

## ROCHESTER RIVERWALK COMMITTEE MINUTES

April 17, 2018

CITY HALL ANNEX, COCHECO ROOM

33 WAKEFIELD STREET, ROCHESTER, NH

MEMBERS PRESENT – Donna Bogan, Peter Bruckner, Ray Felts, Stacey Marchionni, Molly Meulenbroek, Esther Turner, Dave Walker

MEMBERS ABSENT – Sandy Keans, Andrea Lemire

OTHERS Present –Jon Batson, Julian Long, Jenn Marsh

- A. Stacey called the meeting to order at 5:34.
- B. APPROVAL - Minutes of March 6, 2018. Peter made a motion to approve minutes as is, Dave seconded, unanimous approval.
- C. DISCUSSION-Recreational Trails Program (RTP) grant application

Esther attended the Trustees of the Trust Fund meeting on Wednesday, March 21. [*The Trustees are responsible for monitoring conformance to the requirements of the Dominicus Hanson Park Trust.*] They were supportive of the proposal to replace the footbridge across Heath Brook, work the transition to the existing trail system, and make some limited enhancements to the trails.

The NH Bureau of Trails posted the 2019 RTP application and the schedule of workshops at the beginning of April. The deadline for application is Friday, June 22. Workshops will be held on Monday, May 14, from 6-8 pm in Lancaster at the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources Office, on Tuesday, May 15 from 1-3 pm and again from 6-8 pm in Concord at the Department of Natural and Cultural Resources. Advance registration is not required. Stacey, Julian and Esther plan to attend the Tuesday afternoon session. Committee members were encouraged to attend.

Stacey and Esther attended the Recreation & Arena Advisory Commission meeting on Monday, April 9. [*The Recreation & Arena Department is responsible for managing activities in and the health of the Hanson Pines forest.*] They expressed their support of the proposal and informed us that they do not perform any of the maintenance and improvement activities in the Pines; that work is done by the Department of Public Works (DPW).

Julian has started work on preparing the RTP grant application. He reported the results of the report from the NH Natural Heritage Bureau. No finding of rare species or exemplary natural communities near the area of Heath Brook in Hanson Pines. This is good news.

Stacey spoke to the Finance Committee at their Tuesday, April 10, meeting. They agreed to recommend the grant application to the City Council provided that the city is not contributing cash to the project. The contribution of in-kind service and goods was acceptable to the Finance Committee in the form of work by DPW as a match of \$20,000 against a grant of \$80,000.

The City Council is expected to have our request to apply for an RTP at their next regular meeting on Tuesday, May 1. When asked if we should be in attendance at that meeting, Councilors who are members of the Riverwalk Committee said that would be unnecessary.

The in-kind match for RTP must occur during the period of the project. We are already expending time and resources and we may want to keep a record of our hours, but these cannot be counted toward match in advance of the opening of the project.

Ray Felts reported on his dialogue with Fr. Paul at Holy Rosary regarding Riverwalk's interest in crossing their property. Specifics on exactly what is planned, where and when, will be needed, but Fr. Paul plans to take our request forward to the Diocese of Manchester.

Stacey, Ray, Trustee Rob Pallas, and Esther walked the trails of interest to this project. Stacey reported the beauty of these trails and acknowledged that in their natural state they have irregularities that would be challenging to handicap access. Julian contacted Alexis Rudko, Program Specialist, NH Bureau of Trails. He learned that compliance to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is desirable but not required. Efforts should be made to open accessibility. She suggested benches along the trail as a measure to improve accessibility.

In discussion of what attributes the footbridge should have for good accessibility, we were recommended to speak with Jim Grant, Director of Department of Building, Zoning, and Licensing Services.

Michele Halligan-Foley, Director of Career Technical Education (CTE), has requested a meeting to discuss the possibilities for a collaborative project for students and faculty at the high school within the project at the Pines. Stacey and Esther plan to meet with her next week.

Stacey and Esther met with Peter Nourse, Director of DPW, and Owen Friend-Gray, City Engineer, on Wednesday, April 11. We discussed the RTP project and the larger Riverwalk Master Plan, examined the likely routes and the properties affected using the city's Graphical Information System (GIS) which links to tax maps and ownership of properties. In the discussion of the possible kayak/canoe slip-launch for ease of access for handicapped, Stacey inquired about the likelihood of the city creating a parking area at the end of Hillsdale Road. It is not in the budget nor in the plans for the immediate future.

Peter Nourse is investigating the availability of used bridges that could serve as a single-span footbridge across Heath Brook. He has made contact with a firm in Indiana that sells used steel bridges. The firm has estimated the shipping cost to be \$5,000. The bridges that are available from Indiana are 50-foot and 60-foot spans, generally not structurally sound for vehicular traffic, and in the price range of \$10,000-\$11,000. Peter is also looking for used bridges closer to us.

Peter will set up a meeting with the NH Department of Environmental Services (DES) to understand the difficulties and opportunities of crossing locations at Heath Brook. In addition, he wants them to know about the larger project of Riverwalk. He requested an email with a project description within the context of the Riverwalk Master Plan that he could use to setup the DES meeting. Esther has provided that email but has not yet heard from Peter.

The project administrator for the RTP project is not yet identified. There was discussion of qualifications and ideas about best candidates. Stacey will explore this.

#### DISCUSSION- Fundraising

There was discussion of possible donors and ways to publicize the project to attract support. Stacey inquired about the accounting that allows for the collection of tax-deductible donations. Jenn will speak with Blaine Cox, Deputy City Manager and Finance Director, about this.

The Riverwalk dinners are planned to publicize the Riverwalk project. Although the main focus is to gain community awareness, it can serve as a fundraiser and an entry to larger financial support. Jenn will provide the committee with the dates as far as they are known for special events in surrounding communities so that we can avoid scheduling our Riverwalk dinners in conflict with neighboring events.

#### DISCUSSION-Public Awareness

Stacey volunteered to work on the facebook page for Riverwalk. She maintains a facebook presence for her business and for the James W. Foley 5K Freedom Run and is willing and able to do the same for the city's Riverwalk Committee. She shared an image from an old postcard of the three-arch bridge that could be part of the marketing campaign. Dave suggested visiting the Rochester Historical Society to obtain images of the Rochester Intervale.

Donations could be used right now to purchase some marketing materials—pamphlets, banners, and the like. We will want to employ the logo, or a variation of it, that the city is about to use in its wayfinding.

#### DISCUSSION-Public Space at the Fairgrounds

Time ran out before we could address this topic.

ADJOURN – A motion was made by Dave, second by Donna, and approved unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 6:28 pm.

Next meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 1<sup>st</sup> from 5:30-6:30 pm – City Hall Annex, Cocheco Room, 33 Wakefield St., Rochester, NH

Respectfully submitted by Esther Turner