

City of Ashland  
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION  
TRAIL MASTER PLAN UPDATE COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
November 3, 2017

**PRESENT:** **APRC Commissioner:** Jim Lewis

**Additional Committee Members:** David Chapman, Torsten Heycke, Stephen Jensen, Jim McGinnis

**City and APRC Staff:** AF & R Division Chief-Forestry Chis Chambers; APRC Interim Parks Superintendent Jeffrey McFarland; Forestry Supervisor Jason Minica; GIS Analyst Lea Richards

**APRC Minute-taker:** Betsy Manuel

**ABSENT:** **Committee Member:** Luke Brandy

**APRC Commissioner:** Mike Gardiner

**APRC Staff:** APRC Director Michael Black

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

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

**II. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION/GUEST SPEAKERS**

City Planner Brandon Goldman was introduced. Goldman stated that he had been asked to explain the Ashland process of master planning where pedestrian paths or trail systems are incorporated. He distributed copies of approved plans for the Croman Mill area and the Normal neighborhood area. When developed, the intent of master planning is to ensure that the underlying transportation system is updated, land use zoning has been confirmed, and there is compliance with open space requirements. The Transportation System Plan (TSP) details transportation connectivity planned for the area. The TSP includes a pedestrian and bicycle component and the Master Plan sets the stage for development of the property.

Goldman explained that a developer must either meet the requirements or propose a viable alternative. There is a proportionality component that governs the proposed development – what the City asks of the developer must also provide a benefit for the development or the City has to contribute to the costs involved if there is a broader public interest.

Goldman highlighted the pre-app process, noting that each City agency considers the developer’s conceptual plan and provides feedback regarding each area of influence. The Fire Department, Public Works Department, and Water Commission are examples of various agencies. Feedback is relayed to the applicant so that a formal application can be made that meets City and agency requirements.

In response to a question by Richards regarding trails that are a priority for trails, Goldman noted that there would be no agency involvement if a property owner was asking to remodel or build an addition – a type of

activity that requires a building permit. If the addition is in an area where a trail connection has been identified, no discussion would take place. If the property owner was proposing a subdivision, then the scope of the project would trigger agency feedback that includes parks, trails and open space.

Goldman reported that once the Trails and Open Space Master Plan was updated and a new map was proposed, the Plan would be adopted into the TSP and ultimately into the City's Comprehensive Plan. This gives the City a legal basis for proposing a trail or trail easement to a developer or property owner.

Heycke noted that a trail connection could easily be overlooked if there was no agency alert. Jensen asked about ways to generate an agency alert when only a building permit was necessary. Goldman stated that there would be no direct link unless scope of the project triggered an agency review. He indicated that there were no code requirements for trails and therefore, the City could not withhold a permit that complies with the pertinent building code.

Discussion included examples related to planning actions. Situations where the City could compel a homeowner to accommodate a proposed trail were rare. McGinnis stated that trails were typically established only when a property owner voluntarily cooperates. He noted that one way to change the lack of a trigger might be to establish a map overlay that the City could access when a property was under consideration – a sort of information trigger. McGinnis stated that the trail information could be relayed to the property owner and possibly APRC. Those contacts might initiate a discussion about potential trails or connectivity easements. Goldman stated that occasionally people will come in to discuss setbacks and other planning actions prior to making application for a building permit. He indicated that trail connectivity might be addressed at that time. Goldman noted that planners will call up other layers in place for zoning particulars, steep slopes or wetlands. A trails and open space overlay could be added.

There followed a discussion regarding county land, recorded easements, TID considerations and other mechanisms that would trigger trails awareness. Goldman suggested that the TSP would be key to a multi-modal approach. McFarland highlighted the Croman plan as an example where the TSP should be consulted because the plan differs from the Trails map and the two should be in alignment. Goldman stated that the TSP could be modified for trail connectivity if it were an improvement over the adopted plan. He agreed to work with McFarland on alignment issues, but noted that adoption into the TSP was the purview of the Public Works Department. It was agreed that adoption of the updated Trails Master Plan into the TSP was essential.

Goldman emphasized that trails that connect with forestland or properties that are outside the City limits would not be included in the TSP. Richards suggested that the portion of the Trails Master Plan that is under the jurisdiction of Jackson County should be adopted into the County's Transportation Systems Plan.

### III. ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

There were none.

### IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

#### • *Minutes – October 20, 2017*

#### Discussion:

Page 4 paragraph 6: "the multiuse trail was dangerous"  
Should be "the multiuse lower Waterline Trail was dangerous"  
Page 4 paragraph 6: "development of a new trail below the waterline"  
Should be "development of a new trail below the Waterline trail"

Page 5 Paragraph 5 "SOLC was involved with land acquisitions"  
"SOLC was being approached regarding land acquisitions"

**Motion:** The motion for approval of the minutes was approved by consensus as amended.

### V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

#### ➤ *Westside Forestlands (Update from Chris Chambers and Torsten Heycke about bordering private property on Hitt Road.*

Heycke reported that he and three other Committee members met with the owner of portions of Hitt Road, Ostrich Peak and other land that includes the Mystical and Moai trails. He stated that the discussion included options for easements, partitions and acquisitions. Heycke noted that it seemed that the property owner was more interested in the sale of property rather than the granting of easements. Heycke indicated that the land owner was amenable to working with the City and APRC. Until then the owner stated that if he encounters hikers on his property he tells them that they are trespassing.

