

City of Ashland
PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
TRAIL MASTER PLAN UPDATE COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
June 29, 2018

PRESENT: **Parks Commissioners:** Mike Gardiner, Jim Lewis
 APRC Director: Michael Black
 Additional Committee Members: David Chapman, Torsten Heycke, Stephen Jensen
 City and APRC Staff: Interim Parks Superintendent Jeffrey McFarland; Forestry and Trails
 Supervisor Jason Minica
 APRC Minute-taker: Betsy Manuel

ABSENT: Luke Brandy, Chris Chambers, Jim McGinnis, GIS Analyst Lea Richards

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Chapman called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. at 51 Winburn Way in Ashland, OR.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- *Minutes of June 1, 2018*

Motion: Lewis moved to approve the Minutes of June 1, 2018, as presented. Jensen 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*

McFarland stated that one citizen commentary had been received and it focused on the trails along the TID ditch. He noted that multi-use trails were a concern, particularly with mountain bikers in areas such as the Acid Castle Rocks Trail and Fell on Knee Trail. McFarland indicated that the Ashland resident had asked the City to consider installing user separations when trails were in planning stages.

Gardiner noted that consideration might be given to limit bikers to certain trails. McFarland targeted two trails where bikers were asked to walk their bikes on certain sections.

There followed a discussion about safety hazards and various remedies such as increased signage to alert pedestrians, targeting certain trails for redesign where bottlenecks occurred, how to best enforce safety regulations and increased volunteer presence in problematic areas.

Chapman stated that unauthorized new trails were being actively developed – oftentimes on private properties that were most likely created by mountain bikers. Black agreed, stating that mountain bikers had talked about the trails they were building. He said rogue trails were a concern. He also noted that bikers had proposed a mountain bike trail along the east side of Lithia Park; however, there were several entities to consult regarding the trail's feasibility and it would be important to integrate it with the Lithia Park Master Plan, the Forestlands Master Plan and the Trails Master Plan. In addition, Ashland Woodlands and Trails Association (AWTA) worked with all pertinent entities to ensure that new trails were properly built and maintained.

Jensen initiated further discussion regarding mountain bike trails and whether they should be addressed more fully in the Trails Master Plan. Black stated that it should be acknowledged that some places are unsuitable for mountain bike trails. Heycke agreed, indicating that APRC and AWTA should work together to address concerns regarding trail development, particularly for mountain bike trails.

McFarland emphasized that trail building should take into account the topography, geology and location of private properties in relation to a proposed trail. He stated that some terrain was not suitable for trails because of sensitive drainage areas and people constructing trails should do so using only environmentally sound practices.

IV. ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS TO THE AGENDA

There were none.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was none.

NEW BUSINESS

- ***Review Executive Summary (Jensen/Chapman)***

Heycke noted that the Summary was well written and few amendments were needed. He suggested that the sentence "The process unfolded in 2017 and early 2018 with the TMP Update Committee holding regularly scheduled and noticed meetings" be shortened to read: "*The process unfolded in 2017 and early 2018 with the TMP Update Committee holding regularly scheduled public meetings.*"

Motion: Lewis moved to approve the Executive Summary as amended. Gardiner seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

- ***Review Chapter 5: Central Ashland Bike Trail (McGinnis)***

Jensen commented that he was opposed to using an acronym for Central Bike Path but recognized that the title was over-referenced. It was agreed that Jensen would remove references and amend as needed.

Paragraph three sentence three reading: "*A potential long-term regional goal is to continue the route, possibly following the railroad tracks, as far south as Siskiyou Pass or even the California border*" was removed.

Chapman commented that the Central Bike Path map depicted some sections where trails or prospective trails on both sides of the tracks were not referenced in the narrative. He suggested adding descriptions into the document.

Chapman asked whether areas where bike / pedestrian railroad crossings were essential for citizen safety should be spotlighted, indicating that doing so would lay the groundwork for a more comprehensive transportation plan within the City. Black agreed, stating that highlighting the dangerous areas would assist negotiations with the railroad.

After some discussion, it was decided to incorporate references to crossings into the Central Bike Path section entitled **LINKAGES**. Black suggested verbiage that would stress that achieving active transportation was problematic because of the railroad system and lack of frequent crossings. Jensen proposed including a few specific places such as the 4th Street and / or Normal Street crossings.

The narrative that reads:

"When completed, the Central Bike Path will intersect with every existing and proposed upslope corridor offering significant linkages to streets with bike lanes including Glenn, Orange, Laurel, Helman, Hersey, Oak, East Main, and Ashland Streets."

Was changed to:

"The Central Bike Path will eventually intersect with every existing and proposed upslope corridor offering significant linkages to streets with bike lanes including Glenn, Orange, Laurel, Helman, Hersey, Oak, East Main, and Ashland Streets."

Motion: Gardiner moved to approve Chapter 5, Central Bike Path, with the noted amendments. Heycke seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

- **Roundtable Discussion**

Jensen stated that with the approval of Chapter 5, the document was completed.

McFarland noted that he would refine the acknowledgments and upload updated photos. Extraneous photos and information would be available to Mularz via a Miscellaneous file folder in Google.docs. He stated that the consultant would then upload the completed document for final formatting. In response to a question by Lewis, McFarland said photos of people from the various trail user groups would not require authorization for use by the person or persons represented.

McFarland stated that Mularz would be available for a conference call on July 3, 2018, with several committee members. Arrangements were currently underway to properly authorize his role as the format editor via contract.

IV. UPCOMING MEETING DATE

- July 13, 2018 @ The Grove, Otte-Peterson Room—1195 E. Main, 10:00 a.m.

Chapman noted that the meeting of July 13, 2018, would only take place if needed. Otherwise the TMP Committee would adjourn until consultant Mark Mularz had a formatting update to share.

Jensen reviewed the process once the formatted document was received from Mularz. Black indicated that the Transportation Commission might want to address information that intersected or affected the TMP prior to presenting the document to APRC for approval. He stated that he would be available to present the document, if available, to the Transportation Commission at their scheduled meeting on August 23, 2018.

McFarland reviewed the acknowledgments for comment. Gardiner suggested that key staff contributors be highlighted under special acknowledgments.

There followed a brief discussion about the proper time for disbanding the TMP Committee. It was agreed that the Committee should adjourn as the Master Plan went through the vetting process but re-convene if any major changes were proposed.

Black suggested that the links for public comments remain active until the Master Plan was adopted. He advocated for a standard presentation to explain the process and the document once it was finalized.

There followed a short discussion about development of the Imperatrice property. Black commented that in his opinion, the development process (including the procurement of easements throughout the property) would begin once Public Works made a decision regarding their use of the property. He noted that Public Works Director Paula Brown would be presenting an update to the Parks Commission on plans for new wetland cooling areas near Ashland Pond at their regularly scheduled Study Session on July 16. Lewis expressed some concern about including the chapter on the Imperatrice property given that there was no formal plan. He stated that the updated

TMP focused on the portion of Imperatrice land above the TID canal. Black stated that there were currently three uses proposed for the property and it seemed that there was sufficient acreage to accomplish all three. He recommended retaining the narrative about Imperatrice land in the updated TMP document.

- ***Bear Creek Greenway Extension***

Black reported that an open house was recently hosted regarding the Bear Creek Greenway extension through Ashland. He stated that the open house had been well attended and responses to the proposal had been positive. There followed a discussion focused on concerns from the Sleepy Hollow neighborhood

V. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:40 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 Committee meetings are digitally recorded and available upon request.