

City of Ashland
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
TRAIL MASTER PLAN UPDATE COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
February 23, 2018

PRESENT: **Parks Commissioners:** Jim Lewis, Mike Gardiner
 Additional Committee Members: Luke Brandy, David Chapman, Torsten Heycke, Stephen Jensen, Jim McGinnis
 City and APRC Staff: Interim Parks Superintendent Jeffrey McFarland; GIS Analyst Lea Richards
 APRC Minute-taker: Betsy Manuel

ABSENT: Division Chief-Forest Resource (Fire) Chris Chambers; APRC Director Michael Black

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Chapman called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. at The Grove - 1195 E. Main Ashland, OR.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. January 26, 2018, and February 9, 2018

Chapman noted that the Minutes for January 26, 2018, and February 9, 2018, were approval by unanimous consensus.

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION & GUEST SPEAKERS

• *Open Forum*

McFarland noted that a written comment had been received regarding the perceived need for trails maintenance, particularly in the Oredson-Todd Woods, Siskiyou Mountain Park and the trails above Lithia Park. The commentator noted concerns about trail widths and the use of trails for multiple purposes, among other concerns. McFarland advised the Committee about his reply, explaining the history applicable to those trails and any constraints or challenges. He also explained the activities undertaken by APRC staff to create more user-specific trails.

Chapman asked that hard copies of the comments be included for the next meeting.

III. ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

• *Reassignment of Chapters*

Chapman reported that **Agenda Item VI. C** would include discussion regarding reassignment of chapters 9,10,11 formerly assigned to Committee member Mike Gardiner.

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. Final Committee Review / Possible Approval of Chapter 1 Following Suggested Edits from Last Meeting (Jensen)

Jensen stated that the recommended changes for Chapter 1 had been completed, including the addition of a table displaying timelines. He asked for a critique of the timeline and a decision regarding its inclusion in the Master Plan.

Gardiner noted that the table recorded a continuum of the Master Plan process. There followed a brief discussion about updating the timeline. It was agreed that the timeline provided a roadmap tracking the process as it had unfolded and the identification of the next steps.

McFarland referred to a spreadsheet that was created depicting where each Chapter was in the editing process. He suggested that once the final editors had approved a particular Chapter, it could be moved into a Committee Review Folder for further study by Committee members. Any commentary generated from reading the Chapter in advance would then be open for discussion and approval at the next TMP meeting. McFarland stated that the contracted graphic artist had asked that the Master Plan chapters be forwarded to him when all are finished, and not in stages. He indicated that he would also forward maps and photos at that time for the contractor to include in the document.

There followed discussion about a photo folder. It was agreed that photos would be forwarded to McFarland along with notations as to the proposed chapter for each photo – the date it was taken and the photographer.

Heycke asked that the bullet point on page 6 of Chapter 1 that reads: “2005-2014 Oregon Statewide non-motorized Trails Plan” be changed to: “2015-2025 Oregon Statewide Recreation Trails Plan.”

Motion: Jensen moved to accept Chapter 1 as written and to approve the amended text as completed. Brandy seconded and the motion carried by unanimous vote.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

a. Perform Committee Review of Regional Trails – Chapter 12 (All)

Chapman commented that the chapter format followed in the original Master Plan continued to work for the updated chapters - i.e. the descriptive narrative was divided into sub-headings such as route description, linkages, character, expected users, typical section, natural and cultural resources. There followed a brief examination of each subheading as follows:

➤ **Character**

In response to a query by Jensen, Heycke noted that the character of a trail would include the flora and fauna, the geology or view-scape and/or the particular characteristics of the trail itself – rocky, narrow, etc.

McFarland noted that describing the varied character from urban to forestlands allowed the reader to develop an expectation of different types of environments that might be encountered along the trail.

➤ **Typical Section**

Brandy noted that there seemed to be a redundancy inherent in the differences between Character and Typical Section. There followed an extensive discussion about differentiating, combining or eliminating the two connotations. It was agreed that using the elements as they were arranged in the original Master Plan would be duplicated. Brandy proposed that the element Character be defined more subjectively, while the description of a Typical Section would be indicative of the realistic elements as they were encountered.

