

RAIL TRAIL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Minutes
Thursday March 3rd, 2022
12:00 PM

Committee Members in Attendance: Gail Palmer (Chair), Anne Benning, Eric Rosenthal, Mike McCarthy, Eli Mather, Phyllis Halpern (adjunct, non-voting member), Chris Fitzgerald (Weston Recreation Director)

Guests: Charles Young (Purchasing Agent with the Town of Weston and Weston Public Schools), Nancy Piedra (Town Celebration Planning Committee representative), David Penfield

The meeting was hosted via Zoom, in accordance with the governor's orders for COVID-19 social distancing, and it was recorded by the Weston Media Center.

- 1) Approval of minutes (motion, Rosenthal; second, Benning; unanimous approved)
- 2) Citizens' comments (none)
- 3) Update on Phase 2 Plantings (Charles Young)
 - a) \$43,000 was appropriated in 2020 for Phase 2 Plantings; \$21,000 bid with award to Belko Landscaping
 - i) 5% project cost awaits inspection
 - ii) Landscape architect may be needed (possible need for \$500)
 - b) Funds remain
 - i) \$15,432 in Phase 2 Plantings account
 - ii) \$23,995 in Rail Trail design services account (from Article #3, November 2017)
 - c) Question raised about health of existing plants as well as risk from invasive plants
 - i) Town to inspect for need for mitigation and appropriateness for new plants
 - ii) Landscape architect if needed
- 4) Update on Benches/locations
 - a) Agreed to add one additional bench at Concord, Church Trail heads as well as west of Gun Club Rd. where Rail Trail intersects with entrance to Jericho Forrest.
 - b) Gail Palmer, Joel Angillilo (WFTA), and Jim Beams (Weston 300) met with Kelvin Webster of Stonegate Gardens. Location for single bench not ideal due to slope and grade (red "X" below, western most). Alternative location (green "X" below) could accommodate half pad and 2 benches, considered far enough removed from Gun Club Rd. and driveway (red "X" below, eastern most).
 - c) Plan for vote in next meeting based on feedback from abutters



- 5) Earth Week activities/clean-up
 - a) Earth week is the week of April 24 (Earth Day April 22).
 - b) Gail asked for interested parties who can lead a clean-up on Saturday April 23
 - c) Phyllis asked about SWAG involvement. Gail noted resources for bags may be available from Weston DPW.
- 6) Town Celebration May 21st (Nancy Piedra, Town Celebration Planning Committee representative)
 - a) Celebration will extend beyond the town center to celebrate the town
 - i) A street fair will be present on a closed road
 - ii) A parade will start the festivities
 - iii) Activities for children
 - iv) Antique car show
 - v) Weston Historical exhibit in WAIC
 - b) Ideas proposed for possible walk/hike to celebrate the Rail Trail
 - i) Proposal 1: Walk from Town Center to the Church St. Trailhead
 - ii) Proposal 2: WFTA/RTAC-hosted hike from Lamson Park to Rail Trail
- 7) Wayfinding map
 - a) Discussion postponed to next meeting
- 8) Additional Items
 - a) Announcement regarding Sunday, March 5, 2022, 2:00pm, WFTA walk: Concord Rd. Trailhead, walking East and then back to mural projects
 - b) Anne Benning raised timeline for sunsetting RTAC. Gail Palmer noted:
 - i) Bench completion Spring-Summer 2022
 - ii) Complete Phase 2 plantings
 - (1) Eric asked about evaluating which Phase 2 plantings were omitted for budget and requesting we complete them in this season.
 - (2) Eli asked about discussing with Weston Select Board re: plan to discontinue committee; Gail concurred and plans to review with SB.
 - iii) Signage:
 - (1) Balance re: Article 3 Nov 2017 Town Meeting. Utile for Landscape Design Services \$73,000; remaining balance \$23,993; evaluate if available for wayfinding signs; remainder to return to Weston CPC
 - (2) Phyllis noted signage and QR codes for historic aspects, pollinator garden, murals, and safety.
 - (a) Gail noted that Weston High School will create the QR code for the murals to link to the content currently on the Weston High School web site; update forthcoming at April meeting
 - (b) Pollinator Garden would also link to the Weston Plant Pollinator Alliance website
 - (c) Historical signage will need support from Weston Historical Commission.
 - (d) David Penfield noted that he may have domain and hosting for web sites, which he would release when possible. Gail noted that it would be fine for David to sunset those domains and hosting given that the resources exist as above.
 - iv) David Penfield asked about search for trail stewardship going forward. Gail mentioned a variety of options including WFTA, Conservation Commission and Wayland/Weston Rotary Club. David mentioned Bruce Freeman Trail has a non-profit "Friends of Bruce Freeman Rail Trail" associated with raising funds for re-paving and execution. Eric and Gail noted that DCR and Eversource may have purview.
 - v) Phyllis noted the incomplete section of the Rail Trail near the connection to Waltham

- vi) Eli recommended an assessment of the charter, listing of the accomplishments and what remains, including a reporting of the remaining projects.
- 9) Adjourn (motion, Mather; second Benning; unanimous approval)