

Approved Minutes  
**Springfield Trails & Rural Economy Committee Meeting**  
**March 24th, 2022**  
**5:30 PM**  
**Town Offices Meeting Room**

**Call to Order**— The meeting was called to order at 5:37.

**Roll Call:** In attendance were: Jim Fog (presiding), Bettina McCreedy, Barbara Schultz, Josephine Hingston (recording); Jeff Mobus (TOS Mgr), Chris Merrill (Parks & Rec), Jason Rasmussen (Mt Ascutney Regional Commission), Otis Munroe (Mt Ascutney Regional Commission), Jonathan Griffin (VT AOT), TJ ?? (VT AOT), Josh Olund (HNTB consulting engineer).

**Announcements:** Bettina moved to reschedule tonight's agenda for our next meeting to allow time for the VT AOT presentation. Barbara seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Jonathan Griffin, project manager for Springfield IM 091-1(83) and consulting engineer Josh Olund shared a Powerpoint presentation on the upcoming bridge maintenance project. They are still in the fact-finding phase and are gathering ideas, input and data as part of the pre-engineering process. There is a planned meeting with a repeat of this presentation in front of the Selectboard on April 25, 2022.

The project began to remediate issues with bridge 28 (under which route 5 passes), but has grown to include bridges 25-27 as well as all need work and allow for a holistic scope of work that affords more options than bridge 28 alone. Bridge 27 is the bridge over the existing Toonerville Trail/legacy trolley path that runs between Youngs and VT AOT yard. The retaining bin walls are in poor condition, which Bettina has been seeking action on for some time. Jonathan and Josh discussed various aspects of the current configuration that could be improved, such as the I-91 NB weave on/off ramp condition, the on-ramp for I-91 SB if lengthened would improve acceleration "runout length" for trucking traffic, and high traffic collision numbers on the route 5 corridor at the interchange. Possible options included removing part or all of the cloverleaf and replacing/reworking with a diamond on-ramp pattern to improve highway access/egress. This would also allow for removal of culverts and restoration of Spencer Brook, which currently passes under the southbound off-ramp (need to ck).

Concerning the trails, the discussion looked at several possibilities, including replacement of bridge 27 with a similar walkway; replacing bridge 27 and placing a tunnel/buried structure approximately 220' long and 16' wide following the existing trail; and rerouting the trail to follow a divided and narrowed route 5 through the interchange. A copy of the Powerpoint is with Town Manager Jeff Mobus.

Jim Fog requested that in addition to the divided trail/route 5 option, that AOT consider a non-divided stretch of paved roadway with a wide shoulder and designated trail that could be easily plowed during winter and comparatively cost-effective. The introduction of crossings due to the redirect were discussed, along with traffic calming strategies like flashing signals at crosswalks. A pedestrian/usage study was suggested to gauge usage and type of user for this section of trail.

Safety issues were raised around the existing retaining wall underpass as well as those potential if the tunnel route is taken - including lighting costs and maintenance as well as nuisance users. Barbara pointed out that the bin wall section of trail can be a place where people camp or recreate that are unsafe and unwelcoming for many trail users.

Jim asked if trails could make use of the clover leaf space that would be made available if the diamond on ramp configuration is chosen - no concrete answer available at this time but will be pursued, per Jonathan.

Chris asked if swinging the trail around to the south near Bridge 26 and Meeting Waters would be worth considering, although he noted there are extensive wetlands in and around that stretch. Josh and Jason advised that there are not only wetland concerns but archaeologically sensitive areas that would present a challenge to this option.

Bettina and Barbara asked about community partnership possibilities for plantings, and who would be responsible for creating and maintaining greenspace dividing the trail from route 5. Jonathan advised that the plantings would be part of the state's project, but that ongoing upkeep would be the responsibility of the town. Jonathan reiterated that this is in early planning stages and all routes are presently under consideration, with further meetings planned to gather community feedback on the various choices.

Motion to adjourn at 6:52 (McCrary/Schultz). Next meeting scheduled for 4/28/2022, 5:30 PM, at the town offices.

Respectfully submitted,  
Josephine Hingston, interim secretary