

MEETING MINUTES TOWN OF LYNNFIELD

AMENDED AGENDA

Board/Committee Name: Recreation Path Committee (1st meeting of newly assembled team)

Day/Date: Thursday, March 23, 2017

Time of Meeting: 7PM

Location: Town Hall, Selectmen Meeting Room

AGENDA and Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 7:00PM by Chairman Russell with a pledge of allegiance.

Committee members in attendance: Angela Addonizio, Robert Almy, Sheila Aronson, Michael D'Amore, Leah Hook, Joseph Markey, Mark McDonough, Marian Orfeo, and Randall Russell

1. Introduction of all committee members to each other (name, address, skills and abilities each member is prepared to contribute to this committee, etc.)

Chairman Russell explained the appointment of the new committee members by the Board of Selectmen and his appointment as temporary chair. One expressed purpose of the Board of Selectmen was to increase the activity of the committee given the status of the proposed Wakefield/Lynnfield Rails to Trails project. Each committee member introduced him- or herself indicating their background and interest in the committee. Members of the public were recognized: Dianne Courtney, Gill Gulliano, Pat Campbell.

2. Review the recently approved mission statement for this committee per recent Selectmen Meeting on Monday, March 13, 2017 (approved statement will be circulated)

The Chair reviewed the mission statement (attached to the minutes) for the Recreation Path Committee adopted by the Selectmen. The committee acknowledged that the charge from the Selectmen was broader than the proposed Wakefield/Lynnfield rails to trails conversion. Other potential recreation paths in Lynnfield and neighboring towns were mentioned as examples.

3. Nominate and vote on permanent Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary for this committee

Members of the committee unanimously elected Mr. Russell to act as Chair. Members of the committee unanimously elected Mr. Almy to act as Clerk.

4. Review and discuss the proposed Article re: lease for MBTA rail right-of-way to be presented at Town Meeting April 24, 2017.

The chair provided a copy of an article for town meeting that was submitted for public consideration by petition by the Friends of the Lynnfield Rail Trail (attached to the minutes). Petition is Article 24 on the Warrant for the April 24 Town Meeting. The Article would authorize the Selectmen to execute a 99 year lease with MBTA for the length of a proposed rails to trails within the Town. Several clarifying points were raised during committee discussion: no date is set for the proposed action, the article authorizes but cannot bind the selectman to a particular action, there is no specific design mentioned. In discussion the proposed action was characterized as 1) keeping the door opened, and 2) getting a sense of what the town wants.

The committee discussed the status and future steps involved in the rails to trails project. Committee members with more experience with the proposed project provided background regarding its status. The project design has been funded by the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) and the State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP). WorldTech Engineering has been hired to prepare and has submitted draft 25% design documents according to MassDOT project development policies. If the project continues forward, there are several more years of permitting and design work to accomplish. Although construction funds are included in the Draft STIP, local funding may be required to continue permitting and design work.

The committee then discussed a number of issues relating to their responsibilities and the overall process. At this point the committee acknowledged that it was under Agenda item 5.

5. Begin discussion of information gathering approaches to be used to assess any proposed recreation path designs. Identify major categories of information required and study approaches to be considered.

The committee discussed its role to coordinate and provide objective information. The committee recognized that some of the new members were not familiar with the history of the project and that past reports and record were not easily obtained. A copy of the Circulation Goal of the Lynnfield Goals and Policy Statement was provided to the committee as context to the committee's work. In addition, it was suggested that information from other successful rails to trails projects may help clarify the process and issues that the committee may address. The committee agreed to compile existing information. The 4 categories of information agreed to were: 1) example leases, 2) need for and potential sources of funding, 3) overall permitting and design process, and 4) past studies.

6. Receive input from residents in attendance

In an open discussion with the committee, the public participants made the following comments:

- *The committee should concentrate on the proposed Rails to Trails project first.*
- *A copy of the lease the Selectmen would consider should be seen first.*
- *The committee should check into the cost of liability insurance.*
- *The committee should look at alternative sites.*
- *The committee should concentrate on providing facts to the public.*
- *What will be the connection to other trails?*
- *Is the lease actually firm; that is, can the ownership revert to abutters?*

The committee then discussed the potential to make recommendations on Article 24. There was no interest to do so. The committee has been invited to offer input to the Selectmen at the April 10 meeting. In addition to issues raised by the public (above), the committee identified: what are the next steps in the process, under what circumstances might the construction funding no longer be available, what other opportunities are there for engaging the public. The committee discussed compiling information and meeting again to discuss what, if any, input should be made to the Selectmen on April 10.

7. Set date for next meeting.

The next date was tentatively set for April 6 (Thursday) depending on availability of the room. April 5 was mentioned as an alternative date. The chair suggested that now that the new committee members had attended their first meeting, future meetings would be run more formally.

8. Adjourn

The committee adjourned at 9:05 PM.

Attachments: 1 Recreational Path Committee Mission Statement
2 Text of Town Meeting Article 24
3 Circulation Goal of the Lynnfield Goals and Policy Statement