

Saucon Rail Trail

Earlier this year, Hellertown Borough, Lower Saucon Township, Upper Saucon Township, and Coopersburg Borough signed a 30-year lease agreement with SEPTA to convert 8 miles of rail bed into a recreational trail linking the communities and their respective parks and businesses. An advisory committee staffed by volunteers from all four municipalities was formed and the name “Saucon Rail Trail” (SRT) was chosen for the project. The goal of the committee is to meet monthly in a setting open to the public, plan trail development, and make recommendations to the four municipalities for implementation. Our efforts to date have been focused on an inventory of trail infrastructure, cultural, and natural resources, the drafting of a master plan outline, grantsmanship to support the preparation of a master plan, developing a website, and considering the protocols for sustainable fund raising and community partnerships. Once a master plan is complete, we intend to further pursue State or foundational funding for continued trail development and maintenance. Concurrently, the four municipalities have entered into discussion regarding an inter-municipal agreement that will guide trail development, allocation of resources, and long-term oversight. The municipalities are committed to trail development in a timely manner, pending available resources, safety, and uniformity in trail design.

Taking advantage of the spectacular environment of Saucon Creek, numerous historical and natural points of interest, and developed recreational facilities, the SRT stands to transform our community and make our good quality of life even better. We are being particularly mindful of the direct and distal impacts that the trail will have on property owners and businesses and have already incorporated public input on these issues. We are hopeful that positive impacts to property values bordering the trail, community cooperation, and increased bike and foot traffic to parks and businesses associated with successful rail-trails in surrounding communities will also be realized for the SRT. Community input and volunteering of time and resources will be crucial for successful trail development and sustainability. Our next meeting is Monday April 12th at 5:00 PM in the Lower Saucon Township municipal building. Future meetings, a map of the SRT, and project announcements can be found under the Parks and Recreation tab at: <http://www.lowersaucontownship.org/>. Come join us.

The SRT Advisory Committee.

Frank J. Pazzaglia, Hellertown Borough

Steve LaBrake, Hellertown Borough

Gail Nolf, Hellertown Borough

Donna Bristol, Lower Saucon Township

Chris Stromski, Lower Saucon Township

Erin Frederick, Upper Saucon Township

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