

Groton Greenway Committee

March 5, 2012 Meeting Minutes

Location: Groton Town Hall, 173 Main Street, Groton, MA
Time: 7:00 PM
Members Present: Carol Coutrier, Fran Stanley, Marion Stoddart
Other Attendees: Michael Roberts (chair of the Historic Commission and chair of Sustainability Commission), Peter Carson (Nashoba Paddlers)

Fitch's Bridge

Greenway members benefited from Michael Roberts' expertise as they discussed options for restoring or replacing Fitch's Bridge. Michael explained that Department of Interior standards should be followed. If the bridge is restored, that work should be done up to DOI standards. However, in instances where there is neither a prudent nor feasible preservation option, then mitigation should be undertaken if the bridge is to be dismantled and destroyed. In this instance, careful documentation of the industrial design of this historic structure would be made by a consultant and eventually forwarded to the federal DOI engineering files. Documentation would take the form of measured drawings and photographs.

If residents approve the project, then an engineering firm would be hired. The engineer would hire a consultant as approved by the Historic Commission. The work product of the consultant would also be reviewed and approved by the Historic Commission. Therefore, the budget for replacement of the bridge would need to include the costs of this mitigation of the loss of the historic bridge.

The group discussed the fact that a supportive constituency may be limited with respect to funding restoration of the historic bridge. Greenway members want to give residents a chance to restore the river crossing at Fitch's Bridge and so want to bring a warrant article for local funding of the project before Town Meeting.

Discussion turned to the need to inform and educate Groton groups and boards about the upcoming chance to replace Fitch's Bridge. A meeting with the Town Manager will be set up for Marion and Fran to attend. The Conservation Commission, the Groton Water Commission, the West Groton Water Department, and possibly also the Fire Chief, Police Chief and the Board of Health are Town entities that the Greenway should approach to discuss plans for the bridge. The group also discussed proper venue for a request for increased warning signage to be placed around Fitch's Bridge to deter use of the bridge.

River Festival

Pete Carson presented detailed plans for a pared down 2012 River Festival to be held on June 23 at Petapawag Place. Michael Roberts will incorporate sustainability into the festival and also provide a talk at the Watershed offices that will serve to inaugurate Founders Day in Groton. An old banner can be updated and hung over Main Street to help advertise the event. Tent rental is important to allow the festival to proceed in the event of rain. The group discussed volunteer roles and will probably meet next Wednesday as coordinated by Pete.

Minutes

Carol Coutrier moved to accept February 7, 2011 minutes as amended, Marion Stoddart seconded, motion carried 3:0.

Membership

Adam Burnett works for the Army Core of Engineers and has served on the Friends of Fitch's Bridge group. Greenway members discussed how his experience and professional expertise may be very helpful to the Greenway as it seeks to restore the bridge connection at Fitch's Bridge.

Mraion Stoddart move to support the nomination of Adam Burnett to the Greenway, Carol Coutrier seconded, motion carried 3:0.

Minutes by Fran Stanley.