

MERRYMEETING TRAIL
MEETING MINUTES
THURSDAY, JANUARY 22, 2009 AT 2PM

Present:

Bowdoinham – Nicole Briand- Town Planner

Topsham – Rod Melanson- Town Planner, Victor Langelo- Resident, and Jeanette MacNeile- Resident

Richmond – Steve Musica, Resident & Richmond Representative

Gardiner – Tom Reeves- Conservation Committee

Other - Katrina Van Dusen- Regional Planner for MCB&P, Carrie Kinne- Kennebec Estuary Land Trust, Dave Wood- East Coast Greenway

Now that the memorandum of agreement has been signed, what should our next steps be?

What are we calling this trail? The group agreed to call this project the Merrymeeting Trail for reference at this point in time.

It was suggested that we need to have a study and/or multiple studies done.

- Money for studies? Tom has been looking into grants that we may be able to use to complete the study/studies.
- What would the goal of the study be and what would be considered in the study? Rod, Katrina and Tom agreed to meet and put together an outline of the scope of work we would need, as we would need in a request for services. Knowing our scope(s) will help when looking for grants. The group brainstormed for ideas: economic study, cost/benefit analysis, feasibility study. What studies do we need to which purposes? The group will review the outline at the next meeting.
- Tom has also been looking into consultants that could perform an economic study for us based on location, knowledge and experience and has found three so far. Alta Planning, John Pucher, and Kevin Cheys.
- With all the other trail projects out there, could we get copies of studies that they have had done to use as reference until we can have our own studies done and to help frame what we want for studies.
- Katrina will look into the State Planning Office's Challenge grant to see if that may be something we would be able to use.

What should we do until we can obtain funding for a study?

- We should do some preliminary planning for the rail corridor. We can look at the state's aerial photography to see where a trail along the rail might have to be located outside of the rail right-of-way due to natural constraints. Then in the spring/summer we should plan on traveling along the corridor to see what is on the ground.
- We should obtain copies of the railroad corridor plans. Nicole has the set of plans for Bowdoinham and the contact information for the person who sent them. Nicole will forward this information to Staff to request the plans for their municipality.
- We should plan on applying to the National Park Service's River, Trail & Conservation Assistance Program. The application will be due August 1, 2009. Nicole will contact Burnham Martin to let him know we are planning on applying this year.
- Continue to collect information. Tom has been in contact with Rails to Trails Conservancy, but has not been able to schedule a meeting. Victor knows some people

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- from the organization and will try to make some contacts. Nicole will try to schedule a meeting with John Andrews for this winter/spring.
- Continue to talk to interested parties/people/organizations.

When should we meet next? Several people are not able to make day meetings, so how about a night meeting? Night meetings are hard for staff, but we should start holding night meetings, maybe on a quarterly basis. We'll schedule our next night meeting for March. For February we'll meet on Thursday the 26th at 2pm.

Nicole, Rod, Darryl, Jason, Katrina & Carrie will be meeting with Dan Stewart of MDOT to officially discuss this project with him so that it is on his radar.

Nicole will work on creating a master list of project participants that will include names, affiliations and email address.

To-Do for the next meeting:

- **Prepare outline of study scope – Rod, Tom & Katrina**
- **Work on on-going tasks.**
- **Suggestions?**

1/22/09 nbdb