

Minutes
Rail Trail Advisory Committee Meeting
February 20, 2020

Attendees:

RTAC Members: Paul McNulty, Nancy McNulty, Joe Anthony, Scott Bornstein, Mark Jones, Larry Perreault, Lori Dupont, Mathew Duggan. Not in attendance Charley Lincicum

Others: Tara Murphy, Holy Irgens, Sarah Bornstein, T.R. Ramsdell, Georgia Pendergast

New Business

Comments from the public and RTAC

Matt suggested a group photo of our committee members to run in local paper.

RTAC noted Earth Day cleanup to be Saturday April 18 – more on this at next meeting.

Daisy Girl Scout Troup- Possible projects- Holy Irgens

RTAC welcomed Holly Irgen's Daisies' Girl Scout Troop from Great Oak to get feedback regarding their plan for a flower garden –possible location to be Pine Street crossing. Nancy noted Pine Street barrel ok for plantings. Nancy and Lori to help. All approved purchase of barrels if needed (under \$200), and Paul to follow up with number of barrels.

RTN Walk Home for Hunger- request for June 14 from 8:00 am to 12:00

Paul noted RTN Walk Home for Hunger 6/14, 8:00 am -12:00 pm, Hobart Lot North. RTAC approved.

Current /Recent Business

Chocolate Walk Recap

Nancy noted that due to the very cold weather, we did not have much of a turnout- 20 total. Putnam Pantry was thanked for their donated chocolates. RTAC agreed that we should do this again in 2021.

Review Plans area around MM 3.6

Joe provided a plan for review around MM 3.6. Paul and Joe informed RTAC that Paul Krisko of JC Grounds has evaluated the area. RTAC agreed best approach will be to hire out for trench cleanouts/ tree removal. After initial trench clearing work is done, Paul suggested we learn more and potentially get quotes for a more work if needed. Joe to scope out /measure for stone dust quantity and cost of project. Georgia to assist with conservation commission reviews. More will be covered at our March meeting.

Joe also mentioned that he is evaluating/documenting other areas of the trail that might need surface repairs. We can review and build into our longer term and budgets.

Review plans and costs to replace current 8 year old mower.

Paul reviewed mower plans (attached) for Charlie and Bob as they could not attend. Brief RTAC discussion for mower continued noting the sad state of the current mower. Group was more comfortable with the lower prices alternative (essentially the 2020 version of our current mower) Paul motioned for purchase of new mower for not more than \$5,400, Mark second and all approved for the X390-48A. Better storage for new mower discussion to

continue - Georgia to research project shed build, possible location to be near DPW Hobart Lot area Electric Division.

Review Plans for addressing the Maple St. Church cut-through

Paul addressed the new landscaping project for cut-through issue at Maple Street Church and confirmed a potential project to entail a newly landscaped footpath for beautifying area as well redirecting foot traffic away from the new site. RTAC confirmed footprints on the sidewalk will work. RTAC agreed that Paul should meet with the Maple St Church (Dick Crotts) to discuss new landscaping project (more attached). Paul confirmed church is open to supporting the work financially.

Related, Paul met with DTAC to review the lack of 'Pedestrian Crossing' signs for at the nearby crosswalk. DTAC agreed to add signs.

Update on northwest extension project

Georgia reviewed update for Aaron as he could not attend. \$100,000 (from MA state budget) has been allocated for detailed design of the Beaver Brook bridge crossing. Steve King to work on bridge design contract. Further discussion to come.

Friends of Danvers Rail Trail Finance Update

Mile marker fund raising- response and USPS mailing update

Larry noted 2 new sponsors; Camilla Tea on Locust Street, and a Danvers family. 48% renewed, another mailing to follow an e-mail blast. Paul expressed thank yous to various sponsors.

501c3 Finance update

Larry noted 501c3 operating budget to be \$33,160. Strategic/Extension balance is \$29,000.39.

