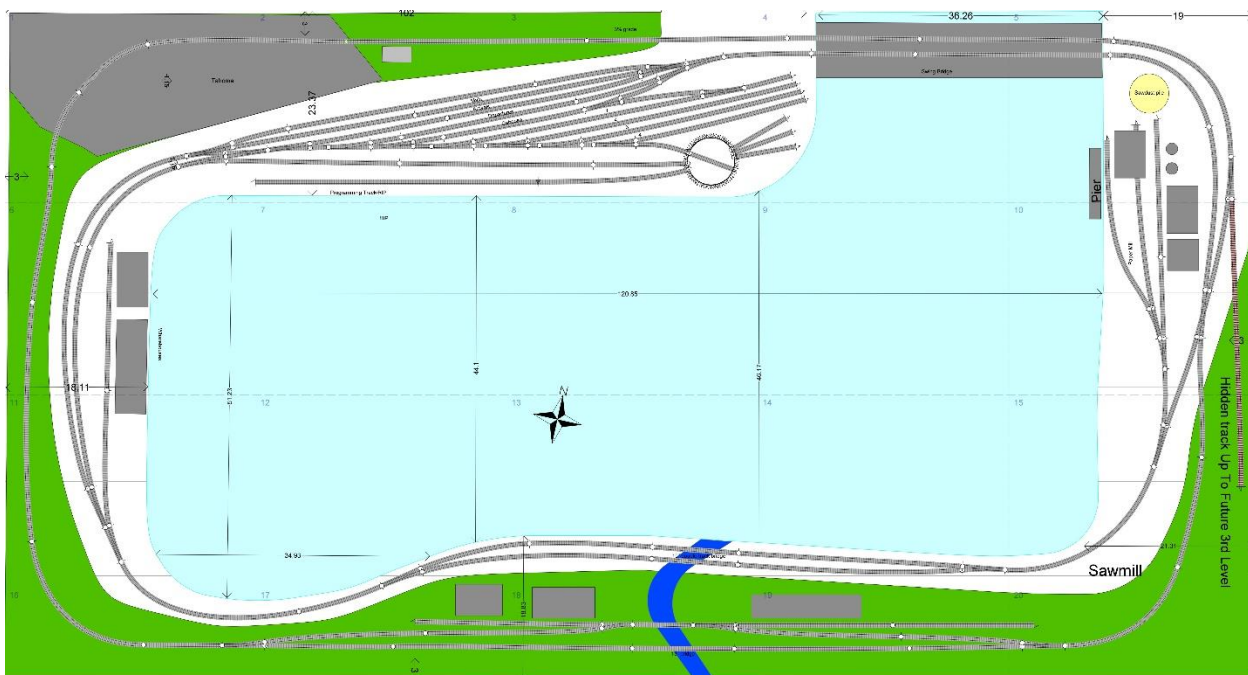


Last summer we had an 8' x 14' stand-alone room built in our back yard to house my railroad layout. The contractor who was supposed to build the deck in front of it absconded with the money, so I have a 3' first step to get into the building. After lots of fits and starts I finally got serious about building about a month ago. The layout is a round-the-room shelf layout built on ½" Gatorboard overlaid with 1" pink foam. My original plan was to use Micro-Engineering track, but I discovered that Peco code 55 turnouts don't play nicely with non-Peco track, so I changed everything to Peco after discussing it with Tyler Whitcomb. It is a real learning experience because, not only did I go with Peco turnouts, I bought electro-frog turnouts. From what I have been reading, it appears there is significant additional work required getting them to play nicely with DCC. At this point I could really use some help with the wiring, but with the current lockdown, I am just going to have to muddle through on my own.



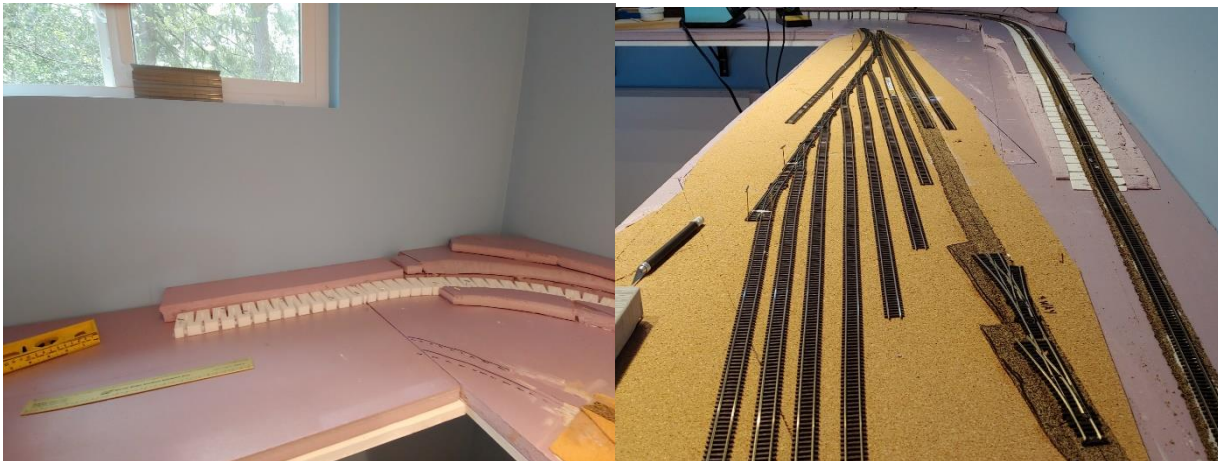
Here is the track plan for the first layer. I want to make sure it is working solidly before I bite off anymore. I have completed the benchwork for the wall containing the yard and my major town (build on a hill overlooking the yard). I have also completed the bench work on the west wall of the room. My plan it to stop there until I get all the track laid and tested on those two sections before I move to the south wall.



I have already discovered some interesting lessons. Don't draw a plan with Micro-Engineering track and Fast Track turnouts and then try to build the plan using Peco track and turnouts. It doesn't work.



When you draw your plan make sure you leave enough room between the yard tracks or you will have to redraw the plan. Flex track will bend regardless of how careful you are. If building a model railroad during a lockdown expect nothing you exists in your home, even if you know you bought it. Do not try to solder with large solder if you can't find the fine solder you bought a couple months ago—just suck it up and order more. Once you do, you can find the missing one. Murphy is the work superintendent and he doesn't like you.



I'm building the yard on sheet cork with the mainline elevated on standard cork roadbed. The complex turnout combinations at the entrance to the yard have been soldered together, but nothing in the yard is soldered or glued down yet. I laid out some trackage just to make sure I have good spacing between tracks and confirming the turnouts all work smoothly. More progress to follow as I continue to figure out what I'm doing. If worse comes to worst, I can always turn the room into a wine cellar and drown my sorrows with Pinot Noir. What are you doing during the lockdown?