
7. could we please paint the bridge over East Silver St. black? answer: we’ll look into it

Reports of City Officers: Mark Cressotti – the work on the Esplanade will be done by the end of this year; moving forward on the Central section; East Silver St bridge is rust colored and will check on different color paint; Demetrios K asked if it is necessary to proceed in order of the north section next, or could central section be next? Mark C said the dollar amount caused north section to be next and the central section is getting ready to follow. Alice F asked if the Esplanade lights are staying the same; the Rinnova Building staff person, James Homan, asked regarding downtown consistency of lights; Chris S asked about sign installation and Jeff L said we need to communicate with the Mayor to ask if the FOCG can donate installation and Mark C said, “no we can’t.” Another item stated by Mark C: there is another upcoming meeting on 1/26/16 regarding the Western Ave. project, which is a DOT requested meeting; Jeff L said we have a committee planning to attend and represent us; Mark C thanked us and said any others to please contact him.

Reports of Chairs:

Jeff L – stated: he is transitioning chair responsibilities to Joe G and he will continue assisting the FOCG. Also, said he emailed Don P about GoDaddy. Next, he said our insurance policy is up for renewal. He then said that Joe G is sick, but he submitted end of year finances and Jeff L will forward more to us. He also stated that he has attended the last complete streets meeting.

Don P – he met with Rich Frazee, Executive Director of MassBike, but he can’t attend the Jan.(26th Western Ave) meeting; Mayor Sullivan will attend the complete streets meeting asap.

MJ B – is planning and developing the kiosk ‘you are here’ signs and George Ramirez (graphic designer) will add this to the others.

Jeff L – noted emailing a copy to distribute minutes of the Western Ave. community meeting.

Old Business:

Don P noted the bike racks from Dan Kotowitz: costs of rack at \$115.00 plus installation of \$140.00 or another version of \$190.00 and more (\$25 for logo on larger racks), plus more for mountings. He said that Jay Vinsky prefers 'case by case' basis, and noted assorted items regarding cars, violations, requirements, and lower cost options. Jeff L will send a thank you to Dan K and tell him that we are not financially able to buy more; Bob P stated that CT riders are asking for racks in order to use downtown businesses. Assorted members commented regarding racks and ordinances are now open to businesses making their decisions.

We then skipped an item regarding the purchase of laptops, but Jay Q said he gets great discounts on them, so he could purchase for us to save money.

Don P said that Massbike is selling bike shops with \$40.00 bottle to get membership and assorted other membership levels.

Sandy S gave update on the brick campaign: she showed form for brick purchase and had good feedback at an event and in the newspaper. Jeff L noted online purchases. Don P asked for info so he could email this to thousands of bikers. Sandy S said to let her know of any events or posting opportunities. Jeff L said the board should set a goal of the number to sell at 3-5 each, and this was informally agreed upon. The first installation will be by 6/20/16 so we need to know of sales by May 2016. They will be installed at the levy at the river.

New Business:

Bylaws were sent out by email, so any questions? Term limits and voting by the Immediate Past Chair were mentioned. Jay Q noted changing term limits of board members (for example, conduct only 4 meetings a year); George H stated the worry of this limiting the board from getting enough done; membership question is on hold; Bob P noted past chair position being a still voting position and to assist the new chair.

Jeff L called the question of accepting the bylaws, seconded, vote passed.

Elections:

Sandy S - noted the handout of positions; Jeff L noted to add George H as an at-large member and to serve as the Co-Director of Maintenance; vote was taken on the handout and all 10 were unanimously voted in.

Jeff L mentioned Giving Tuesday and the assorted dollar amounts.

MJ B stated a big, appreciative THANK YOU to Jeff LaValley for his great service as the board chair and everyone gave him a loud, hearty, very well deserved round of applause!!

Motion made to adjourn, seconded, vote passed.

Next meeting 1/19/16