

# Milford Upper Charles Trail Committee

## Meeting Minutes

A meeting of the Milford Upper Charles Trail Committee was held on Tuesday, November 21, 2023. Reno DeLuzio being in the chair called the meeting to order at 7:17 p.m.

Present at the meeting were seven members: Reno DeLuzio, Henry Papuga, Elaine Capuzziello, Jeff Howard, Attorney Brian Murray, Frank Malangone, and Frank Pirrello. Absent from the meeting was one member: Joseph Arcudi. James Wheelock (1 Cunniff Ave.) was present.

### **1. Approve the November 21, 2023 meeting minutes.**

Mr. Papuga expressed the following concerns with the Oct. 19<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes:

1. Several early discussions that were not included in the minutes. Does not recall a vote being taken to dissolve or continue the Committee.

Chairman's Response: The audio recording was not turned on for the first 20 minutes of the meeting the Chairman was relying on his notes. Also, the minutes are not a transcript of the proceedings. They are a summary of the proceedings, motions, and votes as gleaned from his notes.

Mr. Howard made a motion, seconded by Mr. Papuga, to recommend the Select Board continue the Committee. Motion passed unanimously. Mr. Howard confirmed the motion was made.. The Motion is found in the last sentence of the minutes

2. Discussion regarding submittal of the final report to the Town Meeting in person and sending copies to all town meeting members. Did not remember the Committee agreeing to sending a copy of the report to town meeting members.

Charman's Response: Referred Mr. Papuga to last paragraph regarding Mr. Arcudi's summary of the final report discussion. Mr. Arcudi's recording mentioned something to the effect that "two weeks would be too close." "Two weeks too close" created uncertainty as to whether he was suggesting a hard copy would be provided to Town Meeting members with the Warrant. This uncertainty is the reason [*Members*] was italicized in the minutes.

However, assuming the Committee may consider providing hard copy, a worse- case printing and mailing cost analysis was provided to the Committee for information. Any decision to provide a hard copy to all Town Meeting members would have to be approved by the Committee.

Chairman DeLuzio welcomed Mr. Papuga to provide additional text for consideration. None was provided. The corrected (two typos) minutes presented at the meeting were approved.

### **2. Invitation to Speak:**

Mr. Wheelock was recognized. Chairman DeLuzio asked Mr. Wheelock if he would like to speak on anything that is not on the agenda. He had no comments.

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### 3. Remaining Funds Expenditure

Chairman DeLuzio presented Roy Landscaping cost for hydroseeding the Rt. 85 Connection Path to the Bike Trail shoulders in the amount of \$1600. \$900 for hydroseeding, \$550 for police detail and \$150 for a 50lb. bag of seed to finish next spring. The seed had not been delivered. Chairman DeLuzio recommended the invoice be paid in the amount of \$1,450. The seed can be purchased later if needed. Motion made and seconded to pay the invoice in the amount of \$1,450. Motion carried, six in favor, one opposed.

### 4. Final Report Status

Chairman DeLuzio spent a couple of minutes describing the Final Report as a legacy document that will give the readers a sense of the complexity of this project over the past 25 years. Information and data will be included as Attachments and Appendices. He also mentioned a Trail Development Primer he wrote in 2011 which describes how we did it. He periodically used it to respond to inquiries from other communities regarding our development process. It is posted on the Town Website and will be referenced in the Final Report.

Discussion ensued regarding hard copy to Town Meeting Members. Mr. Howard asked if it was common to have hard copy for Town Meeting Members.

Attorney Murray noted that it depends. It is done for short reports (e.g., 10 pages) but not for long reports like the Trail Final Report. He was opposed to making hard copies for every Town Meeting Member. It is not necessary and a waste of money. He recommended limited hard copies for selected distribution (e.g., Select Board, Planning and Engineering Dept., Library, etc.) and post it on the Town Website. Chairman DeLuzio reiterated that the distribution of hard copy to every Town Meeting Member (and its associated cost) was only raised because of Mr. Arcudi's vague remark at the last meeting.

Discussion ensued regarding the continuation of the Trail Committee. Attorney Murray remarked that it is very unusual for a committee to continue after the project is completed. Mr. Papuga acknowledged that the Committee's work is completed but other linkages may be possible. He gave an example of a nature trail along the westerly shoreline of Milford Pond, crossing the Charles River, thence over an easement (to be acquired) along the perimeter of the cemetery property, terminating at Rosenfeld Park. Chairman DeLuzio added other functions: stewardship, oversight, and coordination.

Attorney Murray questioned how this would work with the Parks Dept. Chairman DeLuzio noted that we do that with Parks Dept. today. They have been very cooperative in responding to public input and problems on the trail. The problem is their plate is full and it takes someone to follow up to move the issue(s) forward to a timely resolution. That someone was the Friends of the Trail (*established by the Trail Committee in 2005 with 20 members, eventually separating as a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization, circa 2007*).

Their performance in this regard has not met expectations. In fact, the Chairman (also a Friends Member) finally got them to create a problem log to track problems and keep track of the time it takes to resolve them. All they did was log the problems but were not proactive in moving the ball forward.

Chairman DeLuzio's opinion is that the Friends are on the verge of dissolving. If that happens, all stewardship, oversight, and coordination of the Trail will be lost? The Committee's position to date is that the MUCT Committee be continued with a new mission. We must decide what the new mission will be. If it is just for special projects, Chairman DeLuzio agreed with Attorney Murray that it should

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be a special committee. If the mission is to include oversight, stewardship, coordination, and special projects, the MUCT Committee should be continued.

Discussion ensued regarding getting people to serve on committees. Mr. Howard opined that to give people a reason to become involved they need a purpose to buy into, and leadership must be there to advance the purpose. Mr. Pirrello suggested getting those who use the trail involved.

Mr. Wheelock expressed interest in finding out what other towns have as open space and recreation committees. Could be a stand-alone committee or sub-committee of the Parks Commission or Conservation Commission. He opined that Milford has a particularly bad record for finding volunteers. He favored an open space and recreation committee.

Attorney Murray was very skeptical about getting people to volunteer for this committee. In terms of users, they will use it but very few are community oriented and want to do something to try to preserve and grow it. It is only going to be as effective as the people that are on it.

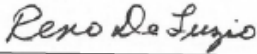
Chairman DeLuzio asked Mr. Howard to draft a mission statement. He agreed to do so.

Final report Review Process: Chairman DeLuzio suggested continuing to send the Committee revision controlled incremental submittals of various sections of the Final Report for review, rather than a full 50-page (*or more*) report to digest and review all at once. The Committee thought this approach was too cumbersome and confusing. Attorney Murray moved, seconded by Mr. Malangone, to allow the Chairman to prepare a draft of the final report and when ready present it to the Committee for review. Motion passed unanimously.

### **5. Committee Goals and objectives going forward.**

Subject matter addressed under Item 4.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:17 PM.

  
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Reno DeLuzio, Chairman

Date: 1/6/24