SwampWalk funds @ \$2053.00 will be transferred to a separate FDRT SwampWalk account to be administered by the FDRT. These funds are to be used for the maintenance of the SwampWalk by SwampWalk volunteers.

Larry met with Mike Grandmason our 3rd party accountant, who will submit required Federal and MA tax returns for the 501c3.

Approval of minutes from January 23, 2020

Paul motioned, and all approved minutes.

Set next meeting – March 19, 2020

All approved next meeting date.

Friends of the Danvers Rail Trail - Tractor/Mower Replacement Recommendations

Trail grooming tasks

- Mow edges varying in width from 1 to 15 feet along about 5 miles of trail (10 miles round trip).
- Haul debris, materials, and tools.

Current mower status

- Current riding mower is a John Deere X310 purchased in 2012. It cost \$3,600.
- After 8 years of use, the mower is now increasingly in need of repairs, increasing costs and reducing time on the trail. 2019 maintenance were about \$700. Time off the trail about 4 weeks.
- If we keep the current mower, it will need four new tires, a major tune-up, and likely a new mowing deck costing about \$1,500 in 2020. Based on 2019 repairs, we expect about \$400-\$500 per year for further repairs.

New mower requirements

- Ideally this new mower will have the same or wider cutting width, can operate longer (greater than 3-gallon tank), can be easily adjusted for varying trail conditions, has a higher speed, can tow our trailer.
- As the with the current mower, it should be quick to learn and safe/easy/comfortable to operate.
- Three to four-year parts and labor warranty. Easy to maintain.

Recommended new mower

- We reviewed Consumer Reports riding lawn mower ratings and John Deere led in all categories. Of the top five rated mowers all were John Deere, followed by Husqvarna (evaluated in further detail below).
- To best meet the requirements above, we recommend going to the 500 series John Deere, specifically the 570-48A. This is a heavier duty machine with a larger engine, larger fuel tank, with improved and familiar operator controls. This includes 4-year parts and labor maintenance. Reliability is predicted to be good based on CR and our own experience. Alternative would be the lower priced X390-48A.
 - We've been happy with the John Deere. It has performed well for the first 8 years we owned it
 - Quotes were secured from two nearby dealers – all the same (driven by John Deere national).
- Travis Reardon (Danvers Forestry) made similar comments on mower requirements and the benefits of a John Deere
- **Optionally** we suggest a [DR Tow Behind Field and Brush Mower PRO XL44T](#) to more safely trim embankments (monthly). And possibly a [DR Grader](#) to repair the trail surface. More info attached.
- Costs:
 - **Priority 1: New Mower**
 - **John Deere 570-48A with 4-year warranty \$6,400.**
 - **Lower cost alternative is a John Deere X390 48A (updated version of our current mower standard with hydraulic lift deck) for \$5,400**
 - Optional 1: DR Tow Behind Pro-XL44T mower \$3,400
 - Optional 2: DR Tow Behind Power Grader \$700



Disposition of current mower

- We recommend trading in or selling the current mower. Rough estimate via eBay \$500.

Ownership, storage and maintenance

- **Ownership** The new mower will replace the current mower and continue to be owned by the Town.
- **Storage:** Danvers Grounds and Forestry will store this mower, as done with the current mower.
- **Maintenance:** Mower maintenance will continue to be done RTAC volunteers. During the maintenance period, major repairs will be done by Rosenkranz, and smaller repairs by RTAC volunteers. Travis will continue to an annual spring tune up (oil change).

Alternative Evaluated: [Husqvarna TS 348XD](#)

Highest end, heavy duty Husqvarna mower. Similar in size as the JD 570-48A. Same cutting width, engine HP, fuel capacity, etc.

Three-year warranty vs four-year for JD. Lower reliability and customer satisfaction reported by Consumer reports.

Lacks hydraulic deck lift, making it a more manual and time-consuming process to lift the deck as the terrain changes (common on the trail).

Can purchase from a local business – Danvers Hardware.

