

Trails Committee Meeting Minutes

East Brandywine Township Building

March 8, 2016 @ 7:00 PM

Members Present: Dave Summers, Muriel Kennedy, Charles Lindsay and Recording Secretary Dick Williams.

Members Absent: Chairman Mike Wagoner, Vice-Chairman Trevor Weiss

Guests: Vice-Chairman of the East Brandywine Township Board of Supervisors Jay Fischer, Assistant Township Manager Luke Reven, McMahon Project Manager Natasha Manbeck, Resident Charles Lindsay.

Assistant Township Manager Reven noted that the absence of the chairman and vice-chairman constituted a lack of quorum. (A quorum is the minimum number of voting members who must be present at a properly called meeting in order to conduct business in the name of the group.) As a result, no decisions could be undertaken by the assembled group, but the meeting continued as an information session.

Assistant Township Manager Reven introduced Natasha Manbeck, project manager from McMahon Associates, noting that the Township board of Supervisors had recently approved the McMahon proposal to secure access agreements for Lot #14 in Hopewell West and from the Homeowners Association in the Hopewell development. Project Manager Manbeck provided 3 hand-outs to those in attendance: a project schedule for the "Trail Connection Across Hopewell HOA Open Space D"; a "Survey, Alignment Evaluation, and Conceptual Trail Plan" for the "trail Connection Across Hopewell Open Space D"; and, as a model of what one of deliverables of the Hopewell HOA Project would look like, an East Goshen Township trail feasibility study entitled, "segment C: Reservoir Road to Boot Road TAP Grant Application.

Project Manager Manbeck indicated that she would be working with the Trail Committee until early June when her duties will be picked up by her colleague Jamie, as she takes maternity leave. Her due date is June 2, she stated.

Trail Committee Member Summers asked Ms. Manbeck what the project work would entail. She responded that there would be essentially 4 tasks: (1) the topographic survey, beginning Thursday, March 10, for which the field work would take approximately 2 weeks. The survey crew, she explained, will collect boundary pins and provide a variety of topographic survey information, including the identification of wetlands and the existing drainage basin.

(2) Two key decisions must be made – how to get from Terralee to HOA Hopewell Open Space D – to use an existing easement between Lots #s 14 and 15, or to place the trail on the west

side of Lot#14?; and to determine how to get there from Tarrytown and Montpelier. This second task will require additional field work, noted Ms. Manbeck.

The trail, at this time, explained Ms. Manbeck, is planned to be a six foot wide “strip” of asphalt paving material. She stated that by the end of May she would be ready to work with the Committee to determine trail alignment. All work must be completed by June 1 due to the Township’s agreement with the Hopewell HOA.

The project, Ms. Manbeck added, will model a suggested trail alignment, and will also look at buffering options, depending on existing conditions. McMahon Associates will attend the July Trail Committee meeting, she said, to present the DRAFT conceptual plan. Property owners will be invited to the meeting to provide comments before it is finalized. There will also be a month-long public comment period and a Trail Committee meeting at which all the comments will be compiled and the Trail Committee will be asked to provide guidance.

McMahon Associates will then provide a cost estimate, Ms. Manbeck stated, and by the end of September, 2016, the trail easement should be completed.

Committee Member Summers asked why the trail pavement would not be a macadam surface like the trails within the Township park. Assistant Township Manager Reven responded that “6-foot asphalt is our standard specification”.

Committee Member Summers asked if contact had been made with the owners of Lot #s 13 and 14. Assistant Township Manager replied that contact had been made with the owners of Lot #s 14 and 15. He went on to state: The owners of Lot #14 don’t want a trail but they would be willing to swap the existing easement with one on the west side of their parcel. They are new owners and the easement was on their property when they bought it.

Assistant Township Manager Reven noted that contact had also been made with the owners of Lot #13. McMahon Associates indicated that the consideration of a move to the west side of Lot #14 makes it necessary to contact the owners of Lot #13. Assistant Township Manager Reven noted that the owners of Lot #13 did not want to see the trail routed onto their property and that they wanted to know why we were moving it.

Assistant Township Manager Reven stated that in the fall of 2016 the Township would have a legal description and drawing and would go to the Hopewell HOA for a vote to approve the proposal. Approval would require a super-majority, or 60%, of the HOA members voting in favor of the proposal.

Project Manager Manbeck indicated that the trail would avoid wetlands, if possible. She noted that East Goshen Township had utilized a boardwalk feature where an asphalt trail could not be permitted in Applebrook Park.

Committee Members Summers asked if it was possible to use stone through wetlands. Township Supervisor Fischer suggested that stone might disrupt water flow. Project Manager Manbeck responded that a boardwalk could be a good feature. Resident Charlie Lindsay asked if there was any sort of wildlife in the area. Ms. Manbeck responded that it was McMahan's intent to investigate. Assistant Township Manager Reven noted that maintenance issues were the concern with a boardwalk. Ms. Manbeck replied that the boardwalk would be typically composed of pressure-treated wood. Supervisor Fischer noted that steps always require railing, adding that the elevation of a boardwalk may not be sufficient to require a railing. Ms. Manbeck stated that the survey will get answers to these questions.

Assistant Township Manager Reven noted that the owner of Lot #14 had been notified of the survey work. He emphasized that Project Manager Manbeck would return to the Trail Committee meeting in May with proposals on alignment for the Committee to select from.

Assistant Township Manager Reven informed those present that the VPP application for funding from the County for the Trail had been submitted ahead of the deadline and that it had scored well in the pre-application meeting. Those present received a copy of the application.

Assistant Township Manager Reven reported that the Township had applied for a PECO Green Region Grant to support the purchase of a 50' x 650' parcel of land facilitating connection between Hopewell and the Township park.

Assistant Township Manager Reven reported that Dr. Whitaker, who was responsible for the development of the trailhead park passed away last week and that his wife Peggy will now succeed him in running his foundation. Clean-up of flood damage recently suffered by the trailhead park is being cleaned up by a landscaper with funds from Dr. Whitaker's foundation. The job is simply too much for the Township to handle.

Assistant Township Manager Reven reported that a number of Committee members had attended a recent workshop on Trails and Shared Use Pathways Signage & Wayfinding, including Committee Chairman Mike Wagoner. We learned about the "Do's and Do-not's", he added.

Assistant Township Manager Reven reported that the Bondsville Mill trail plan had been presented to the Board of Supervisors and that it included a new trail on the eastern portion of the Bondsville Mill Park that would be constructed on Township-owned land.

Recording Secretary Dick Williams asked if there were any plans to connect one of the proposed Township trails to the Downingtown Rail Station. Supervisor Fischer responded that the Struble Trail would provide the link when the train station is moved to a new location adjacent to Brandywine Avenue between the railroad and Boot Road.

Supervisor Fischer noted that a trail is planned in Caln Township behind the K-Mart that will run the full length of Caln Township. The Brandywine Conservancy is involved, he added, that Sheila Fleming had spoken about it.

Committee Member Summers made a motion to adjourn and Recording Secretary Williams seconded it. Following the meeting, there was a brief discussion as to whether Vice-Chairman Trevor Weiss had resigned from the Committee.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dick Williams

Members:

Dave Summers
426 Corner Ketch Road
Downingtown, PA 19335

Trevor Weiss, Vice-Chairman
126 Helm Way
Downingtown, PA 19335

Richard Williams
600 Pancoast Lane
Downingtown, PA 19335

Muriel Kennedy
380 North Buck
Downingtown, PA 19335

Ian Plane
108 Great Oak Drive
Downingtown, PA 19335

Michael Wagoner, Chairman
241 Jefferis Road
Downingtown, PA 19335