

City of Ashland
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
TRAIL MASTER PLAN UPDATE COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
June 1, 2018

PRESENT: **Parks Commissioner:** Jim Lewis
 Additional Committee Members: David Chapman, Torsten Heycke, Stephen Jensen, Jim McGinnis
 City and APRC Staff: Interim Parks Superintendent Jeffrey McFarland, Forestry Supervisor Jason Minica, GIS Analyst Lea Richards
 APRC Minute-taker: Betsy Manuel

ABSENT: APRC Director Michael Black, Committee member and Parks Commissioner Mike Gardiner, Committee members Luke Brandy and Chris Chambers

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Chapman called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. at 51 Winburn Way, Ashland OR.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- *Minutes of May 18, 2018*

Motion: Lewis moved to approve the Minutes of May 18, 2018, as presented. McGinnis seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION & GUEST SPEAKERS

a. Open Forum

There was none.

b. Review Additional Public Input Since Last Meeting

There were none.

IV. ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

McGinnis asked for time to update the Committee regarding the Ashland Canal project.

McFarland asked that the Chapter on the Ashland Canal be first under **Agenda Item VI: New Business.**

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. Web-app for Location-Based Comments Regarding TMP Project

Richards stated that she and co-worker Rickey Fite designed and coded a web-app for public input regarding the TMP. She noted that the website contained basic information about the project including an interactive map. She displayed the web-app information, noting that clicking on an area of the map resulted in information about the location where the pin was located as well as the applicable corridor. Richards noted that the comment section allowed sufficient room for input of approximately 100 characters. She stated that she would retrieve the commentaries via computer and the retrieved information would be in a table format.

There followed a brief discussion about capturing the name of the persons making comments. Jensen recommended that the names be required so that any issues could be resolved and/or specifically discussed directly with the concerned party. Chapman agreed, indicating that face-to-face or email discussion could accelerate problem solving.

Jensen inquired about corridor widths. Richards noted that widths had been determined in the original Master Plan document but there were some areas such as the Bear Creek area that had been updated. In response to a question by Jensen, Richards noted that the corridors were established as a way to organize specific areas.

Heycke asked whether the map would remain open to the public indefinitely. There followed discussion about receiving commentary that could affect the Master Plan – particularly when the Update Committee was at a point where the document was almost complete.

Lewis stated that the interactive map was a very useful tool – not only for Master Plan input but also for ongoing public input with regard to trails.

McGinnis talked about the importance of an end date for comments regarding the Master Plan. He stated that without it, people could assume their input would be incorporated into the plan, when it would not. It was agreed that an end-date should be established with regard to the updated Trail Master Plan.

McFarland detailed the process for adoption. Jensen read from the Master Plan document the actual wording regarding the 2018 TMP update process. Lewis noted that the Master Plan would remain a draft until formally approved by APRC and the Ashland City Council. Until then, technically, changes to the Plan could occur. Responses to public concerns were typically addressed by APRC staff. It was stated that the TMP Master Plan Subcommittee Chair Chapman also worked with the public often in partnership with APRC.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

a. Review Chapter 6: Ashland Canal

McGinnis noted that the Chapter was originally referred to as the TID Ditch. He commented that in the past, people assumed they had access to trails along the canal. McGinnis stated that the easement in place was a maintenance easement and therefore not open to the public.

Heycke talked about the first paragraph that framed the Ashland Canal as a significant part of the a “emerald ring” around the City of Ashland. He stated that the concept of an emerald ring or necklace was difficult to visualize and problematic to achieve. Lewis explained the historic precedent set originally in Seattle. He stated that APRC’s take on an emerald ring was that a series of trails would be assembled as a loop around Ashland. He stated that the descriptor *emerald ring* might not be pertinent for Ashland.

