



Friends of the West River Trail

www.westrivertrail.org

14 May 2015

Melvin Mayo
781 Rice Farm Road
Dummerston, VT 05301

Dear Mr. Mayo,

From previous communications, you are aware that Friends of the West River Trail, Inc. is an organization dedicated to maintaining a walking and biking trail along the bed of the former West River Railroad. In prior letters, we tried to reach out to you to introduce our organization and seek common ground in maintaining this trail, which over the decades has become a much-loved and well-traveled pathway that is open to all.

We have been disappointed that you haven't been interested in discussing with us how we can work together as neighbors.

This letter seeks to clarify, for you, our ownership of the rail bed of the former West River Railroad.

In August of 2011, Friends of the West River Trail acquired the portion of the rail bed that extends from the Presbrey Leland Quarry in West Dummerston down to Brattleboro. This rail bed was purchased from the Salzburg Corporation in New York City (via Byron Corp.), which had acquired the rail bed from the West Dummerston Quarry in the 1930s to salvage iron from the railroad in the lead-up to World War II. Our surveyor and attorney have confirmed through title research, that what we acquired was the actual property, rather than simply an easement to the rail bed.

I am attaching a letter from Paul Gillies, Esq. that addresses this question. Attorney Gillies, of Tarrant, Gillies, & Richardson, is a past deputy Secretary of the State of Vermont, and is a widely respected Vermont lawyer. We believe that this clarifies our ownership of the rail bed, but we would be glad to answer any questions you might have about this; we could also arrange for you to discuss this directly with Mr. Gillies and/or our local attorney, Jim Maxwell, Esq. of Brattleboro, who has also been assisting us in legal issues regarding the trail.

Friends of the West River Trail - Lower Section, 138 Elliot Street, Suite 3, Brattleboro VT 05301

Given this evidence, we respectfully request that you remove the no trespassing signs and other barriers you have placed in this location and cease claiming ownership of the trail to trail users.

We look forward to discussing these issues directly, and we are glad to make our attorneys available to you or your attorney. We would like to move beyond the early misunderstandings and proceed as friendly neighbors.

Respectfully,

Jason Cooper, Chair
Friends of the West River Trail – Lower Section
138 Elliot Street
Brattleboro, VT 05301

cc: Jim Maxwell, Esq.
Paul Gillies, Esq.