

# Grand History Trail Feasibility Study in Adams County

## Public Workshop #1

Meeting Date & Time: Tuesday, May 14, 2019; 5:30-7:00 p.m.

Next Meeting Date: To be decided

### I. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS -

- A. Dennis Hicketier, HAPBI, welcomed the community to the first public workshop for the Grand History Trail Feasibility Study in Adams County. He briefly went over housekeeping and thanked the project sponsors for their generosity.
- B. Dennis Introduced the project, noting the benefits trails can bring to a community and its citizens. He also explained the regional significance of this trail being part of the “Grand History Trail” and the process for beginning this Feasibility Study before introducing the project consulting team at Campbell Thomas & Co.
- C. Robert P. Thomas, CT&C, introduced the consulting team at Campbell Thomas & Co. and Tim Wilson from BCM Engineers. He asked community attendees to quickly go around and introduce themselves.

### II. POWERPOINT PRESENTATION

- A. Bob Thomas explained the research and analysis work that has already taken place for the study. In addition to field research and observation, there have been several meetings with the Project Steering Committee, Township Supervisors, City of Emmitsburg, and Gettysburg National Military Park.
- B. Bob went over the Public Workshop Agenda, noting that the PowerPoint presentation will be followed by a breakout group work session before reporting back to the larger group.
- C. After going through the project scope and goals for the study, two individuals from Table 3 asked some initial questions:

#### **Question 1: How much maintenance of the trail would cost?**

-Bob noted once some trail alternatives are determined, the team will look to develop an opinion of probable cost. As part of the feasibility study, the team

will also include recommendations for maintenance and management.

**Question 2: Have you thought about the negative impact this trail will have on local wildlife?**

- Bob explained that all trail studies are required to include a PNDI search as part of the process to ensure that wildlife requirements/concerns are met.
  
- D. Bob Thomas continued with an overview of the history of the Trail, as well as examples of what the trail study is looking to accomplish, and a description of the regionally significant trail connections that will link to the Grand History Trail. In particular, the September 11th National Memorial Trail will look to connect through Gettysburg Borough.
  
- E. Maps of the study corridor, showing the routes that have been investigated by the consulting team, had been distributed at the beginning of the meeting. Bob Thomas went over routes through a series of four photo tours as part of the presentation. As part of this photo tour of the corridors, Bob discussed the research and analysis that had taken place and identified potential opportunities, areas of concern, and recommendations that may be made as part of the study.

**III. WORKSHOP BREAKOUT SESSIONS**

- A. Following the presentation, Bob Thomas went over the format for the workshop session:
  - Six tables of approximately eight community members each were equipped with large study area maps, markers, and a questionnaire for each person. Consultants and Steering Committee team members were available to answer any direct questions during this process.
  - The questionnaire was used to help guide marking the table maps with recommended destinations, potential trail routes/alignments, areas of concerns, or any additional comments.
  - Participants were instructed to record any additional comments on the back of the sign-in sheets, which were collected by team members following the meeting.

**IV. REPORTING TO THE LARGER GROUP**

- A. Following the workshop breakout sessions, individuals from each of the six tables were asked to report back on the information that had been gathered.

Feedback from the tables were as follows:

