

East Bradford Township Trails Committee (Subcommittee of the Parks & Recreation Board) Regular Meeting Minutes January 15, 2015

The January regular meeting of the East Bradford Township Trails Committee (TC) (subcommittee of the Parks and Recreation (P&R) Board) was held on January 15, 2015 in the McCardle Meeting Room of the Township Building, 666 Copeland School Road, West Chester, County of Chester, PA 19380-1822.

Committee members present:

John Spangler, Chair
Harry Hatzipavlidis, Vice Chair
Dave Baxter
Tony Blanco
Michael Colley
Bob Hawkes
Betsey Mehl
Andy Schaum
Jacob Singer

Committee members absent:

Mose Cornwell
Sheila Fleming
Joseph Hamel
Maria Kenny
Josie Parman
Fred Rothman
Jim Wakefield

Staff/Professionals present:

Mandie Cantlin, Trails Committee Liaison and Assistant Township Manager

Staff/Professionals absent:

Mark Lucas, P.E., Township Engineer

Others in attendance: None

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 12:10 pm by Chair Spangler.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

ORGANIZATION FOR 2015

John Hagens stepped down at the end of 2014 and Tony Blanco and Joe Hamel were appointed as new members at the Supervisors organization meeting. All current members were reappointed. In 2014, John Spangler served as Chair, Harry Hatzipavlidis served as Vice Chair, and Mandie Cantlin served as Recording Secretary.

The Committee unanimously agreed to re-appoint John Spangler as Chair, Harry Hatzipavlidis as Vice Chair, and Mandie Cantlin as Recording Secretary.

In 2015, the Committee will meet on the third Thursday of each month.

MINUTES: Mr. Schaum made a motion to approve the minutes from December 18, 2014 as presented. Mr. Singer seconded the motion. There was no discussion and the motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Brandywine Trail –
 - a. Rules / regulations – A sub-group consisting of Mr. Spangler, Mr. Wakefield, and West Bradford staff, was developed with the purpose of crafting regulations to govern the use of the paved trail. Now that the holiday season is over, Mr. Spangler hopes to make more progress on this effort.
 - b. Rt. 322 realignment – PennDOT is making progress with plans to reconstruct the Rt. 322 bridge at Sugars Bridge Road. The new bridge will be south of the existing bridge and Rt. 322 will be realigned accordingly. Construction tentatively is slated for 2017. PennDOT has expressed interest in transferring the abandoned roadway to the municipalities. If this occurs, East Bradford could use this ground for additional parking and a new trail head. Ms. Cantlin is exploring funding opportunities to plan these new amenities.
2. Brookworth Trail – For several years now there has been limited interest in improving the small trail loop that is located between Highland Road and the Brookworth shopping center. There appear to be residents in the area that are interesting in making this area more usable, but they need guidance in terms of trail construction. Mr. Spangler is interested in working on this project. The TC suggested beginning with some basic outreach to neighboring communities to gauge interest.
3. Paradise Farm Camps Trails –
 - a. Chapel Trail – Some time ago, Paradise Farm Camps and the Township again raised concern about the washout “pinch point” along the Chapel Trail. Prior attempts to fix the washout were not successful and the continued erosion resulted in an unstable surface. The Camp and Township closed the trail in 2013. The entities desire to find a fix that is stable and sustainable so that the trail can be reopened to the public. To assist in this process, the Township hired PennTrails to perform a trail assessment. The completed assessment report was submitted in December 2014.

The report examines two segments of the Chapel Trail. Segment A is the ~2,025 lf section that connects Ravine Road to the lower (western) edge of the Paradise Valley Nature Area (PVNA) field. Segment B is a shorter section (~785 lf) that connects to Segment A at a point between the washout “pinch point” and the historic chapel area and traverses south to the PVNA property line. (Segment B was not in the original scope of work. However, PennTrails agreed to review the segment at no additional cost during the site visit.) PennTrails’ goal during the assessment process was to determine how to transition an informal path to a sustainable trail. The assessment:

- Observes and reports the physical conditions of the corridor (e.g. grade, tread surface, structure, problems)
- Recommends general prescriptions to address structural deficiencies and improve sustainability
- Provides a series of optional next steps

Although not inherently obvious in the report, the assessment process suggests that:

- The overall trail corridor is good – relatively minor alignment modifications will improve sustainability and access
- A comprehensive reroute is not a favored alternative given the Camp’s use of the property, conservation easement parameters, slopes, property ownership, cost, disturbance, etc.
- The washout “pinch point” may be able to be remediated without a bridge (but further information and examination is needed before that conclusion can be made)
- Abandoning the lower portion (southern) of Segment A and utilizing Segment B to connect to the PVNA may be the most sustainable (and cheapest) option to improve the southern portion of Segment A
- Much of the work suggested could be accomplished with volunteer labor
- The work listed in the assessment could be phased over a period of time

The assessment does not recommend a concrete solution to the washout problem because there are some fundamental use parameters that need to be clearly defined and agreed upon – between the Camp and the Township – before designs and specifications can be finalized. The following questions need to be answered:

