

Groton Greenway Committee
Meeting Minutes

Date: November 16, 2012
Location: Town Hall, 1st Floor Conference Room, 173 Main Street, Groton, MA
Time: 8:30 a.m.
Members Present: Carol Coutrier, Fran Stanley, Marion Stoddart, Adam Burnett
Other Attendee: Mark Haddad (Town Manager)

David Manugian's update on the November 15 engineering contractor's kick off meeting was read into the record. David Manugian's meeting highlights were:

1. Due to the schedule the consultant [Fay, Spofford & Thorndike (FST)] said we needed to tie down a bridge design more or less immediately. We tentatively chose a ten foot wide, arch bridge that can accommodate pedestrians, equestrians, and bicyclists and has a wood deck. We hoped that this could be done for an overall construction budget of \$650,000 or less (excluding construction engineering). If more, we may want to pare back. If less, we will have some items to add into the contract such as an improved flooring and a "portal" to the bridge.
2. Based on the design being rather set, Mark suggested that the Greenway Committee and I represent the Town for this project. Our role will be getting the word out to the residents about the project and getting support for town meeting. The consultant recommended a tentative public information meeting on or around December 18th so this could be an opportunity. Jack Petropoulos has been appointed the Selectmen liaison and would like to be involved as well. So the Fitch's Bridge Design Committee would be Fran, you, Carol, Adam, David, Jack, and me as chair.

Fran added more detail on contractor kick off meeting including the concept of using add/alternates in the bidding process to designate a specification minimum but allow for a construction contractor to offer a better alternative. For example the wood decking and curb rail may be wood or an alternative product sometimes used on DCR bridges called lpe. The alternative is more expensive but possibly more durable and thus offering lower long term maintenance. Certain FST offers to design a portal with kiosk, hard pack trail, wooden fencing near river banks may be designed but not necessarily constructed with the replacement bridge project. Eagle scout projects, volunteer efforts, future DCR trail grants, DPW assistance may help with improving area in right of way near the bridge. Such extras are outside the delivery of a safe durable, low cost replacement bridge and may be deferred to a future effort.

FST design of a bridge allowing a water pipe and shut off valves is another element that may be designed now, bid out as an add/alternate and perhaps not built in the main construction effort of demo, stabilize and bridge replacement.

Adam noted that arriving at the true and full cost of the demolition and stabilization of the abutments is important so that townspeople can see how much extra they would have to spend to obtain a replacement bridge.

Coordinating permitting timelines with the required public works, prevailing wage bidding process was a significant focus of the kick off meeting as well.

Fran asked individual Greenway members to submit lists of items to be addressed to David Manugian so that he might act as a clearinghouse for communications with the contractor. Adam has questions of an engineering nature. Fran has collection of items raised a prior Greenway meetings. Carol is focusing on public outreach and how to communicate clearly and effectively in that arena. Marion has a variety of questions and will send some questions raised in today's meeting along to David Manugian's attention.

Following much discussion on role of Greenway to invite public input, support the FST effort, encourage involvement in the remaining design decisions/work outside of the bridge itself, the members voted to affirm David Manugian's promotion to head of the Fitch's Bridge Design Committee team.

Marion Stoddart moved. Carol Coutrier seconded and motion carried 4:0 with David Pitkin not voting due to absence.

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Greenway members do not yet know how the January 26 special town meeting warrant article will be worded. Members discussed whether local ironmonger and artist Ray Ciemney might removed the non structural rosettes from the old bridge to re-use as a part of a future kiosk. Adam will follow up on this matter.

The Greenway might explore idea of archival photo made of the existing bridge with David Manugian and how this item might be paid for with private donations. Marion Stoddart will check with Judy Lorimer to find out the status of money her horse people collected years ago to help with bridge construction, which, if available, could, if we chose, be used for that purpose.

Greenway members flagged the public road question as a matter to be resolved. Does DOT require review if it is a public road that leads to bridge.

Tiffany Doggett, rowing coach at Groton School, asked Fran whether construction work on the bridge will interfere with her school's use of the river. Marion will follow up with Tiffany.

The Greenway discussed how to muster a 2/3 vote for bridge replacement at Town Meeting and came up with a plan which we will discuss at our next meeting. Carol will work on wording for an outreach postcard. This message could be repeated electronically for those townspeople who have migrated over to those communication forms.

Mark Haddad stopped by the Greenway meeting and the group discussed bridge design.

Marion Stoddart moved to approve the draft minutes from June 6, 2012 to November 1, 2012 with noted amendments to the November 1st draft. Carol Coutrier seconded and motion carried 4:0 with David Pitkin not voting due to absence.

Next meeting planned for November 26, 2012.

Meeting adjourned at 12 noon. Minutes by Fran Stanley.