Heycke proposed that the sentence *“Aligning with the hydrologically necessary contour, the Ashland Canal is generally flat to gently sloping and has nearly six miles of linear footage most of which are in close proximity to the southern border of the city limits”* be changed to - *The Ashland Canal is generally flat to gently sloping and has nearly six miles of linear footage most of which are in close proximity to the southern border of the city limits.* He suggested that the word *“robust”* be removed from the last sentence of the fifth paragraph on page one.

Heycke suggested changes to **LINKAGE** as follows:

First paragraph: Last sentence – *“The Hald-Strawberry Park, when developed, may serve as a trailhead”* be changed to *The Westwood open space may serve as a trailhead.* Lewis noted that a neighborhood park was needed in the area as well.

Heycke restated the linkages to Granite Street properties as the *“Lithia Trail System, and the APRC-owned properties from Granite Street to Acid Castle”*. He recommended deletion of the paragraph referred to with the heading *“Pinecrest Terrace bypass.”* McGinnis agreed, stating that the potential for trail development should remain viable if circumstances changed.

CHARACTER

It was agreed that the description "*imposing canopies*" would be deleted.

EXPECTED USERS

Heycke questioned the term "*foot traffic*" and it was agreed that the terminology would be changed to *pedestrians*. The term *baby strollers* was deleted.

Other changes included deleting the word *paving* from the sentence beginning with "*The underground segments 'may offer opportunities to add crushed rock or paving.'*"

There followed a brief discussion about whether to mention the two-mile portion of the Ashland Canal that the City plans to divert underground and cover. It was agreed that plans to do so were tentative and the impact on the trail system unknown – therefore no mention would be incorporated into the updated Trail Master Plan.

McGinnis talked about issues concerning to property owners along the Ashland Canal, noting that there was potential for a group of residents to come together and work toward potential solutions to conflicts in that area.

Motion: Jensen moved to approve Chapter 6: *Ashland Canal* with the edits discussed. McGinnis seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

b. Review Chapter 4: Bear Creek Greenway Trail Corridor

Heycke proposed that the second sentence under the Bear Creek Greenway Route Description read as follows: "*It is the premier bicycle and pedestrian transportation route that crosses a significant portion of the Rogue Valley.*"

Chapman stated that it was important to associate the Bear Creek Greenway with the Rogue River Greenway because of its additional connectivity. Richards responded that the Bear Creek Greenway crossed a significant portion of the Bear Creek Valley – rather than the Rogue River Valley. After some discussion, it was agreed that the sentence would be revised as follows: "*The Bear Creek Greenway in conjunction with the Rogue Valley Greenway is a premier bicycle and pedestrian transportation route that crosses a significant portion of the Rogue River Valley.*"

Lewis agreed, noting that the two valleys are important to mention in context together because of the linkages from Grants Pass to Ashland.

Jensen question the characterization of the bicycle and pedestrian transportation route as "*the premier*" route. It was further agreed that the sentence would be changed to read "*a premier*" route.

McGinnis suggested that the sentence stating that the route begins near Dean Creek north of Central Point would be more accurately portrayed as near Blackwell Road.

GOVERNANCE

Heycke suggested that the sentences "A trail guide has also been published." and "This guide has been updated and made available through Jackson County Park" be restated as "The trail guide is available through Jackson County Parks."

Additional changes were outlined as follows:

"The funding for the maintenance of the Greenway is administered by Jackson County Parks through a Joint Powers Agreement between five municipalities and Jackson County" will be changed to "The maintenance of the Greenway is administered by Jackson County Parks through a Joint Powers Agreement administered by Jackson County Parks."

"The Greenway enters the jurisdiction of Ashland on the north end of the Ashland urban growth boundary where approximately two miles of the Greenway lies within the urban growth boundary and the City limits." The sentence will be changed to "The Greenway enters the maintenance jurisdiction of Ashland on the north-west end of the Ashland urban growth boundary."

"This portion of the trail runs predominately west to east and extends from Valley View Road and then follows Bear Creek to the current termination point at West Nevada..." The sentence will be changed to "This portion of the trail runs predominately west to east and extends from Valley View Road over Bear Creek and follows Bear Creek to a termination point at West Nevada."

