

Groton Greenway Committee
Meeting Minutes

Date: August 21, 2012
Location: Town Hall, 1st Floor Meeting Room, 173 Main Street, Groton, MA
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Members Present: Adam Burnett, Carol Coutrier, Fran Stanley, Marion Stoddart

Other Attendees: Peter Carson, Russ Murray, Celia Silinonte

Fitch's Bridge discussion. Adam Burnett briefed the gathering on the results of the weathering steel bridge research that he has conducted. He provided three handouts from the Excel Bridge Manufacturing Co. regarding bridges constructed from weathering steel. The handouts concerned bridge types, cost and deck types. Bridge manufacturers such as Excel and Acro bridge provide pre-engineered bridges that might be delivered ready to install for \$100,000 to \$120,000. Adam Burnett suggested that the ends of the bridge might rest on a steel plate placed over any uneven portion of the granite abutment (due to a chip or crack in the granite).

The bridge type would be specified and might copy the existing Fitch's Bridge design – double Warren – and loads, length and width noted. While bridge duration may be guaranteed for fifty years, extended usefulness could be expected if 2-3% additional monies were spent on zinc plating and or galvanizing of the steel. Equestrian use and ease of maintenance might recommend the use of spruce wood for bridge decking rather than a steel product.

The committee needs to ensure that design and installation of the new bridge results in a crossing that can withstand flood events. In 2010, Nashua at flood stage measured 17 feet at the narrow channel located at the Pepperell Dam. At that time, water did not touch the bottom girder of Fitch's Bridge. Marion Stoddart shared a story she had heard stating that a large flood in 1936 did not impede Fitch's Bridge crossings but did render all the other existing bridges impassable.

The group discussed a general plan to seek town budget advice and warrant scheduling advice from the Town Manager on August 27, 2012.

River Festival Discusstion. Expected bills not yet received from the River Festival include tent rental (\$215) and bus driver tip (\$100), both bills to be submitted by the Carsons. Katherine Bell and Russ Murray declined to be reimbursed for their respective out of pocket expenses for art supplies and drinking water. Pam Gilfillan, who staffed the NRWA table send an e-mail stating that she thought the festival was a success and introduced a number of new people to the Nashua River.

The group discussed the river festival and plan to hold a meeting in three to four months to see if there is enough volunteer interest to hold a 2013 River Festival. Thank you letters and notices to sponsors and exhibitors were planned. The cash from the donation jar was counted and Fran Stanley will deposit the cash in to the Town's Greenway fund (total amount \$313.26).

The children's yoga demonstration helped to kick off the day as did John Wiesner's children's singing group. There were 125 people at the festival by noon and a little over 500 in total. Face painting and juggling were seen as cheery and engaging activities. Many other exhibitors received positive feedback too. Generator power requirements will need to be planned better in the future. The police detail officer offered his opinion that for a future year he would recommend two officers and scheduling for a longer period of time. The group observed that the canoe race organized by a different group caused parking and traffic issues as the reserved handicapped parking spaces for the river festival kept be encroached by those paddlers wanting to park close to the river. The group noted that food quality and presentation was excellent but that the cost was relatively high.

Next meeting: Monday, August 27 at 8 a.m. at the Town Hall in the Town Manager's office.

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m. Minutes by Fran Stanley.