

Adirondack Rail Trail Stakeholders Meeting Summary
Main Conference Room, DEC Region 5 Headquarters Ray Brook
10 am, Thursday, February 23, 2017

I. Attendees

1. Ed Randig, Town of Harrietstown
2. Patricia Littlefield, Town of Tupper Lake
3. Paul O'Leary, Town of Tupper Lake
4. Peter Edwards, Village of Tupper Lake
5. Rich Shapiro, Village of Saranac Lake
6. Chuck Damp, Town of North Elba
7. Craig Randall, Village of Lake Placid
8. Brad Hathaway, Village of Lake Placid
9. Tony Goodwin, ATIS
10. Lee Keet, ARTA
11. Jim McCulley, LPSC
12. John Hopkinson, LPNEHS
13. Michelle Clement, ROOST
14. Walt Linck, APA
15. Rob Davies, DEC
16. Bob Stegemann, DEC
17. Cpt. John Streiff, DEC Forest Rangers
18. Tom Martin, DEC
19. Fran Sheehan, DEC
20. John Schmid, DEC
21. McCrea Burnham, DEC
22. Eric Kasza, DEC
23. David Winchell, DEC
24. Steve Guglielmi, DEC
25. Holly Kneeshaw, DEC

By Phone

26. Carolyn Dunderdale, OGS
27. Kara Phillips, DOT

II. Introduced McCrea Burnham and Eric Kasza

1. Division of Lands and Forests in Albany
2. Will be part of the DEC team overseeing
 - i. Rail & tie removal
 - ii. Trail construction
 - iii. Trail management

III. Status & Update Reports

1. Litigation – Rob Davies reports court has issued a stay for the removal of rails & ties

- i. Franklin County, Essex County and North Country Community College have provided letters indicating the desire to resolve the ownership issues in a manner that allows the State to move forward with construction of a trail.
 - ii. Court seeks additional information on titles and historic preservation efforts
 - iii. Court was provided a letter from OPRHP expressing satisfaction DEC's and DOT's plan for interpreting historic resources along the travel corridor as outlined in the letter of intent from DEC and DOT to OPRHP.
 - iv. DEC must submit additional information to the court by March 8
 - v. A stakeholder asked whether there was any truth to rumors that the State was planning to settle the litigation by having the rail go to Saranac Lake and the trail would only be between Saranac Lake and Lake Placid
 1. Rob Davies assured the Stakeholders that DEC Commissioner Basil Seggos remains committed to the Travel Corridor UMP amendment and the construction of a trail between Tupper Lake and Lake Placid
 2. Town of Tupper Lake Supervisor Patricia Littlefield reports that in a very recent phone conversation with DOT Commissioner Matt Driscoll he assured her that there was no truth to the rumors; the trail will be constructed between Tupper Lake and Lake Placid
2. Requests for Proposal (RFP) for Rail and Tie Removal
 - i. DEC & DOT agree the RFP for Rail & Tie Removal and the RFP for Railway Rehabilitation will be linked and released together
 - ii. Different companies may be awarded the projects but link is important for the recovery of good rails and ties from the trail section to be reused in rail rehabilitation section
 - iii. DOT/DEC had planned to issue the RFPs this week however, Office of Attorney General, DEC and DOT lawyers are reviewing the court order and the RFPs to ensure compliance with the court order
3. Corridor Ownership
 - i. Attorneys and other staff from DEC, the counties and the college are working to finalize agreements to resolve the issue and allow the trail to be constructed
 - ii. DEC has spoken with Lake Placid North Elba Historical Society about public use of the trail on their property but little else

- iii. DEC assured Historical Society representative that steps will be taken in the immediate future to begin formalizing an agreement
- iv. It was pointed out that there still seems to be confusion in the press and elsewhere regarding the parcel of land around the Lake Placid Depot.
 - 1. The Historical Society obtained the parcel from the rail owner prior to the State obtaining the rest of the travel corridor
 - 2. This parcel was never part of the Remsen Lake Placid Travel Corridor – the travel corridor as described in the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan includes only the State-owned lands.
 - 3. Although DEC needs to develop an agreement with the Historical Society to have the trail and other infrastructure on their property, this situation was recognized early in the process.
 - 4. The situation with the parcel owned by the Historical Society cannot be equated to the situation with the parcels near the college.
- 4. DOT-DEC Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs)
 - i. DOT will retain the underlying jurisdiction of the corridor between Lake Placid and Remsen
 - ii. The MOU in which DOT provides DEC with the ability to have the rails and ties removed is with DOT for final review and signature, this should occur in the next couple of weeks
 - iii. The MOU in which DOT provides DEC the authority to construct and manage the trail is being worked on.
 - iv. Once the second MOU is signed we will begin working to develop an MOU with a third party to provide the day to day operation under DEC's oversight
- 5. OGS report from Carolyn Dunderdale
 - i. OGS has awarded the contract for final design and construction of the trail to Creighton Manning
 - 1. Experienced, knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the project
 - 2. Chuck Damp approved, stating he had worked with them when the town of North Elba sought to develop the rail & trail between Lake Placid and Saranac Lake and found them excellent to work with
 - ii. Schedule of Release of Conceptual Plan
 - 1. Bergmann Associates will provide the Draft Conceptual Plan for the trail to DEC and OGS for review in early March.
 - 2. Seek state agency comments within a week or two

