

Grand History Trail Feasibility Study Meeting with Frederick County Officials and Emmitsburg Town Officials

Meeting Date & Time: Wednesday, December 19, 2018; 3:00-4:15 p.m.

Meeting Location: Emmitsburg Town Offices

Next Meeting Date: Only as needed

I. MEETING ATTENDEES

Jim Gugel-Frederick County Planner
Joe Kelly-Frederick County Bike/Ped Coordinator
Zachary Gulden-Emmitsburg Town Planner
Cathy Willets-Emmitsburg Town Manager
Donald Briggs-Emmitsburg Mayor
Robert Thomas-Campbell Thomas & Co.
Douglas Maisey-Campbell Thomas & Co.
Dennis Hickethier-Project Officer from Healthy Adams Bicycle/Pedestrian, Inc.

II. MEETING PURPOSE

- a. Having requested and arranged the meeting, I (Dennis Hickethier) explained that after several years of trying to get money to fund a trail feasibility study, Healthy Adams Bicycle/Pedestrian, Inc. (HABPI) partnered with Gettysburg Area Recreation Authority (GARA) and obtained a grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) to pay for half the study and then obtained other grants and donations to match the DCNR grant. I explained how this trail segment will be part of the Grand History Trail (GHT) and spoke about the GHT concept, using handouts. The purpose of the meeting, as I stated, was (1) to ensure that what we planned for a trail was in alignment with the desires of the town of Emmitsburg and any trail plans of Frederick County, (2) to explain what had been done on the trail study, and (3) to learn what officials from Emmitsburg and Frederick County were planning. I explained that the firm of Campbell Thomas & Co. (CTC) had been selected to conduct the study and introduced Robert Thomas and Douglas Maisey.

III. MEETING DISCUSSION

- a. Bob and Doug passed out copies of an 11x17 inch map which showed markings for different roads being considered for side paths or road markings.
- b. Bob then explained the work that had been done on the study and possible routes that were being evaluated. He especially focused on alternate routes into Maryland and asked what trail activities were happening in Frederick County.
- c. Jim Gugel explained the trail activities in Frederick County. He mentioned that the county bike plan had been updated from the 1999 version to the Frederick County Bikeways and Trails Plan, dated July 2018. It is available as a PDF on their website at-
<https://www.frederickcountymd.gov/DocumentCenter/View/300816/Bikeways-and-Trail-Plans-2018>.
- d. They (Frederick County) are considering a variety of options to include “roadside” paths and off-road trails on old railroad beds. There are no plans for off-road trails north of Thurmont at this time. The Hagerstown & Frederick Trolley Trail (HFTT) exists in Thurmont and may possibly be extended (go to <https://www.hftrolley.org/> for more information). One problem is that the railroad easements have been transferred back to adjacent land owners. A roadside trail on Kellbaugh Road is possible and it parallels route 15 on the west side, from Thurmont to the south end of Mount Saint Mary’s University (MSMU).
- e. North of MSMU may require use of Business 15/South Seton Avenue.
- f. The town is also interested in a possible trail along Tom’s Creek.
- g. Mayor Briggs wants the trail to come into Emmitsburg for obvious economic reasons. The town is also trying to work with MSMU to establish a trail between town and the MSMU campus.
- h. There was a short discussion about using rights-of-way along roadways and how that may differ between PA and MD.
- i. Joe Kelly said he would prefer having the trail come into town from Tract Road rather than Irishtown Road. These are county roads in MD. He feels that Irishtown is too hilly and not conducive to bicycling.
- j. There was mention of a “trail with rail” along the Walkersville Southern Railroad (<http://wsrr.org/ws/>) that goes from Walkersville, south toward Frederick. Research conducted after the meeting found the following statement at <https://envisionfrederickcounty.org/support-the-monocacy-crossing-trail-a-mixed-use-path-connecting-our-city-and-countryside/>, “In keeping with our mission, the Frederick Bicycle Coalition has identified a real need for a safe pathway for cyclists and pedestrians who wish to link the City of Frederick to

points north. Our proposed solution is what we call the **Monocacy Crossing Trail.**”

- k. Joe mentioned the Frederick Bicycle Coalition and Frederick Bicycle Club and said he will probably be establishing an advisory committee to examine and coordinate development of trails.
- l. There was mention that a top trail priority for the county was connecting Thurmont with the Catoctin Mountain Park???
- m. A goal for the county is to have one trail in planning, one in design, and one in construction at all times.
- n. The county has used TAP funds previously, but the new federal funding is not as generous.
- o. Jim said that the county public works office must review all trail plans.
- p. Jim talked about resistance from land owners and stated the need to move slowly and be transparent with trail plans. He did not know of any plans for growth/development in the area where the GHT trail might go.
- q. Jim said that his office could make arrangements for CTC to look at GIS layers for Frederick County, now that he understood CTC was working for a government entity (GARA) and not a non-profit.

IV. FURTHER MEETINGS

- a. Jim said that he probably would not be attending future meetings since Joe Kelly was now working as the new bike/ped coordinator and could handle that function. Jim would still be available as needed.
- b. The trail study team agreed to keep the MD officials apprised of our study progress and decisions and would check back as appropriate.

These minutes were prepared and submitted by Dennis Hickethier, Project Officer, with input from CT&C.

