

Grand History Trail Feasibility Study for Adams County

Meeting to Discuss Landowner Support & Opposition

Minutes, by Dennis Hicketier, of meeting held on December 11, 2019,

Attendees:

Dennis Hicketier	HABPI, Project Officer
James (Jim) Paddock	Cumberland Township Supervisor
Paul Kellett	Freedom Township Supervisor
Rich Luquette	Liberty Township Representative
Sarah Kipp	Land Conservancy Representative

Meeting location and time:

Conference room in the Gettysburg Heritage Center, 297 Steinwehr Avenue, starting at 3:30 p.m.

Meeting purpose and structure:

Jim, Paul, and I had met previously with Tim Shields to discuss a possible trail easement on Mr. Shield's property near Sachs Covered Bridge. During that time, we also discussed the possibility of obtaining easements from neighboring landowners. There have been a couple discussions since then about which landowners may or may not allow the trail on their property, since Mr. Paddock and Mr. Kellett know many of the property owners in the study area and have spoken to some about the trail. None of this information has been recorded so this meeting was intended to review what is known about the landowners and to record the information.

I paid the county, using funds from Healthy Adams Bicycle/Pedestrian, Inc. (HABPI), for a 3x4 foot map of the study area showing all the land parcels and owners. This map was on a table where we sat. The county also provided a PDF file of the map. I opened this file on my laptop and connected it to a large-screen television in the meeting room. I was able to zoom in and out on the map and move it around so we could easily view the details of the map.

My intent was to go down a road, starting with Red Rock, and review each land parcel, first on one side of the road, and then the other side, discussing what we knew about the landowners and their support or opposition to a trail easement. It was quickly evident that this was not the most efficient use of our time. Instead, we discussed the best possible routes for the trail, including on private land, and the attitudes of the landowners along these routes. Below is a summary of our discussions.

Using property owned by Tim Shields and the National Park Service:

1. To understand this better, print the map file that accompanies this document, as I will refer to it.
2. Mr. Shields has tentatively agreed to provide trail easements across a couple of his land parcels.
3. From Sachs Covered Bridge, the trail would travel along the southeast border of the parcel labeled the "Gettysburg Nature Alliance." This is owned by Tim Shields.
4. The trail would then need to cross onto the National Park Service property and travel along the northwest border of this property until it crosses onto another property owned by Tim Shields.
5. Here the trail would travel southeast until reaching Marsh Creek.
6. The trail would continue following Marsh Creek until reaching the southern border of the Shield's property. Here it would turn west, following the parcel border.
7. After crossing onto an adjacent property owned by Mr. Shields, the trail would turn south and connect with his private driveway. This would take the trail out to Red Rock Road.
8. It should be noted that Mr. Shields may desire to locate the trail at a different location on his property, or the terrain may cause the trail to change locations.

Going south from Red Rock Road: Several options were discussed.

1. Traveling south and/or west, on or along Red Rock Road and turning onto Shriver Road and then Cunningham Road, traveling to Pumping Station.
2. Continuing along Red Rock Road until intersecting with Pumping Station Road and turning south.
3. Continuing along Red Rock Road, crossing Pumping Station Road, and continuing onto Camp Gettysburg Road.

Following Red Rock Road and Turning onto Shriver Road:

1. Obtaining easements along Red Rock Road would be difficult.
2. Once on Shriver Road, the Sentz property is on the southwest side of the road and the landowner has already expressed opposition to the trail.
3. The landowner on the northeast side of Shriver might consider an easement but the terrain and wetlands might not allow this.
4. Without the cooperation of Sentz, it would be best to work with landowners on the east side of Shriver. According to Jim and Sarah, the Calhoun and Tempel property owners would be supportive and maybe Simon.
5. Nothing concrete was known about the position of other owners along the east side of Shriver.
6. The owners of the Mathews property on the west side of Shriver would provide an easement but that would not help if neighbors do not agree.

Following Cunningham Road to Pumping Station:

1. The "Future Stake" property is owned by Tim Shields but there are buildings close to the road on the south side.
2. No one had information about the King property on the north side.
3. Baddick on the south side, has not returned calls from Jim.
4. Hagarman on the south side is not likely to support the trail but ownership could change as he ages.
5. Nothing was known about the Style, Gulden, and Crawford owners.
6. The Sharrah property has not been developed and Mr. Sharrah operates a design firm in Gettysburg.

