

Milford Upper Charles Trail Committee

Meeting Minutes

A meeting of the Milford Upper Charles Trail Committee was held on Tuesday, March 21, 2023. Reno DeLuzio being in the chair called the meeting to order at 7:15 p.m.

Present at the meeting were seven members: Reno DeLuzio, Henry Papuga, Elaine Capuzziello, Jeff Howard, Frank Pirrello, and Frank Malangone. Absent from the meeting were four members: Joseph Arcudi, Brian Murray, Margaret Knowlton, and Rose Mary Natelson. Also present was James Wheelock (1 Cunniff Ave.).

Chairman DeLuzio announced that the meeting was being audio recorded and asked if anyone had objection. Hearing no objection, the meeting was recorded.

1. Approve the February 14, 2023 meeting minutes.

The February 14, 2023 meeting minutes were approved as presented.

2. Invitation to speak.

Chairman DeLuzio asked if anyone cared to speak on topics not on the agenda. Hearing no request to speak, the meeting proceeded.

3. Old Cedar St. Discontinuance/Relocation

Chairman DeLuzio provided three documents that he sent to the Committee in advance of this meeting for information. Two addressed a similar proposal in 2007 (which never materialized) and a Town Planner Memorandum dated 9/14/22 to the Select Board that addressed the current proposal. He briefly reviewed the 2007 series of events and reported on a meeting he attended on March 8, 2023 with the Town Planner and an engineering representative of the current proposal's developer.

Mr. Papuga presented a plan of the proposed discontinuance/relocation and information he gathered. Discussion ensued regarding Milford Upper Charles Trail access and parking accommodation for trail users, neither of which was shown on the plan.

Mr. Wheelock was recognized to speak. His comments were:

- a) Town Planner Memorandum dated 9/14/22 is totally unsatisfactory.
- b) Overly favorable to the developer.
- c) Sufficient area is available for 60 parking spaces for trail users and the general public.
- d) Does not trust that the Panning Board's Special Permit/Site Plan approval will guarantee trail access and that parking will be provided.
- e) The Committee should take a strong position against this proposal.

Chairman DeLuzio commented that the Special Permit/Site Plan is not a promise, it is an enforceable document. More discussion ensued regarding parking. Consensus was that the number of parking spaces could not be recommended without a study.

Chairman DeLuzio then offered what the Committee's letter to the Select Board should address in support of the Articles being submitted for the May 22, 2023 Annual Town Meeting. Mr. Howard suggested an amendment.

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The letter (**as amended**) should state the Committee's support of the Articles being submitted for the May 22, 2023 Annual Town Meeting for the discontinuance/relocation of Old Cedar Street and the Planning Board's position of assuring access to the Milford Upper Charles Trail and suitable parking accommodations for Trail users.

The letter should also state: The Committee also understands that the trail access issue can't be made part of the town meeting decision, but will come about later at the Planning Board's Special Permit /Site Plan review, **in consultation with the Milford Upper Charles Trail Committee**, which will occur after town meeting.

Motion made and seconded that the Chairman prepare a letter for the Committee's approval. Passed unanimously.

4. Mr. James Wheelock's Trail Improvement Suggestions

Chairman DeLuzio handed out Mr. Wheelock's list of suggestions separated into several category groups (**Attachment 1**). A preface was added that puts the list in context of bringing this Committee to a responsible close, which will be taken up in the coming months. Chairman's comments:

Item 1: Old Cedar Street Discontinuance/Relocation (See Agenda item 3).

Items 2-6: Multiple year projects. Pursuit best left to the next Milford Upper Charles Trail successor committee, if formed by the Select Board.

Item 7-9: Enhancements beyond the Committee's core mission. Intended for the Friends of the Trail which has not met expectations.

Items 10-12: Uncategorized.

Items taken individually

Item 2 & 5: Mr. Papuga described a Water Co. Plan along this corridor and connect to Plains Park on Cedar St. as an enhancement or alternate to the original trail corridor. The main trail would continue to Hopkinton as designed. Mr. Wheelock commented that it would integrate with the Old Cedar St. discontinuance/relocation project. Mr. Papuga commented that perhaps this alternate should be resurrected if someone wanted to take it on. No one volunteered.

Item 3, 4, & 6: Jackson Court, Goodrich Court, and Eugene Circle: Mr. Wheelock wants the Committee to recommend the town pursue permanent easements. Chairman DeLuzio noted that easements are difficult to negotiate and best left to the successor Milford Upper Charles Trail Committee. Such easements are possible via the Planning Board/Zoning Board (e.g., Zain Ridge PRD Special Permit). Chairman DeLuzio noted that the town Planner knows about the unauthorized Eugene Circle connection to the bike trail because he asked for the Chairman's files regarding the Committee's easement negotiations.

