

## MANHAN RAIL TRAIL COMMITTEE MINUTES

April 25, 2022

**ATTENDEES:** Barbara LaBombard (chair), John Bator, Peter Brooks, Wendy Hammerle, David Jaffe, Liz Sturgeon, Julie Schwager, Pamela Brooks-Richards, Eva Andros.

- The minutes of the March 28th meeting were unanimously approved, pending minor revision to the text (to include omitted attendee, Peter Brooks, and delete phrase “via Zoom”).
- Local resident, Pamela Brooks-Richards, who lives adjacent to the Manhan Rail Trail, presented information about G.R.A.C.E. Trails and sought support for the creation of one to honor her mother along the section of the Rail Trail extending from the NEARI School to the Route 5 trailhead. This would involve the creation and erection of signs in five different spots that would provide passersby with varied opportunities for self-reflection (as described here: <https://gracetrail.com>). Ms. Brooks-Richards indicated that it was her intent to provide or obtain funding for this project herself and to work with the Committee and the city to facilitate its completion. Committee members offered general support and inquired about the potential size and language of the signs and where and how best they might be erected. It was agreed that any signs should be modest in size (roughly the dimensions of a standard piece of notepaper), should visually blend in, should make clear the Grace Trail is a part of the larger Rail Trail, and should not impede mowing or other maintenance. Further discussion and action were deferred, pending the provision of more specific information about the signs (with a request to review mockups) and the funding. The Committee will wait to hear back from Ms. Brooks-Richards regarding such.
- Wendy Hammerle reported that information about Williston Academy’s plan to remove overgrown trees and upgrade the landscaping and lighting along the trail beside Tandem Bagel—approved at the March meeting—has been posted online on both Facebook and the Friends of the Manhan Rail Trail website. It was suggested that this “press release” also be physically posted by Tandem Bagel on a laminated sign, to alert passersby of the plan.
- Barbara LaBombard reported that she was contacted today by someone from Richard’s Oil, who discovered that the trash barrel (which they regularly empty) adjacent to the company’s site by the trail had recently been set on fire, severely damaging the plastic inner layer. It was not known whether the fire was accidental or intentional. Barbara reported the matter to the Police Department. Richard’s will look into replacement of the damaged part.
- Barbara also reported that Terry Buckowski, who provided assistance to the Committee last year as part of the Senior Tax Work-Off Program, is expected to resume her part-time duties in May.

- There was some general group discussion about better organizing the contents of the maintenance shed and getting rid of any unused or unneeded items (e.g., benches, root guards, etc.). The possibility of arranging a work party to do this was brought up.
- Wendy reported that the local resident who had previously contacted the Committee regarding the erection of a memorial bench is currently working with the Parks Department on such and looking into a suitable location.
- Barbara reported that DPW has recently obtained a number of bollard covers, which could potentially be used to replace any covers that have been removed or damaged along the trail.
- David Jaffe and others expressed concern about multiple large cracks in the asphalt of the trail in various spots (e.g., behind the mills) that might require repair. Barbara noted that DPW might possibly be able to help with such, but further information (photos and specific locations) would be useful.
- The Union Street construction project is moving forward and is expected to begin in the coming months. Several trees along that street and near the trail have been marked for removal.
- No update on local efforts to obtain grant monies to update the trail maps were available at this time.
- It was reiterated that there remain no plans for the Committee to participate in local Bike Month activities this year.

**NEXT MEETING:** The next meeting of the Manhan Rail Trail Committee has been scheduled for Monday, May 23, beginning at 7:00 p.m. **This meeting will be held in person at City Hall, without remote access.**

Respectfully submitted,  
David Jaffe