

MINUTES
ASHLAND PARKS & RECREATION COMMISSION (APRC)
Trails Master Plan Review Subcommittee
November 1, 2021 – 10:30 a.m.
Electronic Meeting

Present:

COMMITTEE MEMBERS: APRC Commissioner Rick Landt, APRC Commissioner Leslie Eldridge, Ashland Forest Lands Commissioner Priscila Franco, Ashland Forest Lands Commissioner Luke Brandy, Jeffrey McFarland, Ashland Woodlands & Trails Association Torsten Heycke, David Chapman, Brooke Hansen, Rogue Valley Mountain Bike Association Member Casey Botts

APRC & CITY STAFF: APRC Director Michael A. Black, City of Ashland Fire Department Forestry Division Chief Chris Chambers, City of Ashland GIS Specialist Lea Richards, APRC Open Space Supervisor Jason Minica, APRC Executive Analyst Dorinda Cottle

PRESENTERS: Rogue Valley Mountain Bike Association Member Ian Cropper

Absent:

None

View [recording of meeting](#)

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 10:30 a.m.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Trails Master Plan Review Subcommittee Meeting – October 20, 2021

Motion: Chapman moved to approve the Minutes from October 20, 2021 as presented. Botts seconded.

Vote: The vote was all yes.

III. ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

None

IV. PUBLIC INPUT

Written comments were received and have been [posted online](#)

V. CONTINUATION OF REVIEW AND QUESTIONS OF RVMBA (ROGUE VALLEY MOUNTAIN BIKE ASSOCIATION) PROPOSAL (View [meeting packet](#) for background information and for the RVMBA Proposal, *City of Ashland, Sustainable Mountain Bike Trails*)

- The RVMBA Plan contains 10 proposals – Six (6) proposals are directly related to APRC managed lands; the other four (4) are on COA lands
- Botts clarified what a sustainable trail means in the mountain bike context and the two documents that RVMBA refers to:

- [Guidelines for a Quality Trail Experience](#) (put together by Bureau of Land Management and the International Mountain Biking Association)
- [International Mountain Biking Association Trails Solutions](#)
- Botts presented the following proposals at this meeting:
 - **Lithia Park Low Angle Climb and Descending Trails**—This proposal addresses neighborhood connectivity, beginner trails, environmental impact and tourism. The low angle trail would allow to get bikes off of Winburn Way and/or Granite St, with a loop option that would allow for climbing and descending, and funnel bikers toward downtown
 - Cropper pointed out that a designated biker trail in this area would be a benefit for all users, as user groups would then have their own designated trails
 - Black asked if Glenview Rd had been considered as an alternative. Botts stated that Glenview does have motorized traffic, the northern area is steep with blind corners in some sections and therefore not ideal for youth or beginners. Black suggested that Botts talk about why one alternative is preferred over other options. Botts stated that their goal is to create a safe place for youth and beginners to ride
 - Brandy asked for clarification on how young riders would access this trail and if they would ride up Pioneer St near OSF (Oregon Shakespeare Festival), going through multiple traffic lights. Secondly, he asked if RVMBA has thought about the economic impact of mountain bikers parking downtown. Botts pointed out that the traffic lights on Pioneer are actually a safety measure and much safer and more predictable than traffic on Winburn Way through Lithia Park. Botts stated that some families will park in Lithia Park and then access the trail loop near the APCR Administrative Office. Botts said he feels there are two demographics when it comes to parking and that the locals would utilize the Lithia Low Angle trails as a route of travel and not drive to the trails, the occasional riders and tourists would likely park in Lithia Park
 - Franco asked if RVMBA has considered specific trailhead parking. Botts stated this location doesn't lend itself to trailhead parking; therefore, users would ride to the trail or park in Lithia Park, or downtown
 - Hansen stated that one of the problems she sees is that we need more beginner trails in town and this trail offers a solution
 - Franco reiterated that she would like to see consideration for parking. Botts offered clarification that the RVMBA plan is meant to be looked at and revised as needed, and if the subcommittee feels parking is more important than reducing traffic up to the quarry, then that is a consideration that they will look into
 - Brandy asked about trails crossing and signage and preserving this 'wild' area and how it fits with equity between all user groups. Botts stated that in their opinion a mountain bike trail does not make an area less scenic than a hiker trail. And putting in a sign to alert a trail crossing is not a dealbreaker for the experience
 - Minica asked if RVMBA would be able to monitor the trail to help keep bike and pedestrian traffic separate. Botts responded that indirect monitoring would be what they could offer and if you build a trail that people want to ride, they will not leave the trail
 - Cropper shared that a Strava heatmap shows that this trail is already being used by mountain bikers and creating an official mountain bike trail would reduce the conflict between the user groups as each would have a dedicated trail in the same space
 - Eldridge asked if this area could be reduced to one main pedestrian trail and one main biking trail to reduce crossing. Currently this area has many unsanctioned trails. Franco added that it is standard practice to create legal trails to curb user-generated trails and reduce the overall number of trails and take care of the ones that are sanctioned. She pointed out the Forest Lands Commission's, [Ashland Forest Plan](#), includes monitoring of recreation use and forest conditions. She was not sure if this was happening
 - Heycke acknowledged that there is a need for beginner trails and for youth. He questioned if the trail is primarily for youth or both youth and beginners and is that a problem. Botts said primarily a beginner trail but built in a way that anyone could utilize it

- and built in a way to reduce speed. For example, corners that require riders to reduce speed or grade reversals, so go up slightly before going down
- Franco asked the group to consider rating our trails like ski areas do. For example, beginner to advanced ratings
 - Brandy asked about the cut-in trail from Glenview. Botts said that would be an option that could be discussed at some point. Black offered that we may look into placing a traffic counter on Glenview and to look at the Lithia Park Master Plan and see if any information was gathered that could be helpful here. Botts pointed out that there are parts of the Lithia Park Master Plan that support this proposal
 - **Pioneer Street Mountain Bike Promenade**—This proposal addresses beginner trails, environmental impact, user experience and tourism. The proposal includes restoration work to the area. This addition would keep bike traffic off of Winburn Way. This proposal would be the exit point to the Lithia Park Low Angle trail proposal. It would include rollable terrain for mountain biking, but would also be able to accommodate multiple user groups
 - Minica pointed out that the promenade is used as a fire road and that will need to be taken into consideration
 - Heycke asked if the promenade features would be two-way. Botts said it would be one-way toward town, with the rolling features on one side only. Heycke followed up by asking if the biker user footprint would be larger than just the features added to the promenade. Botts acknowledged that would be the case as some would loop the promenade

Action Items:

- The subcommittee members will continue to visit the proposal areas in small groups or on their own time

VI. ADJOURNMENT – Meeting Adjourned at 11:55 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dorinda Cottle
APRC Executive Analyst