

NVRRRA Layout Committee Blog August 2022

August 13, 2022 Layout Committee Meeting Notes

Present: Eric LaLonde, Denise Edwards, Nick Carbone, Cory Connors-Reynolds, Jim Fenner, Larry Roberts

Scenery - Areas in Progress:

Gardner - Jim Fenner (inner) and Joe Albano (outer) responsible:

Progress:

- Rte. 2 bridge is rough fit, with final coat of the highway surface needed, followed by details. See photos in blog below.
- Fascia has been modified to fit and screw holes filled - sanding should allow it to be painted. Hopefully before Ops.
- Joe has a plan for making guardrails
- Ted signed up to work with Jim on the inside of Gardner, but there is no progress yet.
- No decisions needed here.

Industrial branch along wall (NY) - Larry, Jim, and Doug Adams (at least for now);

- Doug to do prelim CAD design on hinge area, Larry and Jim to confer with him after first draft.

Mechanicville - Joe Albano responsible:

- There has been no further work in the Mechanicville village area except that Joe's friend Patrick Kubala has completed construction of the XO tower - see photo below for the progress since last month. Looks excellent!
- Jim and Larry to start to extend the benchwork and spline to where the bridge over to the industrial branch will be, so that Joe can finish Mechanicville trackwork and the final turnout.
- Nick pointed out the need for plastic track guards in this area need to be put back before Ops. We agreed. He will take care of it.

Fitchburg Passenger station and layover facility: - Corey Connors-Reynolds responsible:

- Cory described the opportunity to redo Fitchburg MBTA storage tracks to be closer to the prototype. He supplied a detailed paper of reasons and impact. This report is attached to the email for this month's blog.
- Major reasons:
 1. It's more prototypical.
 2. It would give a little bit more space
 3. It would prevent a seesaw movement requirement if we wished to run trains up to have some come out of Gardner first thing in the morning.
- Corey indicated that Joe had pointed out that foam there already at right height for station platforms.
- There needs to be level walkways slightly below rail height on the mains too.
 - That way through trains would be able to take on and discharge passengers.
 - Larry pointed out that he would like to be able to run steam excursion trains westbound out of Ayer, loading and offloading platforms at Fitchburg and Gardner would be appropriate.
- Gardner had walkways across the mains and no storage track?

- Larry will try to find pictures he took there when he rode the last train out of Gardner 12/31/87 to see configuration
- We all agreed Cory's plan has merit and will distribute his presentation with this blog for members to consider.

Under-layout curtains: - Nick Carbone responsible:

- Nick reports the curtains are all attached complete from the right side of the helix all the way to West Fitchburg.
- Can only go a little further as final fascia is needed.

New England Milling:

- Lots of progress, as outlined in the photos with landforms and pond development.
- Eric has fixed pond with new added latch bolts and shims so all you have to do is push up a little bit.
- Denise indicated that she and Eric have some of those foam floor pad blocks that lock together and will bring them in so that crawling into the New England Milling access pit is easier.

Hudson river bridge to Noonan's – Joe Albano responsible:

- Joe has put in all the landforms and basic ground cover between the bridge and Noonan's - see the photographs in this blog. It looks great.
- The question of trees will have to wait until we make decisions about how we're going to make trees. Joe has also redone all the fascia and painted and it looks great.
- There is one issue which we knew about the fascia from about Ferry Street to Noonan's it's a little high and the lights can be seen. We may need to add some black cloth strips to hide the lights. But that can be done after we get the work from Ayer to Willows complete.
- Some repair of the backdrop under Noonan's is necessary due to glue leakage. During the meeting we checked out paint for the sky - we still have a small amount of 1 gallon and a large amount of a 2nd gallon of sky paint but they are of different bases, although from the same company. We will compare the two paints where we have to over-paint the glue spots below Noonan's. If we have to order more samples we will for additional testing.

Assigned but no progress to date:

Berkshire paper - Nick Carbone responsible:

- Nick has agreed to take on production of mill buildings.
- Larry noted that he has some photographs of paper mills from northern New Hampshire that he will supply to Nick.
- We will review his selected kits and discuss at a committee meeting before work progresses.

Not assigned yet:

Ayer:

- We have to decide if we are building the extended valence above the East leg of the wye. Jim pointed out the East leg of the wye is very dark when only layout lights are on and it will only get worse when scenery is added.
- Agreed if we have to have more lights or something like that, we will need to have a valence.
- Must find a new source for plywood sheets for valence (also for future fascia and spline. What we have been using is Patriot Timber Products 5.5mm Sureply underlayment. <https://www.patriottimber.com/sureply-underlayment/>
- Claude bought some plywood for track guards to try but it cracked too easily when bending valance and fascia widths.
- We estimate that we will need at least five sheets of underlayment. May have to buy one and test if we can't get the same brand.

- If we can't find SurePly the next steps are to buy some alternatives, test, then figure out total needed before purchasing.

