

# Lamoille Valley Rail Trail

## Community Committee Minutes

11/21/2023

**Committee Members Present:** Laird McDowell (*video*), Doug Molde, Tricia Follert (*video*)

**Guests:** Bill Mason, Jane Gearhart, Kaitlyn Bought, Cindy Locke (*video*), Pat Ripley (*video*), Yva Rose (*video*), Valerie Valcour (*video*), Randall Szott (*video*)

**LCPC Staff:** Victoria Hellwig, Alberto Della Torre, Melissa Manka

The meeting was called to order by Tori Hellwig at 10:32 am.

### Introductions, Comments, Announcements

- Everyone introduced themselves for the benefit of new attendees.
- Updates from Cindy Locke
  - Jackie and Bill from VTrans said the Hardwick portion of the LVRT was fully open with temporary bridges installed. State's goal is to have the entire length of the trail system open by January 1, 2024.
  - VAST is signing the trail now and will groom the entire length of the trail system beginning December 16, depending on snow cover.
  - VAST Ambassador program will be in effect this winter with 45 statewide ambassadors charged with safety checks, enforcement, and rider assistance.
  - VAST plans to invite the Governor for Rail Trail ride this winter.
- Updates from the Lamoille region
  - Laird stated that Bridge 68 slope failure was being repaired. Jeffersonville connector trail has been fully repaired.
  - Tricia stated that Morrisville is sprucing up the trailhead and installing lighting at kiosks.
  - Doug stated that the State laid surpac on the trail in Johnson and the Dog's Head portion of the trail has been fully repaired.
- Tori states that VTrans is updating the LVRT website PDF maps to include restrooms, potable water, bike repair stations, Wi-Fi, information, etc. The Committee assisted in updating the resource list for VTrans.
- Tori provided an update on work in the other LVRT regions. She noted that the eastern portion is working on completing a VTrans funded scoping study

involving 6 towns, assessing amenities and potential improvements. The western portion of the trail was reviewing its rebuilding efforts, trail counts, and reviewing their services and facilities map.

- Tori stated that the RPC planners from all regions are interested in coordinating an all-region “summit” meeting with VT Tourism and Marketing. Stay tuned for a future meeting regarding marketing and updated business/organizational information on the [Vermont Vacation](#) website.

### **Rail Trail Projects & Funding**

- [VOREC grant](#) applications due December 15.
- VT Forest, Parks, and Recreation [Recreational Trails program](#) just announced. Accepting pre-applications through December 30.
- LVRT Community Grant is due January 8, 2024, and could fund a potential consortium project. The grant requires a 20% match which towns/villages could pool together. LCPC could act as municipal project manager for a consortium grant.
- The group discussed the following potential projects:
  - Hyde Park interested in potential spur trail to Ten Bends Brewery area.
  - Johnson interested in investigating installation of bike lane on Railroad Street. Also:
    - A bridge from the trail to the skatepark and Jolley gas station suggested by VAST
    - E-bike charging stations
  - A Passport program, involving local artists designing stamps for each town & village. This could encourage rides to explore all town/village offerings along the trail.
  - Assessing accessibility and/or developing accessible trailheads.
  - Researching business and non-profit support and sponsorship was suggested. Cambridge & Jeffersonville have had success in developing and increasing amenities through business partnerships (e.g., doggie bag/stations)
- Pat suggested all of these ideas should be organized and prioritized, because we can't pursue them all at once. He suggested keeping a running list of projects, identifying feasibility, cost, supporters/partners, and resources. A list will help the group form ideas as well as short-term and long-term goals. Potential projects can then be ranked, and funding options investigated and/or pursued. The list could help guide future meetings.

- Valerie agreed with this method, stating it would allow the group to identify ways to focus more on equity.
- Cindy stated that the VT Trails & Greenways Council may also be a good resource. She suggested joining future meetings.
- Tori will pull together a [draft list of projects](#) and send out to this group.
- Yva said she began working on developing a Passport Program and is open to collaboration.

Meeting Adjourned 11:22 am.

**Next Meeting: December 19 at 10:30am.**