3. 1st Revision of Draft Conceptual Plan will be provided to Stakeholders for their review in late March/early April
 4. Seek Stakeholders comments within a week or two
 5. 2nd revision of Draft Conceptual Plan will be provided to the Stakeholders in mid to late April
 6. State Agencies and Stakeholders will provide the 2nd revision of the Draft Conceptual Plan to the public for review and comment
6. Branding, Marketing & Promoting
- i. Commissioner Seggos has approved “Adirondack Rail Trail” as the official name of the trail, the name previously accepted by the Stakeholder group.
 - ii. DEC has determined that ROOST will be the lead organization for marketing the Adirondack Rail Trail
 - iii. The first priority will be to research and identify a logo
 1. Commissioner recognizes the efforts ARTA undertook to develop a logo, but is asking ROOST to undertake their own review of the logo to ensure it is properly vetted.
 2. The logo should be something that is unique and recognizable both locally and across the country
 3. ARTA will share the work it has done so far with ROOST and DEC – a meeting between the three will be scheduled to work out the details
 - iv. **DISCUSSION** – Information needed by businesses to attract customers using the trail and the timing of providing that information.
 1. Businesses need confidence the trail will be built and when it will be built to determine capital investments
 2. Logo and other information can be provided at a later date.
7. Local Snowmobile Laws
- i. **DISCUSSION:** Differences and similarities of the local laws pertaining to snowmobiles in each of the villages and OPRHP statewide snowmobile regulations
 - ii. Villages will work together to ensure local laws regarding snowmobiling are similar
 - iii. Each village and town will determine which streets and roads are open to snowmobiling
8. Saranac Lake Train Depot
- i. Stakeholder asked the status of the Saranac Lake Train Depot
 - ii. DOT will retain oversight of the depot, not DEC
 - iii. The depot is a valuable asset to the rail trail and will be one of the main, if not the main, gateway to access the trail.

- iv. Depot needs roof repair and painting
- v. Problems with heating had existed though it is unknown if that had been fixed or not.
- vi. DEC will check with DOT to determine what work has been or will be done and what the future use will be.

IV. Rules, Regulations, and Enforcement (Forest Ranger Captain John Streiff)

1. DISCUSSION:

- i. Applicability of Part 190 State Land Use Regulation
 - ii. Coordination of State and Local Law Enforcement Agencies
 - iii. Snowmobile Speed Limits – Statewide (55 mph) vs Specific Limits on the Corridor
- 2. DEC Dispatch Phone Number will be the number for emergencies and enforcement complaints
 - 3. Coordination of emergency response will follow current protocols for emergencies on state lands
 - 4. Do not over regulate – “restrictive but enjoyable use of the corridor”
 - 5. ATV use is prohibited under OPRHP regulation – no ATV use on public lands except where designated
 - 6. Form Rules & Regulation Subcommittee
 - i. Charge
 - 1. Determine what Rules and Regulations already apply
 - 2. Develop a list of desired rules & regulations
 - 3. Propose how rules and regulations will be enforced
 - 4. Report out to Stakeholders
 - ii. Composition
 - 1. Co-chairs: DEC Forester and Forest Ranger
 - 2. Representative from each municipality

V. Interim Access Plan

- 1. DEC will discourage any use of the corridor prior to construction of trail – except for winter use – snowmobiles, skiers and snowshoers.
 - i. It will be extremely dangerous to be in the corridor during rail removal and trail construction
 - ii. Ballast will be smoothed over but it still will not be conducive for biking or walking
- 2. Some infrastructure will be installed during the rail and tie removal
 - i. Gates will be installed at road crossings and other locations to prevent illegal motor vehicle use
 - ii. Signage will be posted on roads indicating trail crossing ahead
 - iii. Signage will be placed on the trail corridor noting driveways and private roads prohibiting trespassing

- iv. Ties on bridges will be covered so they are safe for snowmobiles and skiers during the interim access prior to completion of the trail
3. DEC will issue a press release with this information
4. A web site will be maintained and notices will be sent to keep residents aware of the status of rail & tie removal work in their area.

VI. Public Participation for the Conceptual & Interim Access Plans

1. Stakeholders will present the Draft Conceptual plan in a series of informational meetings during one week
2. DEC will hold two public meetings the following week to take comment
3. DEC and OGS will work to develop presentation
4. DEC will work with Stakeholders to organize informational meetings
5. More details will be discussed at the next Stakeholders meeting