Continuing along Red Rock Road until intersecting with Pumping Station Road and turning south:

1. Staying on the north side of the road is difficult since Siperko has a house near the road. If the Wells owner could be persuaded, the trail could go from the Shields property across the Wells property and onto the Garnett or English property and onto the Shrawder property near the road.
2. Going on the south side of Red Rock is not likely with the opposition from the Sentz family. The Swomley property, south of the road, has a house close to the road and that is also a problem.

Continuing along Red Rock Road, crossing Pumping Station Road, and continuing onto Camp Gettysburg Road: The same items above apply here. I will address Camp Gettysburg Road separately.

Continuing south on Pumping Station (PS) Road, from the intersection with Red Rock Road:

1. On the southeast side of PS, houses on the Swomley and Yohe properties are too close to the road to likely get a favorable response from the landowners.
2. The current Hagarman landowner is thought to oppose a trail easement.
3. There are no homes or buildings close to road on the northwest side of PS. Nothing is known about how the Sutton, Dodson, and Richmond landowners may feel about the trail.
4. The Bushy landowner may be persuaded to SELL an easement along the road and we may have a contact to help us negotiate with Nancy Bushy. However, the property is in the land conservancy program and as Sarah stated; the landowner, the Land Conservancy, and the federal programs providing funds for the conservancy, would all need to approve this easement so that would be a major undertaking.
5. Going south past Bullfrog road, there are fewer properties on the west side of PS. The large Trider property, site of the former Middle Creek Bible and Conference Center, may get a

positive response from the landowner. One reason is that it may become an event center and could possibly provide lodging for trail users.

6. Easements would also be needed from landowners-Holler, Johnston, and Gornicki to get to Middle Creek Road. Mrs. Johnston is a Waybright from Mason-Dixon farms. There is a “ducks unlimited pond” on the Johnston property.

Continuing south on Pumping Station (PS) Road, from the intersection with Cunningham

Road: Same as above but disregard item #1.

Cunningham Road to Bullfrog Road, across private land:

1. If the trail crossed Cunningham onto the Future Stake property, we may get an easement from Tim Shields to cross over to the Moose landowners. If they agreed to an easement, we then need to cross the Johnston property to get to Bullfrog.
2. After traveling southeast, a short distance along Bullfrog, it would be good to enter onto the Oliver or Lowenthal property.

Bullfrog Road to Middle Creek Road, across private land:

1. Traveling southeast on Bullfrog, easements would be needed on the Harner or Peterson Farm properties. Some felt that the younger Dean Harner may agree to this but his mother probably would not.
2. The trail would need to follow Middle Creek south/southwest, possibly using the Route 15 south right-of-way (ROW).
3. To get to the Maryland border, the trail may need an easement along the Hobb property. The land was preserved when Hobbs purchased it.
4. This option would work better if North Seton Avenue could be extended north and if the town of Emmitsburg and Frederick County preferred this entry point to Irishtown or Tract roads. There are some obstacles for bicyclists and walkers along North Seton Avenue, leading into Emmitsburg.

Bullfrog Road to Middle Creek Road, across the northwest border of the Gordon property:

1. From the Johnston property, the trail could cross Bullfrog onto the Gordon property and travel southwest on the “backside” of the property.
2. Even if Gordon would allow this, we would need approval for the trail to cross the back of the Shriver and Frost properties, and two streams would need to be crossed. As Jim and Paul have stated previously, they don’t think these property owners would agree, even with this new trail location.
3. Another problem with this route is that the trail would need to travel farther along Middle Creek Road.

Camp Gettysburg Road to Bingham Road to McGlaughlin Road:

1. Paul likes the idea of going down Camp Gettysburg to Dawn to McGlaughlin Road.
2. Another alternative Paul mentioned again is to go west on Bigham, then come back/east on Camp Gettysburg, and go on Dawn to McGlaughlin.
3. We did not discuss the properties along these roads in any detail as I feel the roads take the trail too far west.

Other considerations and observations discussed:

1. I asked how we can better persuade property owners to consider an easement. I suggested we develop materials to show property owners our vision for the trail, complete with sample video and photos. I asked those at the meeting to think about what would help them when they talk to landowners about the trail.
2. Paul said that information about the positive impact on property values near trails might be helpful.
3. Paul said he was emphasizing to residents that development of the trail may keep other housing development away. I actually think that building trails may attract some development but did not voice that opinion.