

Friends of the Milford Upper Charles Trail
Minutes of the General Membership Meeting
January 9, 2007

Call to Order

Tony Niro called the meeting to order at 7:06 PM. 12 members and 3 visitors were present.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made and unanimously carried to approve the minutes of the 11/14/2006 meeting.

Guest Speakers

Jay and Mike Bradley:

- Mike Bradley of Troop 2 proposed an Eagle Scout project regarding bat houses on the trail to promote conservation of bats and to control the mosquito population on the trail.
- Mike reports that the small brown bat is one of the most common bats in New England. Its primary diet is a variety of insects, but insect repellent would still be advised. Mike has a book on bat houses. The old style bat house has only a 10% occupancy rate, but the new style has one of 80%. The bat houses should be placed 10-12 feet off the ground and face south. Mike suggests placing multiple bat houses around Louisa Lake and Cedar Pond as the water attracts insects. The houses should be built out of cedar to prolong their life. Mike estimates it will cost about \$200 for 15-20 bat houses. He plans to go to Home Depot, etc for material donations.
- Mike asked for any suggestions. Responses included:
 - Safety in the construction and installation was raised as a concern. Jay responded that adults associated with troop would help with power saw cutting and putting the houses up high.
 - It was suggested that Mike make a map with the locations of the bat houses.
 - It was suggested that Mike check with Mike Bresciani of the Parks Department about any rules concerning installation.
- Mike will return to the next meeting with proposal after incorporating our input.

Officer Reports

- **Secretary – Tom Myatt:**
 - The membership count at year end was 74: 37 Bronze, 17 Silver, 12 Gold, 7 Pathfinder, and 1 Trailblazer.
 - Tom will start soliciting dues from members with their annual membership anniversary in January.
- **Treasurer – Dave Cassinelli: absent and no report**
- **Vice President – Tony Niro**
 - A woman from an ad agency from Texas called Tony regarding a promotion for the Radisson or the Marriott. They asked for permission to use some of the photos she saw on the website. Tony suggested that the hotel make a donation. Tony has not heard back but will follow up.
- **President – Margaret Myatt: absent**
 - The Friends received a \$150 donation from one of Reno's children and a \$2,500 donation from the Harmon Foundation.

Committee Reports

- **Trail Committee Report – Reno DeLuzio**
 - Some additional Phase 1 work was permitted by the mild weather. There is still some landscaping to be done in the spring around the trail entrances. Overall, no major issues remain with Phase 1 construction and it should be turned over to the town by late spring.
 - The Phase 2 design is 25% done and submitted for approval to a battery of agencies.
 - All contracts are in place to do the design and things are financially in good shape for Phase 2.

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- National Grid remains the major issue (99-year license by National Grid versus lease by federal officials). National Grid and local authorities are trying to get the Feds to change the regulation before Mass Highway goes out to bid.
- Reno would like for Mass Highway to go to bid before fall 2007.
- Mass Highway is required to hold a public hearing on Phase 2, as they did on Phase 1. Phase 1 had 200 people attend in favor of the trail, and it would be good to have the same show of support at the Phase 2 hearing. The hearing may be in March.
- Special Events Committee – Pat Rosenthal
 - Pat attended the November Hopkinton Trail Club meeting and went on one of their hikes. She did not attend policy committee meeting in December. The Club is expressing their intent to do their part on the Charles Trail and they are looking for a person to take the lead. They have some participation underway but no major effort yet. One section of the proposed trail has flooding issues.
 - Pat said she is not working on planning events other than the grand opening until the trail is turned over to the town.
 - Reno said it should be safe to plan for the grand opening event in June. People thought the best period for the event would be after the MHS graduation and before school ends. A motion was passed and unanimously carried to schedule the grand opening on Saturday June 16th, rain or shine.
 - The thinking is that a budget of \$5,000 for the grand opening event would be sufficient. Some people think it could be less. The event should be self-funding.
 - Pat will schedule a Grand Opening committee meeting.
- Fund Raising Committee – chair vacant
 - The question was raised concerning the specific purposes that the Friends focus on now for fund raising. It was suggested that we can focus first on the grand opening event. Also mentioned were educational programs about bikes and nature. Nancy motioned and it was unanimously carried that a representative from the Parks Department attend the next trail meeting to communicate what types of assistance they would like from the Friends.
- Safety Committee – John Edmondson
 - Reno said he is getting emails and many positive comments about the trail, except dog problems: dog fights; unfriendly approaches, dog feces. Reno recommends an education effort early on.
 - A discussion ensued about incidents with dogs on the trail. It was motioned and unanimously carried that Margaret invite the Animal Control Officer to the next meeting.
 - Sheldon asked about police patrols. It was recommended that we get the Police Explorers to come to meeting to make a presentation.
- Publicity Committee – Nancy Wojcik
 - Nancy suggested that the brochure be revised. She will work with Tony on it. Bob Buckley has a new version of the trail map that can be used. The new logo can be used and the text refined. Nancy will get bids, and then we can vote for funds at the next meeting.
 - Tony brought the remainder of the old brochures for people to use.
 - Nancy will do a newsletter in the spring.
- Maintenance Committee – Jennene Pasquarosa: absent
 - People generally agree that the trail is looking good in regards to an absence of litter.
 - Some people think that the rule signs are too small and rules are not consistent with bylaws.
- Environmental Education Committee – Linda Konvalinka: absent

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Old Business

No old business.

New Business

No new business.

Next Meeting

- Motion was made and unanimously carried to have the next meeting at 7:00 PM, Tuesday, February 6th at the Senior Center.
- Some topics for the next meeting suggested at this meeting:
 - Representative from the Parks Department to explain types of assistance that the Friends can provide.
 - Animal Control Officer to discuss incidents with dogs on the trail.
 - Mike Bradley presentation on bat houses. Note: It has been subsequently decided to defer this topic from the February meeting due to the number of guest speakers and agenda items.
 - Discussion on types of education the Friends will sponsor

Adjournment

Motion was made and unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:30 PM.