

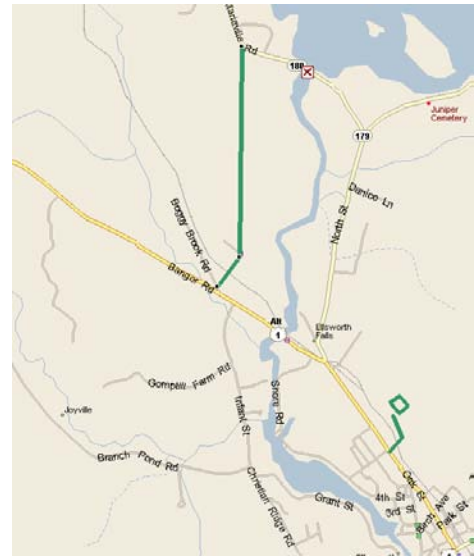
STAR Center Feasibility Analysis
10/28/2008
Minutes

Attending: Tom Testa, Gary Briggs, Dan Stewart, Bruce Mattson, Jef Fitzgerald, Bill Ceckler,
Sally Jacobs, Jim Fisher

Updates

Downeast Heritage Rail

- Five Sidings Completed at Washington Junction
- Mainline Washington Junction to Ellsworth Falls
- Have two coaches (one is have baggage), flat car, caboose, locomotive
- Volunteers restored the cars
- Crossings need to be rebuilt at Lincoln Street and Davis Street
- MaineDOT is planning to create a new road connection for Route 180 to Route 1A, entering near the Ellsworth Transfer Station. This may require a new level grade crossing, or may use an existing crossing.
- Ellsworth High School is planning a new entrance road that will enter High Street across from Forrest Avenue. This may entail creating a new track crossing, though the current crossing may still be needed by pedestrians going to the athletic fields and tennis courts.
- Ending work this season
- Plan to run excursion train starting next summer
- When the rail is activated, the crossings will have to be signalized
 - Plan to have crossing hearings
- Initially will have parking at Washington Junction



Down East Sunrise Trail – Sunrise Trail Coalition (STC) – www.sunrisetrail.org

- Bill Ceckler – New President/Chair
- Sally Jacobs is the inaugural STC representative for the DOC Trail Advisory Committee
- The STC Annual Meeting was held last week
- Approximately 48 miles are converted – but not open for public use. Dan reported that track removal has ended for the winter, but that tie removal and surface improvements continue.
- Concern about rocks in the riding surface
- Trail Advisory Committee has been formed



City of Ellsworth / MaineDOT – Rail with Trail

- Jef Fitzgerald presented detailed maps of the trail section between Ellsworth High School and Main Street.
- Preliminary Plans from Ellsworth Falls to Spring Street have been created by MaineDOT
- Ellsworth is applying for a Bikes Belong grant to build the on-road section between Main Street and the end of Spring Street
 - We talked at length about the alternatives for this section
 - Need to determine whether Spring Street can serve one-way cars with a trail
 - There are safety concerns with the trail on either side
 - Might be possible, but costly, to put the trail on the east side of the tracks

STAR Center Feasibility Study

- Dan Stewart – recently selected new project manager after Anna Price moved to FHWA
 - Working on contracting and approval of the funds (currently working through administrative details like indirect rates, insurance and workman’s compensation.
 - Want to streamline the project
 - Focus on space requirements, costs and potential locations
 - Discussed the option (new) of moving a rail yard closer to High Street
 - Cost of moving the rail yard needs to be estimated
 - This would save “rail with trail construction” to Washington Junction, but would involve significant expenses, such as the probably need for a turntable to rotate the locomotive.
 - Also need to identify on-road or alternative trail options for connecting between Ellsworth and Washington Junction. Shoulder improvements may suffice for bicycles, but would be problematic for ATVs and Snowmobiles.
 - **ACTION:** Look at additional case studies
 - Portland Rail Station
 - Kennebunk Rail Center
 - Utica, NY rail project
 - Newport, ME trailhead for Multiuse Trail
- Project Description and Funding
 - Jim handed out a one page description with budget that was requested by Dan
 - The committee discussed other elements from the feasibility analysis proposal
 - Business Plan – who this facility can be built and operated
 - User analysis – understanding peak and off-peak activity levels from various users – see spreadsheet handout with columns for different users and rows for space, vehicle flow and other demands
 - Environmental constraints –site limitations due to wetlands, etc.
 - Traffic analysis – identifying capacity constraints on High Street

Next Meeting Tentative– Tuesday, November 25, 2008 Ellsworth City Hall 2:30 PM

- Possible pre-meeting high rail Tour starting at Washington Junction 1:30 – 2:30 PM