

Neuse River Valley Model Railroad Club Minutes of the HO Committee Meeting of March 20, 2022

1. Call Meeting to Order
The meeting was called to order by Ken Howard at 1:03 pm
2. Roll Call of Member in Attendance
Those attending in person were Brock Bowden, Richard Calfee, Bernie Dawson, Peter Donofrio, Jake Forbes, Randy Foulke, Tom Garren, Ken Howard, Mike Johns, Ted Kunstling, George Lasley, Ethan Quiram, and Bob Witwer.
3. Ken brought the group up to date on several items.
 - a. There will be a work session next Saturday, March 26th at Bob Witwer's storage unit in Clayton. This session will be to deconstruct the donated modules to yield materials we can repurpose for our expansion.
 - b. Richard Calfee and Tom Tieman have relocated the legs on the corner of the existing layout, so they no longer pose a tripping hazard.
 - c. Ted Kunstling has compiled a photo inventory of stations and industrial buildings on the current layout. This will help in planning for the improved layout.
 - d. We are almost ready to implement a reporting system for track problems on the HO layout so we can track progress and make sure they are fixed.
 - e. Marilyn Calfee has prepared a summary of all comments received by the Committee via e-mail. Copies of the comments were distributed to all attendees.
4. Objective of the Meeting
Ken Howard shared the meeting objective with the attendees.

Establish the final track configuration of the extension so that a final plan can be completed, and necessary plans can be prepared for construction. To accomplish this objective, the following questions/ objectives must be resolved:

- a. **The proposed L-shaped extension will be the final size and configuration used.**
This item was discussed at length, and it was agreed that we will proceed with the proposed L-shaped extension.
- b. **Given the average 30-inch arms' reach, we need to establish access to the extension. Aisle ways are preferable considering the number of older members.**
This item was discussed at length with several ideas being mentioned. George Lasley mentioned that an access hole gives you 360-degree access. Your reach can be extended with the use of a step stool.

In the end it was unanimously agreed that access holes were preferable to aisleways or “geezer gates.” In some other areas a hatch could be created so that scenery can be opened for access to hidden track.

c. Do we want to take a two-track main around the exterior of the extension?

It was agreed that we want a two-track main around the exterior of the extension.

d. Do we wish to include a wye on the lower level of the extension?

It was also determined that a wye on the base elevation level of the extension would be preferable to a reversing loop.

e. Do we want the expansion to have a single connection from the main layout to the upper level (reversing loop), or do we want to have the upper level of the expansion as a continuous loop connected to the main layout?

A continuous loop connected with dual connections to the main layout was the preferred solution.

f. Do we want the closed loop (that will have DC and DCC capability) on the base level or upper level of the expansion?

It was agreed that that we want a closed loop with DC and DCC capability on the base level of the layout. The wye will facilitate construction of this loop.

It was further stated that some switches need to be powered, particularly in tunnels or hard to access areas of the extension.

g. What major features do we want to add to the layout (power plant, coal mine, port, engine facility)?

It was suggested that Morehead City could be the staging yard also with intermodal facilities. The staging yard is to be attached to the layout.

There was much discussion about an engine facility. Ken Howard pointed out that it could be a striking visual feature of the layout. The tentative location will be in the lower corner of the extension. There are still questions as to the size of the turntable. A check of available units indicated the Walthers unit is in the 18-inch range. This should turn any engine that is run on the layout.

For the extension it was suggested that we have a coal mine and a small coal town with the supporting industries. It was also suggested that we could add a lumber industry and agricultural areas.

h. Where should we place sidings for supporting structures?

George Lasley suggested we first install the main line - then determine where we need to install switches to serve industries. This makes a lot of sense and seems to be good advice.

5. Mike Johns reminded everyone to buy in with the final plans and help make them a success.
6. Volunteers are needed to put together the track plan based on today's discussion. Peter Ring will use SCARM to construct a detailed track plan based on the decisions made today.
7. The next meeting has been scheduled for April 24th at 1:00 pm. At that time, we hope to approve the final designs.
8. The meeting was adjourned at 2:06 pm.