

Newtown Rail Trail Meeting – April 19, 2022 Minutes

Meeting Attendees:

- Chris Green – Gilmore and Associates – cgreen@gilmore-assoc.com
- Angie Nagle – Bucks County Parks and Recreation – ajnagle@buckscounty.org
- Kevin Spencer – Bucks County Director of Operations– ksspencer@buckscounty.org
- Evan Stone – Bucks County Planning Commission- ejstone@buckscounty.org
- Rich Brahler – Bucks County Planning Commission – rgbrahler@buckscounty.org
- Christian Regosch – Bucks County Planning Commission – cpregosch@buckscounty.org
- Paul Gordon – Bucks County Planning Commission – pwgordon@buckscounty.org
- Kirsten Becker – Churchville Nature Center – klbecker@buckscounty.org
- Bill Woodroffe – Churchville Nature Center – wpwoodroffe@buckscounty.org
- Peg Mongillo- Churchville Nature Center– pamongillo@buckscounty.org

1. Meeting Purpose

To discuss the new concept alignments developed by Chris Green, for the portion of the Newtown Rail Trail that will run from the existing rail bed to connect the trail to the Churchville Nature Center (CNC) building. These concepts incorporated feedback from the first meeting County Staff had with him.

2. Overall Concept Plans

Chris presented 3 concept plans to depict the connection to from the rail corridor to the Churchville Nature Center Building. The three concepts are described below.

- **Concept 5A:** Vacates the corridor and enters Aqua PA property approximately 400 feet from the eastern boundary of Aqua PA's property. The alignment would traverse the Aqua PA land for approximately 500 feet moving southwards to the Aqua Pa Bucks County Property Boundary. The alignment then continues southward following the contours of the land until it connects to the CNC building. 390 feet of the green trail would need to be removed.
- **Concept 5B:** Exits the rail corridor approximately 100 feet from the eastern boundary of Aqua PA property. The alignment continues southwards following the contours of the land and runs within Aqua PA land for approximately 900 feet. On County land, the alignment continues to follow the contours of the land until it connects to the CNC building. Again, about 390 feet of the green trail will need to be removed.
- **Concept 6:** Exits the rail corridor approximately 100 feet from the eastern boundary of Aqua PA property. The alignment heads south towards the CNC Building. To construct this alignment, two

hills, one on Aqua PA land and one on County land would have to be graded to accommodate the trail. Furthermore, an elevated boardwalk will have to be constructed to bridge the gap between the two hills to maintain a level riding surface. This trail would require 180 of elevated boardwalk with a maximum height of 8 feet.

After reviewing the plans, the group decided that a combination of the Aqua PA portion from 5b and the County Land portion from 6 should be investigated.

The meeting then opened for discussion:

- Kevin Spencer said that with any grading he would prefer cut slope planted with native plant species, as it reduces maintenance cost and creates a more attractive environment for users.
- Chris Green noted that retaining walls could be utilized in certain areas to help reduce the amount of earthwork associated with grading the cut slopes or to help save existing mature trees. As the design progresses, we will need to continue to evaluate the best solution from a cost and disturbance standpoint. It is assumed that a combination of earthwork and limited use of retaining walls would be preferred to reduce construction and maintenance costs.
- Rich asked what the cost of the elevated boardwalk would be and Chris informed the group that it would be around 500,000 dollars.

3. Follow up actions Gilmore & Associates will develop a conceptual alignment that combines the northern portion of concept 5B with the southern portion of concept 6.