

**Camden Rockport Bicycle and Pedestrian Pathways Committee**  
**Rockport Town Office, Minutes**  
**December 2, 2015**  
**7:00 pm**

**Present:**

Geoff Scott –Camden  
Anita Brosius-Scott – Camden  
Mac Thomas –Camden  
Leni Gronros (minutes) - Rockport  
Robert Davis –Camden  
Helen Shaw – Rockport  
Richard Stetson – Camden  
Owen Casas – Rockport Liason

**Absent:**

John French – Camden Select Board Liaison  
Jane Self – Camden (Alt)  
Wyatt McConnell – Camden  
Erin Brainard – Rockport  
Tim Wooster – Camden (Alt)  
Eliza Haselton –Rockport

**Guest:** Julie Isbill – National Park Service

**November Minutes.** – accepted as amended.

**Seabright**

Today was the last day the Maine Conservation Corp team would be working on the Seabright section of the Riverwalk there. They made the trail stable for the winter. Water runoff issues still need to be resolved. If there is enough money remaining in the grant, we will buy materials to purchase materials for a split rail fence which will be installed next year. The next grant application is due 1/15/16 but can't be submitted until the current RTP accounting is closed out.

**Micro Grant Opportunity – Every Body Walks**

Mac reported we did not receive the grant.

**Julie Isbill- National Park Service**

We had a long discussion with Julie about how to work the long term view of the Riverwalk. Following is her summary of our discussion that she sent by email.

Below is an email following our meeting from Julie Isbill summarizing the main points we had during the meeting and providing some follow up information.

Hello Pathways Committee! (Geoff - thank you for forwarding),

It was very good to catch up with you last week and talk about the Riverwalk. As follow-up to the discussion, here is some information to ponder.

1) You asked if we have worked on similar projects in Maine, specifically related to a trail passing across relatively small residential lots. This is one of the hardest types of trail projects, but not impossible!

\* My Maine colleague Burnham Martin worked for awhile with the Medomak Land Trust to create a trail in downtown Waldoboro along the Medomak River. That project did not yet succeed, mostly because the sustained time and effort required to get landowner agreement was not invested.

\* There is a pathway along the shore in Bucksport crossing multiple relatively small landownerships. Most of these are not residential.

\* The Shore Path in Bar Harbor is right in town and crosses multiple residential backyards. Such a great asset to Bar Harbor. It was created long ago and in an area with a long tradition of village pathways. Pretty much the same story for walks in Ogunquit and York.

\* Auburn has built a path on the river downtown over time. Some of it is behind residences. In at least one case they bought a property with eminent domain and others that have foreclosed.

\* With a variety of stories, there are also downtown paths along rivers in Kingfield, Kenduskeag, Mexico, Houlton, Biddeford-Saco and Boothbay. None are just like Camden's situation, which is very challenging in a few stretches.

There is a good chance that in the short run, and maybe even the long run, some of the Riverwalk will have to be on sidewalks.

2) We talked a bit about landowner liability and the strength of Maine's Recreational Use Statute which pretty much protects landowners from any liability from others using their land for recreation (there has never been a successful lawsuit in Maine). This is something that needs to be discussed with every landowner who is approached about the Riverwalk. Twenty years ago a bunch of land trusts created a brochure to give to landowners. Copies are available at Inland Fisheries and Wildlife in Augusta and online:

[http://www.maine.gov/ifw/aboutus/commissioners\\_office/OutdoorPartnersPgrm/landowner\\_liability\\_explained.htm](http://www.maine.gov/ifw/aboutus/commissioners_office/OutdoorPartnersPgrm/landowner_liability_explained.htm)

3) We talked about possible incentives to landowners for allowing the Riverwalk on their land. Various techniques have been used across the country:

\* I contacted my colleagues in Washington and they sent me this link to the Kings County tax incentive program that they instituted in 2012. I think this might be what Geoff was referring to.

[http://kingcounty.gov/council/news/2012/June/LP\\_traillinkage.aspx](http://kingcounty.gov/council/news/2012/June/LP_traillinkage.aspx)

\* Payment for the easement or for a strip of land is probably the number one incentive. Easements can be assessed for their value and then payment can be negotiated with the landowner. Of course we hope that people will donate the easement, and would ask first for that, but we may need to figure out how to pay for some of them.

\* A landowner could get their property reassessed after a trail is built and might see a drop in value, which would result in lower taxes. This goes both ways though, because the landowner might get less for their property when it comes time to sell it. On the other hand, often property values rise when there is an adjacent trail!

\* We hope that the primary incentive is the opportunity to provide an amazing amenity to the residents with priceless health and quality of life benefits!

The economic and health benefits of trails (benefits to the community) have been well-studied and written up. The Rails to Trails Conservancy is one of the primary repositories of that research.

<http://www.railstotrails.org/experience-trails/benefits-of-trails/>

\* Here is a link to the slides from a recent webinar by walkability guru Mark Fenton. He is chock full of ideas, facts and inspiration about creating trails and walkable communities.

[https://drive.google.com/a/nps.gov/folderview?id=0B1lhUBSz7E0lc3dNUHBoQWktOFk&usp=sharing\\_eid&ts=5661d42d](https://drive.google.com/a/nps.gov/folderview?id=0B1lhUBSz7E0lc3dNUHBoQWktOFk&usp=sharing_eid&ts=5661d42d)

4) Do we want to apply again to Bikes for People for the Riverwalk? A letter of interest is due January 29th. I know Pathways' application was denied last time but I think it might be worth applying again. Often that kind of perseverance pays off. My one hesitation is that they do NOT fund feasibility studies, and in essence, what we need for the Knowlton section is a feasibility study. Maybe a few of us should form a fundraising "committee" to think through the funding needs, possible sources and a strategy?

5) I mentioned a "workshop" for the Pathways committee and wonder if that is of interest to you? I would see it as a time to scrutinize the map, get in our minds who exactly owns what and which landowners have already been approached. And then come up with a strategy for working with landowners to ultimately secure permissions and ideally easements for the Riverwalk. We might see if CMLT would participate in this which I think would help to get their buy-in to the project and the process. I could "facilitate".

That's all for now,  
Julie

### **Rockport Select Board Presentation**

Geoff and Leni will present the Rockport Pathways Master Plan on December 7<sup>th</sup>.

### **Route 1 North - State Park to Lincolnville**

Anita looked for confirmation we wanted to be included in the discussion and it was approved.

### **Southern Gateway**

Maritime Farms- can we make a better landing spot to avoid the bus stop? Can we make an agreement with Maritime Farms to change the island? **Action - Robert** will draw up an idea.

Anita suggested a satellite scan to get a better idea.

Leni recommended tabling the remaining discussion until January.

Meeting adjourned at 9:15 pm.