- **Table 1:** Recommendations were made to look at the connection along Sedgwick Ave/Confederate Ave. from GNMP to Wheatfield Rd./Millerstown Rd., then Millerstown Rd. to Eisenhower Farm, to the Sachs Covered Bridge. If possible, a connection along Marsh Creek would be nice. Table 1 also noted that the trails within GNMP are only open to walkers, although bicycles and horses are actually accommodated on certain trails.
- **Table 2:** Table 2 identified themselves as residents of the Red-Rock Rd./ Schreiver Rd. area. They have no interest in a trail on or off road through their community. Much of the area along Schreiver Rd. is farmed and they would not like to see bicyclists directed down their roads.
- **Table 3:** Table 3 also identified themselves as Freedom Township residents from the Red-Rock Rd., Schreiver Rd., and Cunningham Rd. area. They agreed that the trail should not go through their community on Marsh Creek or on any of their local roads and had concerns about the wildlife in the area. Table 3 believes a trail would bring trash, noise, and unwanted bicyclists.
- Residents at this table also expressed anger and disappointment for not being notified about the public workshop and asked why they had not received noticed in their mailbox or seen signs along the roads?
- Dennis Hickethier apologized that residents didn't hear about the meeting directly and explained that two notices that were put in the Gettysburg Times preceding the meeting and information was posted on GARA, County, and Township webpages/Facebook. It was also distributed to numerous list-serves and posted on the GARA notice board. Paul Kellett, Freedom Township Supervisor, explained that the Township made a sincere effort to get the word out to the public and that they by no means wanted to exclude anyone from attending. It was also noted that everyone who signed-in to this meeting with an e-mail address will be included in a distribution list for future public meetings.
- **Table 4:** Table 4 focused on areas of most interest along the trail and definitely believe that the Sachs Covered Bridge and Eisenhower Bridge are good destinations. They agreed that a connection to W. Confederate Ave would also make sense. The viewpoint at Bullfrog Rd. / Pumping Station Rd. should also be included, but the current intersection in that location is dangerous and needs improvement.
- **Table 5:** Table 5 expressed some concerns about noise and that local residents would like to keep the roadways quiet. It was noted that the best alternative would be a sidepath along Pumping Station Rd., as it does not impact as many

local residents. One resident at table 5 asked that Schreiber Rd. not be listed as a bike route/trail on any distributed materials and they “like it how it is”.

- **Table 6:** Tim Shields at table 6 noted many of the health and community related benefits associated with a future trail through the community. Table 6 agreed that a connection to a learning orchard and future museum on the Shields property would help to promote the history of the area and teach residents/visitors about the importance of the environment and preserving critical habitat. Tim Shields spoke about the trash concerns that already exist at the Sachs Covered Bridge but believes that the bicycling/walking community are generally respectful of the area. Tim believes there is a great benefit in bringing respectful bicyclists/trail users to the area.
- Table 6 believes that Marsh Creek would be a nice resource to connect, but if not, Pumping Station Rd. could also work. Pumping Station Rd. is too dangerous to bike/walk today, so if it were used, it would have to include a separated sidepath.

## V. ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/QUESTIONS

### **Question 1: How do you typically handle road crossings for the trail? Do trail users/automobiles have the right-of-way?**

- Bob noted that State vehicle code states that pedestrians/bicyclists have the right-of-way, but all intersections are looked at carefully with appropriate warning signage to ensure all crossings are done safely.
- Dennis H. added that many trails will have trail signage that directs trail users to stop and cross when the roadway is clear.

### **Question/Comment 2: We have concerns about the Sachs Covered Bridge and the potential issues for fires being set?**

- Tim Shields, a property owner adjacent to the bridge noted that there have been loitering/trash issues in the past and he was able to have a light installed in the bridge. This has greatly reduced the concerns that he had for the area. Tim believes that if the community wants to address areas of concern on the trail it can be improved through a joint effort.

### **Question 3: As residents, how can we be assured that Eminent Domain won't push this trail through our properties?**

- Paul Kellett stated that it has never been the Township's policy to utilize Eminent Domain. From the beginning of this trail study, it was always recognized that Eminent Domain will not be used in any way to push a trail on to anyone's property in the community. He let the residents expressing concerns know that “their concerns have been heard” and there will be no Eminent Domain for the Trail while he is Township Supervisor.

- Bob Thomas noted that this policy applies to the entire trail, not just one Township.

**Question 4: Could you explain some of the potential funding sources that could be used for future trail development?**

- Bob Thomas mentioned that the Feasibility Study will identify specific funding sources that may be relevant to the development of the Grand History Trail. Key Trail funding sources often include:
  - o State Funding: DCNR-C2P2, DCED-GTRP, and DCED-Multimodal Grants
  - o Federal Funding: BUILD Grants
  - o Foundations: William Penn Foundation and local conservancies.
  - o Local Funds/Donations.

**VI. NEXT STEPS/OPEN DISCUSSION**

Following question, meeting attendees were thanked for their input and interest in the trail. The meeting concluded just after 7:00pm.

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