Mr. Wheelock expressed his appreciation for the Committee's work and emphasized the need for continued stewardship of the trail. Mr. Howard reported a dramatic improvement of trail maintenance in the past couple of years.

Item 9: As a matter of principle, Mr. Wheelock would like the Committee to advocate for the Town to take back the property.

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Item 10: Ms. Capuzziello does not see any problem with the how the trail ends at the senior center. Chairman DeLuzio noted the barriers were put in at the request of the Senior Center to slow down bikers speeding through the parking lot. Not a priority for Mr. Wheelock.

Item 11: Mr. Wheelock suggested plowing the trail on heavily used segments to make it more useable over the winter months. Chairman DeLuzio noted that this issue continues to come up. In 2007 the Park Commission adopted a rationale/position for not plowing the trail in the winter (**Attachment 2**). It was supported by the Friends of the Trail and the Committee. Chairman DeLuzio asked the Committee if they would like to change this position. Hearing no, the 2007 position remains.

Item 12: Chairman DeLuzio asked why the Hayward St. crossing is not sufficient access. Mr. Wheelock is in favor of more access. This path is there and just needs to be spruced up a bit and made official. No further comments.

Chairman DeLuzio noted that he will leave this list on the table if any Committee Member would like to take them on. Mr. Papuga noted the Committee could just send these items to the proper agency for their consideration. Chairman DeLuzio did not recommend sending these suggestions without some basic supporting information (e.g., problem that needs attention, is it an enhancement, description, photos, GIS maps, etc.) Mr. Papuga agreed to take the action item to flesh out some of these suggestions and report back to the Committee.

5. Proposed Amendment to the General By-Law Article 34 to allow the use of Electric Bicycles (E-Bikes) - Status.

Chairman DeLuzio pointed out that he discovered the Mass. General Law governing E-Bikes that a public hearing is required to establish regulations, including speed limits. Chairman DeLuzio notified Town Counsel.

Chairman DeLuzio also noted that at our February 14, 2023 meeting, in discussing the proposed helmet regulation, Mr. Papuga recommended our By-Law should just state “Helmets shall be worn in accordance with h MGL Chapter 85, Section 11B, subsection (2)iii”.

Upon further reflection, Chairman DeLuzio recommended the wording “Any person 16 years of age or younger” should remain since this is the observable enforcement element of the MGL. Mr. Papuga had no objection. Motion was made and seconded. Passed unanimously.

6. Walden Woods Rt. 85 Connecting Path to the Bike Trail - Status.

Chairman DeLuzio reviewed the status.

ADA Compliant Footbridge Procurement: The Highway Dept. solicited bids from six vendors. Of the six, three no bid, one did not comply with the Scope of Work requirement to deliver a design plan stamped by a Mass registered structural engineer [\$19,750, Kit]. Of the two remaining Fifth Room [\$12,384 fully assembled], and Bridge Brothers [\$28,000, steel bridge]. Fifth Room was selected.

The issue with Fifth Room is delivery. Grant funds must be expended by June 30th. Thirteen weeks to June 30th. Fifth Room uses Glulam beams (with deliveries running 9 – 12 weeks). 12 weeks plus 4 weeks for assembly, delivery would be mid-July. Fifth Room is exploring alternatives to the Glulam beams.

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Path Improvements: Scope or Work for path improvements is in process. Highway Dept. plans to perform some tasks and subcontract most of the work over the next couple of months.

Funding: Finance Director Zachary Taylor advised that \$3K Committee funds cannot be comingled with \$40K grant funds. For accounting purposes, he does not approve transferring the Committee's \$3K to the Highway Dept. Since there is an expiration date tied to grant funds, he recommends spending the grant funds followed by the Committee's funds.

Mr. Papuga asked what tasks the Highway Dept. is doing. Chairman DeLuzio reported they will prepare the base for the footbridge concrete support pads, and form & pour the pads.

Mr. Papuga questioned the source of the grant funds. Chairman DeLuzio reported that the grant was an unsolicited earmark submitted by Representative Brian Murray (also a member of the Committee).

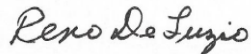
7. Trail Committee going forward.

Chairman DeLuzio reported sending a letter to the Select Board recommending they accept the resignations of Rose Mary Natelson and Margaret Knowlton and recommended no replacements at this time. Discussion regarding the future of the Committee will continue over the coming months.

Meeting adjourned at 9:08 pm.

Submitted

Date: 5/10/23



Reno DeLuzio, Chairman