

**MERRYMEETING TRAIL
MEETING MINUTES
WEDNESDAY, JULY 21, 2010 AT 1:30 P.M.
BOWDOINHAM TOWN OFFICE**

Present:

Amanda Bunker, Wright-Pierce
Andy Hendrickson, Kennebec River Rail Trail Board
Burnham Martin, National Park Service
Dan Stewart, MaineDOT
Dave Wood, ECGA
Greg Bakos, VHB
Jon Edgerton, Wright-Pierce
Lynne Sanford, Bowdoinham resident
Melissa Anson
Molly Dow
Nicole Briand, Bowdoinham Planner
Rich Rothe, Midcoast Council of Governments
Rod Melanson, Town of Topsham
Tom Reeves, Gardiner resident
Victor Langelo, Topsham resident

Presentation of VHB's Work

Greg Bakos presented a summary of VHB's work on the feasibility study so far. This included:

- Data gathering, using the State's GIS data base and other sources to form an ArcGIS geodatabase, which was overlaid on 2003 high resolution orthophotoquads. There are a total of 41 such maps along the corridor. The orthophotoquads also include the railroad valuation maps.
- Field review of the entire corridor on April 26 and 27, 2010, using one of MaineDOT's Hyrail vehicles. GIS-based information was reviewed and modified based on real conditions on the ground.
- Identification and mapping of various types cross sections, based on the amount of fill or ledge cuts that would be required, and identification of bridge crossings.
- Preparation of cost estimates for each mile of the trail, based on the cross sections. The initial cost estimates assumed a trail primarily on the east side of the tracks.

There are a lot of challenges along the entire trail. VHB is currently evaluating a number of alternative/ interim routes for some of the more challenging sections of trail. The breakdown by community includes the following:

Gardiner:

- A trail on the west side of the tracks, between Route 24 and the railroad;
- The use of Riverside Road;
- A shared use, gravel path on the west side of Route 24.

Dan Stewart offered that MaineDOT could consider reducing shoulders by 3 to 4 feet to accommodate the trail, and could also consider moving the rail towards the river. MaineDOT

would be hesitant, however, to support anything less than a paved trail.

Richmond

- A shared use path on the west side of Route 24
- A cross-country trail to the west of the railroad right-of-way

Andy Hendrickson stated that some people may have an entrance right-of-way across the railroad to get to the east side of the railroad; that may affect establishment of the trail.

Bowdoinham

- Fisher Road (same road as Cathance Road in Topsham) north to Main Street
- Route 24 from Ridge Road north to Brown's Point Road
- Browns Point/Pork Point Road back to Route 24

Topsham

- From the point where the railroad intersects Cathance Road, north on Cathance Road to Katie Lane and then back to the railroad
- From the point where the railroad intersects Cathance Road, north on Cathance Road to the Bowdoinham line (where Cathance Road becomes Fisher Road)

At this point in the meeting, Greg left with Tom to view potential areas for a shared use path.

Follow-up Discussion

There was a general follow-up discussion concerning the feasibility study and the need to follow-up with the consultant concerning next steps that should be taken.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned about 3:30 P.M.