Price assembled and delivered is \$3,825.



[DR Field and Brush Mower PRO 44T](#)

Hitch it to lawn tractor and clear overgrown land. Takes down 3" saplings and mows the thick field grass while riding. Stop/start via remote switch.

- 20.0 HP Electric-Starting engine
- 44" cutting width.
- Mows up to 2 acres per hour
- Tow vehicles: ATV, UTV, Tractor
- Floating deck rides over obstacles
- Mows outside wheelbase
- Mulches everything
- Remote Control for blade engagement
- Pivoting blades

Price: \$3,400



DR Power Grader

Hitch it to lawn tractor two grade trail surface, removing grown in grass and leveling the trail surface.

- 48" Width grading
- 12 Scarifying Carbide Teeth
- EZ Dial, manual depth control
- Reversible Grading board with toothed or flat edge
- Recommended towing vehicles: Lawn/garden tractor (minimum of 14 HP and/or 400 lbs.), Utility Tractor, ATV.
- Price: \$700



1-42 OF 42 RATED MODELS SHOWN

Overall Score	Brand & Model / Price	Survey results		Test results							
		Predicted reliability	Owner satisfaction	Side discharging	Mulching	Bagging	Evenness	Handling	Noise at ear	Noise at 25 ft.	
Lawn tractors											
90	John Deere X350-42 Recommended Price: \$3,200		↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↓
89	John Deere S240-48 Recommended Price: \$2,600		↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↓
89	John Deere E160 Recommended Price: \$2,300		↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↓
86	John Deere E130 Best Buy Price: \$2,000		↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↓
85	John Deere E140 Best Buy Price: \$2,000		↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↓
80	Husqvarna TS 354X Recommended Price: \$3,500		↑	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↓
78	John Deere E110 Price: \$1,700		↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↓
77	Cub Cadet XT2 SLX50 Price: \$2,500		↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↓

Deere Mowers

Specifications

Recommended

X570 / X580

Current (current version of X310)

Cost today \$4,800

X380

ENGINE

Model Number	FS730 V iTorque™ Power System	FS651V iTorque Power System
Engine Power	24 hp* (17.9 kW)	22 hp* (16.4 kW)
Displacement	44.3 cu in. (726 cc)	44.3 cu in. (726 cc)
Cooling	Air	Air
Governor	Mechanical	Mechanical
Cylinder Configuration	V-twin	V-twin
Electrical System	12 volts, 15 amp regulated	12 volts, 15 amp regulated

DASH DISPLAY

Fuel Gauge	Yes	Yes
------------	-----	-----

FUEL SYSTEM

Fuel Tank Capacity	4.4 U.S. gal. (16.7 L)	3.3 U.S. gal. (12.5 L)
--------------------	------------------------	------------------------

TRANSMISSION

Forward Speed	0-7.2 mph (0-11.6 km/h)	0-6.2 mph (0-10 km/h)
Reverse Speed	0-5.2 mph (0-8.4 km/h)	0-3.5 mph (0-5.6 km/h)

STEERING:

	Low effort, 2-wheel steer / Power, 2-wheel steer	Low effort, 2-wheel steer
Tilt Wheel	No	No
Front Axle	Cast iron	Cast iron

TURNING RADIUS

	16 in. (40.6 cm) / 22 in. (55.9 cm)	16 in. (40.6 cm)
--	-------------------------------------	------------------

UNCUT CIRCLE RADIUS

	23 in. (58 cm) w/48A Mower or 20 in. (51 cm) w/54A Mower / 24 in. (61 cm) w/54A Mower	21 in. (53 cm) w/48A Mower or 18 in. (46 cm) w/54A Mower
--	---	--

SEAT

Style	15 in. (38.1 cm) high-back with grasp	15 in. (38.1 cm) open back with grasp
-------	---------------------------------------	---------------------------------------

LIFT SYSTEM

Type	Foot pedal with adjustable spring assist / Hydraulic	Foot pedal with spring assist
------	--	-------------------------------

