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December 17, 2021

RE: Newtown Rail Trail Update

Dear Neighbors:

We hope this letter finds you doing well. As we have done throughout this process, this letter is our latest effort to keep you informed of the most recent developments relative to the ongoing development of the Newtown Rail Trail.

Trail opening / Ribbon Cutting

As you may have noticed, apart from a couple of minor items, construction activities along the trail are now complete. The most recent updates to the trail included the following:

- Installing stormwater management improvements along the trail from the Street Road underpass to just past Orchard Avenue;
- Paving the trail from Second Street Pike north to just past the entrance to Tamanend Park; and
- Spraying the edges of the trail with an environmentally friendly binding emulsion.

These measures were taken due to unforeseen erosion issues the trail was experiencing with uncontrolled stormwater runoff from adjacent properties during heavy storms such as Hurricane Ida.

Unfortunately, due to scheduling conflicts, the holidays, and the weather, an official ribbon cutting will not be held until the spring of 2022. However, the trail will be officially open to the public for use as soon as the contractor removes the "trail under construction" signs and other various construction related signage. We will notify you once a firm date has been set for the official ribbon cutting. As a reminder, the trail will not be cleared of snow or ice during the winter months.

Replacement Landscaping

As communicated previously, any landscaping planted earlier this year, but which has now died, will be replaced. As this time of year is not ideal for planting trees and shrubs, the replacement trees and shrubs will not be replaced until the Spring of 2022.



Fencing and “gate” access

We also want to take this opportunity to bring you up-to-date relative to the fencing and providing access to adjacent property owners who have requested it. As you may recall, earlier this year we reached out to property owners to ask if they wanted access to the trail by creating a “gap” in the fence behind their property. As a reminder, if this were to happen, it would be in the form of the fencing boards being adjusted or removed to create a gap in a section of fencing behind your property. No actual, physical gates will be provided.

There are 116 property owners adjacent to the trail corridor. Of those 116, 84 properties have trail fencing in the SEPTA right-of-way behind their rear property lines. Of those 84, 4, properties have site constraints such as steep slopes that would prevent access. This equates to 80 properties where access is feasible. To date we have heard from 25 property owners regarding their decision relative to trail access. While we do not require a response, if we do not hear from you, we will assume that no access is being requested. If you do want your property to be considered for access, please respond to us via email at pwgordon@buckscounty.org or rgbrahler@buckscounty.org. If you have already responded to our earlier inquiry, there is no need to reply again as we have a record of the 25 property owners who responded previously.

Again, this should not be interpreted as access will be provided. As we have communicated previously, we are maintaining a record of those requesting future access and will be revisiting these requests in the future.

Should you have any questions, please contact Paul Gordon, Senior Transportation Planner, at pwgordon@buckscounty.org, or Richard Brahler, Director of Transportation Planning, at rgbrahler@buckscounty.org. We thank you for your continued cooperation, understanding and support.

Sincerely,

Bucks County Planning Commission



Evan J. Stone
Executive Director

EJS/tmr