Heycke led a discussion about the relevancy of regional trails. He noted the challenges of a discussion of the myriad of trails that connect far and wide to the Ashland trails system. Brandy replied that his intention for including different wilderness areas was to illustrate that hikers could travel from downtown Ashland to many other places of interest. Lewis noted the importance of connectivity and linkages with other trail systems. Jensen suggested alluding to wilderness area such as the Red Buttes, Sky Lakes and Soda Mountain as *examples* of continually evolving connectivity.

Chapman stated that naming a few of the outstanding wilderness areas added interest and allure to Ashland's trails systems – including the hiking outlier known as the Pacific Crest Trail. McFarland suggested that the wording could be changed slightly to encompass nearby linkages. Brandy noted that the differences between the regional trail chapter and the local trails chapters was the broader view.

➤ **Emigrant Lake Trail**

The potential for trail connectivity was debated given the lack of feasibility for development of a trail to Emigrant Lake. The TID lateral trails were an additional barrier – primarily because TID administrators were adamant about limiting access to TID canal trails for recreational purposes. Lewis suggested keeping the elements in the chapter as placeholders for future possibilities. He stated that circumstances could change over time and mention in the Trails Master Plan might facilitate future consideration. Heycke advised use of the word “proposed” and emphasis on the tenuous nature of future trail development in that area. Jensen proposed that the word *trail* be removed from the section title. He advocated for changing the second sentence to read: “This recreation area is the planned terminus of the Bear Creek Greenway and was part of the original Greenway Plan of 1966.”

Richards suggested that the Cascade Foothills be included as an additional section in the Regional Trails Chapter. Chapman noted that the Imperatrice Property would then become a chapter of its own. Lewis noted the importance of the Imperatrice Property, indicating that the upper section of the property be discussed in the Trails Master Plan. He explained that future City planners could look at the Master Plan and understand that the interest in trail development for that area had been apparent for twenty or more years. It was agreed that the Imperatrice Property would be mentioned in the Cascade Foothills section and also referenced as a potential Grizzly Peak access point.

It was stated and agreed that the Jack-Ash Trail was broadly described, primarily for pedestrian access.

McGinnis suggested that posting the document seven days prior to a meeting would be helpful so that people could prepare their commentary for the meeting. Jensen highlighted the facility of Google Docs to make comments on the document without editing.

Jensen asked about references to rogue trails. He noted that mentioning those trails – some of which were frequently used – might set a precedent for their use. Heycke noted that those trails were often through private property. He stated that he did not include trails that were used but not sanctioned in his narratives for the Eastside and Westside routes. Richards indicated that maps included tentative lines that traced the Alice-in-Wonderland Trail and some of the unsanctioned connections on Hitt Road but in general other trails were not included in the maps.

After some discussion, it was agreed that unsanctioned and rogue trails would be described in the Glossary but not encouraged. Chapman stated that the narrative should not point out locations or names for rogue trails – rather, commentary should focus on what they were and why they were considered off-limits. McFarland stated that the City has a trails application process for new trails or changes to existing trails on City properties.

It was agreed that the Master Plan would strongly discourage use of rogue trails and would stress the quest for legal connections.

➤ **Photos**

McFarland said the process for submitting photos should list the intended Chapter, the name of the submitting person, the photographer and the date and feature represented.

➤ **Misc. Discussion**

McGinnis asked that the next Agenda include discussion about the development of a matrix that would provide a grid that identifies key characteristics about the trails at a glance.

Gardiner stated that he would be unable to complete Chapters 9, 10, and 11, which were assigned to him. Chapman asked that volunteer editors contact McFarland for editorial authority to complete those chapters through Google Docs.

Chapman reported that the goals and objectives in Chapter 2 would be changed to goals and sub-goals. APRC would be designated as the entity responsible for conversion of the goals and sub-goals into action plans. Chapter 14 would be added to provide a set of recommendations for future development and enhancement of the Trail Master Plan.

VII. UPCOMING MEETING DATE

a. March 9, 2018

- Siskiyou Room, Community Development Building – 10:00 a.m.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Betsy Manuel, Minute-Taker
Trail Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission

These Minutes are not a verbatim record. The narrative has been condensed and paraphrased at times to reflect the discussions and decisions made. Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission Subcommittee meetings are digitally recorded and available upon request.