- What is the managed use? (The managed use is the mode of travel that is actively managed and intentionally accommodated – it is the primary audience of users. There can be more than one managed use and there can be permitted uses beyond the managed use.) Upon discussion, there was a general consensus that the managed use for the trail should be pedestrian only with accommodation for fishing access.
- What is the designed use? (If there is more than one managed use, the design use would be the use that requires the most demanding design, construction, and maintenance parameters. If there's only one managed use, the design use would be the same. Unlike managed uses, of which there may be multiple, there can only be one designed use.) Upon discussion, there was a general consensus that the designed use for the trail should be the same as the managed use.
- What trail class best describes the trail? (The US Forest Service uses trail classes to categorize the development scale of a trail.) Ms. Cantlin distributed pictures to illustrate the different classes. Upon discussion, there was a general consensus that the trail class would be between class 2 and class 3.

The TC recommended to the Supervisors that a small working group (Schaum, Spangler, Cantlin) work with PennTrails to develop a plan to remediate the washout area first (so that the trail can be reopened) and develop a phased approach utilizing volunteer labor to the greatest extent possible to work outward from the washout.

- b. Skelp Level Road Public Trail – The Township and Camp agreed to work together to achieve the trail opening by March 2015.
4. Naturalist Walks – Mr. Spangler, Mr. Hawkes, and Mr. Colley continue to work on the naturalist walks. The first walk is tentatively scheduled to occur in May using the Paradise Farm Camp trail that is slated to open in March).
5. 2015 Trail Blazer Run – The race group will meet after this meeting.

NEW BUSINESS: None

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS:

1. Brandywine Creek Greenway – The Brandywine Conservancy (BC) has William Penn funding to work towards implementing the Strategic Action Plan that was prepared in 2014. One of the projects BC would like to work on in 2015 is the Plum Run Green Corridor. The BC is prepared to complete a variety of mapping exercises at no cost to the Township, which would provide the groundwork for future funding opportunities. The Supervisors authorized this effort during their meeting earlier this month.
2. Member's Trail Inspections – Mr. Blanco asked about the water problems on the Brandywine Trail. Ms. Cantlin hopes to be able to remediate some of these issues this summer.
3. Ethics statements – Nancy Holland distributed copies of the ethics statements for signature. Members need to sign and return the form to Ms. Holland.

PUBLIC COMMENT: None

NEXT MEETING: The next scheduled meeting of the Trails Committee is February 19, 2015 at 12 noon.

ADJOURNMENT / CONTINUANCE: At approximately 1:15 pm, the Committee unanimously agreed to adjourn the meeting.

Amanda "Mandie" Cantlin
Trails Committee Secretary

TRAILS COMMITTEE INSPECTION ASSIGNMENTS:

	Date Last Inspected
Dave Baxter – Harmony Hill Nature Area; red and yellow trails	September 2013
Tony Blanco – TBD	
Mandie Cantlin – (Floating)	May 2014 (Starr, HHNA)
Michael Colley – Paradise Valley Nature Area & Starr Farm Park	August 2014
Mose Cornwell – (Floating)	
Sheila Fleming – Harmony Hill Nature Area; green trail	July 2013
Joe Hamel – TBD	
Harry Hatzipavlidis – Jane Reed & Copeland / East Bradford Park trail	July 2013
Bob Hawkes – Paradise Valley Nature Area	March 2014 – WORK NEEDED
Maria Kenny – Harmony Hill Nature Area; green trail	
Betsey Mehl – (Floating)	July 2013 (Timber Top)
Josie Parman – (Floating)	
Fred Rothman – Shaw’s Bridge & Blue Rock Trail	April 2014
Andy Schaum – Paradise Valley Nature Area & Brandywine Trail	March 2014 – WORK NEEDED
Jacob Singer – Timber Top Farm	March 2014 – WORK NEEDED
John Spangler – Harmony Hill Nature Area; blue and black	July 2013
Jim Wakefield – TBD	

TRAILS COMMITTEE PRIORITIES (2015):

1. PFC-CCWA trails & easement
2. Brandywine Trail Phase 5 feasibility
3. Paradise Valley Nature Area (trail improvements, washout, & Valley Creek fish habitat improvement)
4. Mt. Bradford Improvements (meadow restoration, parking area, paved trail)

Other projects that are not prioritized include:

- Bike/ped improvements along Sconnelltown Road (Mt. Bradford to Sconnelltown Park)
- Brookworth Trails (and connection to WCB)
- Brandywine Farm
- Brandywine Trail – Phase 4 (Skelp Level to Ingram’s Mill)
- Improve / repave trail between Copeland and East Bradford Park
- Fire Company trail
- Construct off-road path to improve bike use at Allerton Road / Creek Road / Miner St intersection
- Plum Run Watershed
- Guthrie trail easement
- Ravine to Brandywine Road
- Sunset Hollow Road
- Sunset Hollow / Happy Creek / Harmony Hill