TIRES

Type	Turf / Turf, Heavy-Duty All-Purpose (rear only)	Turf
Front	15x6.5-8 / 16x6.5-8	15x6.5-8
Rear	24x12-12 / 24x12-12	22x11-10

DIMENSIONS

Wheelbase	51.2 in. (130 cm)	49.4 in. (125 cm)
Overall Length	75 in. (191 cm) / 79 in. (201 cm)	72 in. (183 cm)
Min. Storage Width (Deflector Up)	53.6 in. (136 cm) w/48 in. Accel Deep or 59.4 in. (151 cm) w/54 in. Accel Deep	53.6 in. (136 cm) w/48 in. Accel Deep Mower or 59.4 in. (151 cm) w/54 in. Accel Deep Mower

Weight, Tractor (no fuel) and Mower

	748 lb (339 kg) w/48 in. Accel Deep, 756 lb (343 kg) w/54 in. Accel Deep / 787 lb (357 kg) w/54 in. Accel Deep	651 lb (295 kg) w/48 in. mower or 659 lb (299 kg) w/54 in. mower
--	--	--

MOWER DECK OPTIONS

	48 in. Accel Deep™ or 54 in. Accel Deep / 54 in. Accel Deep	48 in. Accel Deep or 54 in. Accel Deep
Cutting Width / Blades	48 in. (122 cm) 3 blades or 54 in. (137 cm) 3 blades / 54 in. (137 cm) 3 blades	48 in. (122 cm) 3 blades or 54 in. (137 cm) 3 blades

BUMPER-TO-BUMPER WARRANTY**

	4 year/500 hours	4 year/300 hours
--	------------------	------------------

Addressing Cut Through at Maple St Church – DRAFT for RTAC Review

Current Situation

Trail and Hobart lot users heading both north and south tend to cut across the Maple St Church property on their way to/from Maple St to/from the trail/lot. This has created an unattractive worn path through the church lawn.



Goals

- Reduce traffic across the church lawn.
- Encourage trail lot users to use the safer Maple St crossing (east of the trail at Dominos Pizza).
- Improve the trail surface and landscaping between Charter St and Maple St.

Suggested Approaches

Church Pathway Improvements

- Run a combination of split rail fence (about 40 feet) and shrubs across the worn path to guide trail users to the proper trail access to the sidewalk. Loam, seed, and landscape the area.
- Add stone dust on correct path (east side of banner pole).
- Replace the grey wooden sign guiding trail users to the crosswalk with something more standard (i.e. yellow diamond).
- Estimated cost about \$1,700. Final costs and source of funds till to be determined.

Additional Crossing Improvements – Time and Approvals Permitting

- Remove the 2 granite curbs along the church lawn east of the banner/signpost to make for a smoother-non-stepped access to the sidewalk.
 - Town has confirmed curbs can be moved/removed by us with church agreement.
- Move the “bicycle art” from the east side of the banner/signpost to the west side, encourage trail users to head east towards the safer crossing. Marking sidewalk with “footprints” as guide.
- For consistency, move the bicycle art on the north side of Maple St south of the banner/sign post to guide people to the safer crosswalk.
- From the trail crossing at Maple St, increase pedestrian visibility of the crosswalk at Dominos by adding pedestrian crossing signs on the west-side of the crosswalk (like at Cherry and Essex St). [DTAC and DPW support needed]
- Increase visibility of pedestrians at the Dominos crosswalk by removing or changing to handicap the adjacent west-side parking spot. [DTAC and DPW support needed]
- Ideally add new layer of stone dust Charter St to Maple St to reduce flooding, and keep trail users off the church parking lot.

Next Steps

- Research costs and review plans with RTAC at February RTAC meeting
- Discuss with Maple St Church, including co-funding.
- Confirm plans and spending at March RTAC meeting - Paul
- Present pedestrian crossing plans at February or March DTAC
- Aim for work party in April