Art, it’s been some time since we have talked and I thought you’d enjoy an update on our rails-to-trails project. I have spoken to a number of property owners who purchased ROW from CSX in the early 1990’s. One of them, Alice Joy Binion, owns about 5 miles of ROW in the Grahn-Aden-Fultz area, including a nice tunnel and several bridges. Alice is now considering an informal written proposal that I made to her for a trail easement across her property.

Several weeks ago I spoke with the owner of Louisville Fire Brick Plant in Grahn, Bill Shuck, and he was very receptive to giving us an easement. I sent him a follow letter the other day and have my fingers crossed.

In my research at the Court House I discovered that Carter County owns about five miles of CSX ROW between Hitchens and Fultz, and near the town of Music. If we can work out some technical issues, Judge Executive Charlie Wallace and the Magistrates of the Fiscal Court have indicated they will support a trail easement paralleling any county roads which occupy the old railroad ROW.

My work in the Limestone – Lawton area has been less successful. I have spent uncounted hours gathering copies of deeds for sales of local ROW by CSX . I have found deeds that indicate that Tommy Reynolds owes about 2,200 feet of ROW in Lawton, and Othelle Lykins owns over 1,500 feet of ROW running east of Mushroom Road. The deeds are a little obtuse, but I believe Tommy Reynolds property may include that portion of the ROW that runs behind the Lawton store.

Danny Sparks and the Global Data people have a strong conviction that they own ROW in the area of the store, but I have been unable to find any evidence at the Court House to support that belief.

I’m taking the liberty of attaching a draft Fiscal Court resolution I wrote to this email. It is intended to give the Judge Executive authority to create a trail easement on railroad ROW owned by the county.

Any comments or advice you might give would be appreciated.

I have great hopes that before the end of the summer, I’ll be able to show you some of the prettiest walking/biking trails in this part of the country.

Best regards,

John