"Another three miles of trail is proposed to extend through Ashland to the southeastern edge of the Ashland Municipal Airport" will be changed to "Another three miles of trail is proposed to extend beyond Ashland to the southeastern edge of the Ashland Municipal Airport."

McGinnis suggested that the paragraph be broken into two paragraphs beginning with *"Another three miles..."*

Jensen asked about the addition of a paragraph that explained that the Greenway is a work-in-progress. The paragraph reads: *"A future trail extension from West Nevada Street to North Mountain Park has become the scope of work for a new trail building project. Currently an Alternate Routes Proposal is being funded by a joint agreement between the Ashland Public Works Department, APRC and The Bear Creek Greenway Foundation Board."*

McFarland noted that the study had been completed and a series of recommendations proposed. Recommendations included an interim proposed route and a long-term proposal for a permanent route. The Mace property was referred to as the extended Riverwalk property and a section of the parcel was the interim route.

Discussion included various properties and bridges. Jensen asked whether the proposals should be included in the Master Plan. Chapman suggested that the paragraph should convey that work is currently underway for an extension of the Greenway to North Mountain Park without further comment. He noted that the map depicts two possible routes.

McGinnis suggested that the Willow Wind property that extends from East Main to the I-5 Highway could be considered a corridor – and could be mapped accordingly. Richards stated that there were a number of factors involved that would require some research. She indicated that she would take the matter under advisement and see what she could do.

It was agreed that the paragraph that begins *"A future trail extension"* would be re-written and condensed.

LINKAGES

Heycke pointed out a typo under linkages.

Richards reported that the sentence that talk about the Greenway connecting to Helman and Oak streets should also include North Laurel – as the street was also a designated bike route.

Motion: Jensen moved to approve Chapter 4: *The Bear Creek Greenway*, as edited. Heycke seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

c. Table of Contents

Jensen highlighted a proposal to re-order the Table of Contents. He noted that the title page would be developed more simply by APRC, and he committed to completing the Executive Summary prior to the meeting on June 15.

Jensen suggested that several chapters be incorporated into the body of those that already existed, where appropriate. He explained that he would prefer to eliminate the Appendices if possible, given the size of the document. He stated that citations would be documented and reference links would be attached but a Bibliography was not necessarily needed. In response to a question by Chapman, Jensen replied that the goals and objectives would be incorporated into the first Chapter. In addition, Chapter 14 on implementation and phasing would be eliminated.

McFarland reported that in spite of the various iterations of the Master Plan, the document would be similar in length to the original Plan. He summarized other changes, such as the combining of Chapters 1 and 2 and the incorporation of the Cascade Foothills into the chapter on Regional Trails. Flora and Fauna were also combined, and the historical references inserted into the appropriate chapter or chapters. The title page would be simplified and the Executive Summary would be shortened. Jensen added that the acknowledgements and partnerships would also be shortened.

Chapman recapped the agenda Items for the next regularly scheduled meeting, indicating that they would include a final review of the Executive Summary and the Central Bike Path.

There followed a brief discussion about maps, with Richards commenting that the maps would be similar to those displayed at the Open House with the possible addition of the Willow Wind property if appropriate.

McFarland added that photos were still needed. He reminded those present that each photo should contain the name of the member submitting the photo as well as the date the photo was taken. He recommended sending no more than three per chapter.

Chapman stated that in his opinion, the Master Plan should be completed by the end of June – or shortly thereafter.

Jensen proposed a meeting with the format editor who would be compiling the project, ensuring that narratives were in order and that all parties were in agreement.

V. UPCOMING MEETING DATE

June 15, 2018 @ The Grove, Otte-Peterson Room—1195 E. Main -10:00 a.m. [later changed to 9:00 a.m.]

VI. ADJOURNMENT – 11:30 a.m.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Betsy Manuel, Minute-Taker

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; those recordings are available upon request.