

Grand History Trail

Gettysburg National Military Park Meeting

Minutes of Meeting on August 23, 2018
with personnel from the Gettysburg National Military Park (GNMP)

See attached list of attendees

Status of the GNMP Trail Study

- Mr. Zachary Bolitho, Acting Deputy Superintendent & Chief of Resources Management, hopes to have the GNMP Trail Study available for public comment by December 2018.
- The number of proposed trails in the study has been reduced from 23 to 9. The top priority is the Spangler Farm Trail since, it is currently funded. A connection to the Gettysburg Inner Loop Trail System is one of the 9 recommended trails.
- Allowing bicycles to use the existing walking path from the Visitor Center to Taneytown Road is part of the trail study and this action is waiting on approval from their national office. The “no bicycle” sign on the trail cannot come down until this happens and Mr. Bolitho believes this may not happen until next summer.
- One of the proposed trails would go from the Gettysburg Area Recreation Park to West Confederate Avenue. Creating a trail alongside the old Armory building has proven to be too problematic.
- Another proposed trail would go west from the Lutheran Seminary, across Reynolds Road, near Stone-Merideth Avenue, and across Willoughby Run to the Harman Farm property which was the Gettysburg Country Club.

Connection with the Gettysburg Inner Loop (GIL) Trail System

- In the long term, assuming the existing trail from the Visitor Center to Taneytown Road is opened for bicycle use, bicyclists could use that, then cross Taneytown Road at a marked pedestrian crossing, and travel up a new multi-use trail that is planned to replace the existing, paved trail, inside the fence on the west side of Taneytown Road, up to the Cyclorama parking lot. From the parking lot, bicyclists would need to travel along

Cyclorama Drive out to the bike paths on Steinwehr Avenue, unless GNMP is able to build a separated sidewalk/path that could be used by pedestrians and bicyclists.

- In the near term, the route presented by Susan Naugle, Borough Council President, is acceptable, according to Mr. Bolitho. This route would take riders from the Visitor Center over the walking path to the pedestrian crossing at Pleasanton Avenue. Riders would take this road to Hancock Avenue where they would travel north to Cyclorama Drive and take it out to Steinwehr Avenue.

Creating the Grand History Trail (GHT) Segment

- Both of the routes proposed for the GIL connection noted above are possibilities for the “start” of the GHT section heading out of Gettysburg.
- Another option is to travel on Pleasanton Avenue (as above), but turn south on Hancock, then west on United States Avenue, then south on Sickles Avenue, then west on Wheatfield Road, and straight onto Millerstown Road. Then the option exists to take Red Rock Road south or continue straight onto Pumping Station Road.
- Mr. Bolitho suggested the possibility of using West Confederate Avenue. He suggested using the GIL to get to the Gettysburg Area Recreation Park. Eventually the GNMP hopes to have a trail from the Rec Park up to West Confederate Avenue. When the road crosses Millerstown Road, riders could turn west on this road where again they could take Red Rock Road south or continue straight onto Pumping Station Road.
- The problem with West Confederate Avenue is that no separate sidepath or trail could be built, according to Mr. Bolitho.
- If a trail is built along Steinwehr Avenue/Emmitsburg Road, there is a 50 foot, PennDOT right-of-way that could potentially be used. Rather than create a separated fence/barrier between the road and the trail, Mr. Bolitho suggested moving the existing park fences within the PennDOT right-of-way and closer to the road and putting the trail inside the fence. This would provide the barrier between trail users and traffic on the road. However, we do not know what space would be needed to do this and it needs to be determined. Mr. Bolitho also noted that by moving the fences closer to the road, traffic speeds will likely reduce.

- Creating a trail sidepath alongside Emmitsburg Road is sometimes easier on the east side of the road and sometimes easier on the west side of the road. Trail crossings at appropriate locations may need to be considered.
- Allowing bicycles to access the Eisenhower Farm may be easiest if they enter from Pumping Station Road and then exit the back out to Emmitsburg Road.
- Mr. Bolitho prefers a maximum 8-foot wide trail or path, like that at the “blue bridge” in town, since it is less obtrusive than a wider trail.

Future Agreements

- We would need to agree on some standardized trail markings for the GHT. The park signage committee is always looking at ways to reduce the number of signs in the park so minimal signage is key.
- Trail maintenance agreements would need to be in place, but trails constructed within the park would need to be overseen by the park staff.
- If the park is willing to move fences, this would need to be spelled out in an agreement.
- Any work in the PennDOT right-of-way would need specified in an agreement with PennDOT and NPS.

Other Items

- Bob Thomas will provide Mr. Bolitho with a pdf copy of the CT&C Trail Feasibility Study from Gettysburg to Hannover, so he has a better understanding of the trail network and future links to the East. The report is available for download at HABPI’s website at <http://habpi.org/pages/Gettysburg%20Hanover%20Trail%20Final%20Report.pdf>

The meeting concluded at 10:00 a.m.