East Deerfield:

- One of two remaining bridges on layout needing someone to be responsible for it is the Railfan bridge to the West of East Deerfield yard.
- Larry will email Mark Camire to see if he has good before and after photos so we can put before the club to decide which bridge to build.
- Meeting agreed the bridge must look like one or the other, not some generic bridge.

Schaghticoke (Skat-i-kohk):

- Need someone to work on finishing Agway, building the dam & bridge, etc. Is going to be difficult due to complete scenery below which will have to be very carefully protected.

Agenda for Saturday 8/13/22 Layout Meeting

- Fitchburg passenger station and layover facility
- Exact location needed for Catenia Oils

Photos of Progress since July Meeting (Hold on to your hats, part deux!!!)

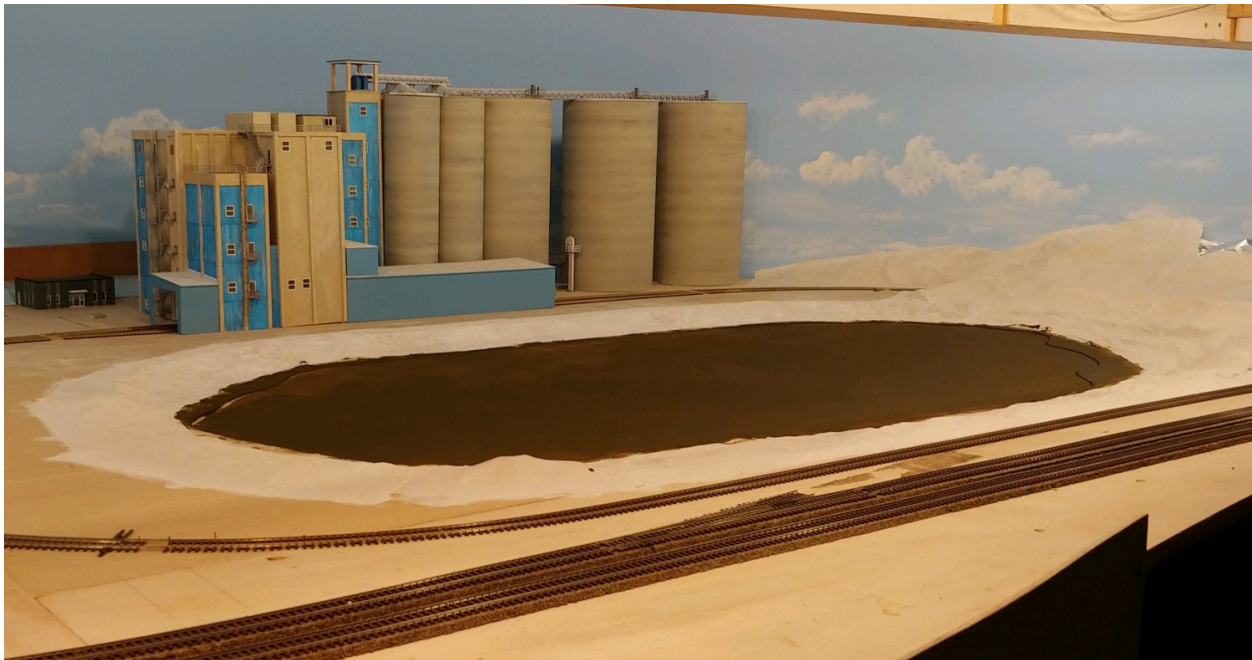
New England Milling:

Eric has brought the mill in, in almost final form, including the small office building. Also, he has put in place land forms using plaster cloth, and the pond development is well underway.

This photo shows the mill and the shape of the hills and cut to the right end of the loop:



And here we have the left view showing the office building with the pond bottom painted.



And here we have Eric hard at work reinforcing the plaster cloth with a new layer of plaster:



Further development of the pond has now made it look sufficiently grungy:



Work remaining includes reinforcing the hinged pond which sags a little, determining the exact location of the Catania Oils sidings and installing them, the remaining ground cover and roads, a bridge over the track at the east end to hide the mousehole through the backdrop, and general completion of the scene. Then trees, lots of trees!

But what progress!! Way to go Eric!

Layout Skirting:

On the lower level of the layout, Nick has extended the curtain work down the East Deerfield aisle, but I neglected to get a good picture. People who come to the Op session can see for themselves. But great work Nick – it looks a lot better and will stay that way because the curtains are solidly attached.

Upper Deck – Bridge to Mechanicville:

Joe has completed landforms and basic ground cover from the Hudson River bridge to Noonan's:

West abutment of Hudson River bridge facing west:



Detail of backside the fill facing east toward Hudson River bridge:



Here is view from Noonan's looking east toward the Hudson River bridge:



And here is the opposite view showing Noonan's and the road bridge under construction:



Great progress Joe!

And an exciting addition. Joe's friend Patrick Kubala has completed XO tower, and it's ready to go in as the village scene is developed



And if that was not enough, Joe heard a birdie say we need a Route 2 bridge over the P&W at Gardner, so.....



Thanks a lot Joe -the scene is really coming together!!