

**MERRYMEETING TRAIL
MEETING MINUTES
FRIDAY, MAY 1, 2009 AT 10:00 P.M.
BOWDOINHAM TOWN OFFICE**

Present:

Bowdoinham – Nicole Briand- Town Planner

Topsham – Rod Melanson- Town Planner, Victor Langelo- Resident, and Carla Rensenbrink – Resident & Brunswick-Topsham Land Trust

Richmond –Steve Musica, Resident & Richmond Representative

Gardiner – Jason Simcock- Planning & Development Director

Other - Katrina Van Dusen- Regional Planner for MCBDD&P, Dave Wood- East Coast Greenway, and Dale Thinseth- Kennebec River Initiative

Steve Musica obtained a set of the right-of-way plans for the railroad corridor from Topsham to Gardiner from Maine Department of Transportation. Nicole will hold onto them at her office.

Preliminary Planning-

1. Review Strategic Project Outline

Group reviewed outline.

2. Organizational Structure

i. Establish Workgroup –

Victor Langelo volunteered. Steven Musica and Nicole Briand volunteered to be the liaison between this workgroup and the Richmond Board of Selectmen. Nicole Briand volunteered to help organize this group and provide support if/when necessary. Discussed asking:

- Tom Reeves to join this workgroup given his experience with the Kennebec River Rail Trail,
- the representative from KVCOG, and
- someone from Bowdoinham.

Nicole will contact Tom, KVCOG and a Bowdoinham resident.

ii. Reviewed Work Plan. This workgroup will need to:

- research the various organizational structure options for the municipalities,
- discuss the options with the municipalities and full group,
- go through the necessary step to have the organizational structure established.

The group discussed forming a non-profit for this project-

- there would be many benefits of having a non-profit,
- the organizational structure for the municipalities is what is required at this time,
- having a non-profit formed would be a bonus, but is not required at this time.

This workgroup should try to schedule a meeting with John Andrews to discuss the organizational

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structure used from the Eastern Trail. Dave Wood agreed to try to schedule a meeting with Mr. Andrews.

3. Corridor Planning

i. Establish Workgroup –

Rod Melanson, Nicole Briand, Dave Wood and Katrina Van Dusen volunteered. Nicole Briand volunteered to help organize this group and provide support if/when necessary.

Discussed asking:

- Carrie Kinne and/or Angela Twitchell to do property owner outreach for alternative routes if necessary.
- someone from Gardiner, and
- someone from Bowdoinham.

Nicole will contact Carrie, Angela and a Bowdoinham resident. Jason will contact a Gardiner resident. Dave Wood will contact Andy Herrickson, who worked on the Kennebec River Rail Trail to see if he would be interested in helping with this project.

ii. Reviewed Work Plan. Group suggested edits and additions.

4. Identify Funding Sources/Ideas

- i. MDOT – Nicole is talking with Dan Stewart to see if we can get funding for our regional planning commission(s) to work on the corridor study.
- ii. Regional Challenge Grant – Katrina has started working on this letter. Katrina, Ben & Nicole will be working on this to get it submitted asap.
- iii. Quality of Place Grant – Katrina submitted a letter of interest for MCBDP that includes money for our corridor study. MCBDP will hear in June if they are selected to submit an application.
- iv. Workgroup – Katrina Van Dusen, Ben Long, Jeanette MacNeille, Nicole Briand, and Josh Platt have volunteered.

National Park Service's River, Trails & Conservation Assistance Grant-

1. Workgroup – Katrina Van Dusen, Ben Long, Nicole Briand have volunteered.
2. Meeting with Burnham Martin on May 5th at 10:00am in Bowdoinham to discuss application process and services wanted/needed/provided:
 - i. Organizational Structure
 - ii. Maintenance Plan
 - iii. Project Organization/Guidance
 - iv. Funding Opportunities
 - v. Public Support

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Marketing-

The group brainstormed marketing ideas.

- We should form a workgroup for this. It would be great if we could get our municipal economic development directors to work on this workgroup.
- We should create a website for the project. Right now Nicole has a webpage for the project within the Town's website. Victor volunteered to research hosting options and if municipalities would be willing to pay, then he would be willing to create and update the website for the project.
- We should create a newsletter.
- We should start creating a monthly/bimonthly Bulletin/Status Report outlining what we are doing (past/present/future) to keep our Boards, Council, representatives and others updated on our progress.
- We should keep our Boards/Council updated by:
 - We should start by sending our Boards/Council our Trail Summary.
 - monthly/bimonthly Bulletin/Status Report
 - attending one of their meetings every three-four months
- We should plan to have a table at upcoming events, such as:
 - Gardiner's Whatever Race
 - Richmond Days
 - Celebrate Bowdoinham
 - Kennebec River Initiative evens
 - Other events?
- We should try to get blurbs about this project in other newsletters, such as:
 - Municipal newsletters
 - Land Trusts
 - Bike Organizations & Coalitions– Dave Wood will make contact.
 - Merrymeeting Wheelers– Dave Wood will make contact.
 - Kennebec River Rail Trail
 - East Coast Greenway - Dave Wood will make contact.
- Attend meetings, such as:
 - The monthly bike council meeting
 - Other organization's meetings

Nicole will update the Work Plan and other documents for the groups review, as well as create a TO DO List.

Adjourn