McFarland stated that they let the homeowner know that the Master Plan Update Committee had identified Hitt Road as a priority for trail development. They discussed possibilities for funding to purchase the land. After the comprehensive conversation, the owner stated that he would need to consult with others prior to making any decisions. No conclusions were drawn, but the land owner agreed to think about the value of the land and possible next steps.

Heycke noted that he had committed to talking to the Forest Service about Ostrich Peak and nearby trails regarding possible acquisition of the properties. He reported that in following up, he discovered that an environmental impact assessment would have to be initiated and if vulnerable species were found, such as the spotted owl, the existing trail might be closed. Further discussion about processes and possible next steps included contacting pertinent agencies (such as LWCS) regarding the land. McFarland talked about geologic studies, the purview of the Forest Lands Commission and other data.

McFarland verbally reviewed the properties between Hitt Road and Forest Service Lands – and which of the properties APRC would find of interest.

Heycke highlighted information regarding recreational immunity. One issue that is a grey area was the indemnification process with regard to transients if they are injured while on a trail that is either privately owned or public land open to the public. There followed a brief discussion about the liabilities involved.

McGinnis asked about next steps and Heycke replied that the conversation about Hitt Road established it as a priority even though the City does not own all of that road. The Master Plan could detail next steps that would assist in developing a process to convert the roadbed into a workable corridor with trail connectivity.

Discussion focused on the properties that were privately owned and talked about with the property owner – who indicated a willingness to partition the properties in creative ways to assist in the creation of the Hitt Road Corridor. McFarland stated that the property owner was open to lot line adjustments if necessary. Jensen suggested that the properties be identified as the preferred route for connectivity.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **a. *Chapter Writing Assignments***

McFarland talked about a chapter assignment sign-up sheet that includes existing chapters as well as new chapters that are yet to be developed. He stated that the Table of Notes would be a resource with information that could be added into the Chapters.

McFarland detailed the proposed new chapters – highlighting the need for a Glossary, and new narrative for the Cascade Foothills area that includes the Imperatrice Property and the Eastside and Westside Forestlands. Side corridors were not listed as a potential new chapter and McFarland suggested that the side corridors be incorporated into the main corridors where they bisect. For example, a side corridor was identified for the Railroad District, developing from the Central Bike Path. McFarland proposed that non-controversial parking areas be depicted on the maps.

McGinnis talked about developing corridors that parallel the railroad. He stated that the railroad bisects the City and a parallel route would allow access to properties north such as those from Mountain Street to Oak Street. He commented that discussion of a future route in the Master Plan would legitimize it as a possibility for future development.

Jensen recommended that the assignments be divided amongst pairs of committee members if possible. He spoke about the value of shared information and expertise. There followed discussion about how best to accommodate different technical systems and writing styles. McGinnis suggested editing on Google docs. McFarland asked that all edits be tracked and that a review process by the Committee be instituted once the assignments were completed. He stated that the final step would be to send the document to consultant Mark Mularz for completion.

McGinnis suggested following the existing formatting for consistency. He noted that the existing version presents a route description, linkages, character, expected users and other types of information in a similar order for each chapter. McGinnis proposed that discussion of future availability and/or acquisition of priority properties be included along with expected outcomes. Jensen agreed, adding that a list of the priorities could be placed in hierarchical order.

McFarland identified another update – that of recreational immunity – for the Trail Safety and Etiquette chapter due to current changes in interpretation of the law.

Chapman volunteered to bring his write-up of the Cascade Foothills to the next meeting for review. Richards suggested reviewing the maps for changes as well. It was also agreed that chapters could be passed between one another to capture information based upon individual knowledge and familiarity with an area.

It was agreed that Chapman's chapter on the Cascade Foothills would be reviewed at the next meeting. Also at the next meeting, additional assignments would be given for remaining chapters. Review would happen in no particular order as members completed the write-up for their particular chapters.

It was agreed by consensus that the next meeting would be held on November 17, 2017, and an additional meeting would be identified at that time.

Richards asked about the maps that preface each Chapter. She stated that they were not in a program that was used by the City of Ashland. McFarland committed to identifying the information needed to institute map updates. It was agreed to address maps at the next scheduled meeting.

#### **AJDOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:45 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Betsy Manuel, Minute-Taker

Trail Master Plan Committee of the Ashland Parks and Recreation Commission