

Trails Committee Minutes
December 14, 2011 – 3:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Kinowski; Supervisors Veitch, Wright, Wormuth, Richardson, Daly, Grattidge, Collyer, Barrett and Wood; Steve Dorsey, County Attorney; Jason Kemper, Planning; Paul Lent, Emergency Services.

Chairman Kinowski called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance.

On a motion made by Mr. Veitch, seconded by Mr. Richardson the minutes of the September 28, 2011 meeting were approved.

Mr. Kinowski said the county trail system has blossomed into a significant tourist attraction for the county. The trail system is now available on the county website as well as in google. A binder is available to all Supervisors that identifies county owned lands that could potentially be developed into expanding the county trail system. The finishing of the Zim Smith Trail is moving forward with the help of some county money and the connecting with the railroad and NYSEG to finish the trail into Mechanicville. The northern end of the Zim Smith Trail will probably foster more attention going into 2012, he said.

Mr. Kemper said Planning submitted an application to recognize the Zim Smith Trail as a national recreation trail. To date, they are still waiting for confirmation. This recognition will help when applying for grant money, he said.

Mr. Kinowski said one item that was not mentioned during the DEC initiative when it was going to be turned back over was what would be required to transfer land, and/or sell or lease.

Mr. Dorsey said to sell County Land, county section 215 requires that the property be sold at public auction after public advertisement. There is an exception that was set forth from the Comptrollers opinion of 1979, which allows the county to sell land to a specific purchaser without having to go through the public auction. The process requires that a local law be adopted authorizing the specific purchaser. It must be for a value; it can't be given away. The local law would be subject to permissive referendum, therefore, It would be at least 45 days after the Local Law is adopted before it could go into effect.

Mr. Lent said part of the new radio system was to get a permit from the Adirondack Park Agency to consolidate the antenna holdings on Spruce Mountain down to a lower tower. This was a requirement to essentially clean the top of the mountain up, with the exception of the fire tower, which is owned by the Department of Conservation. As part of the radio project emergency services took down two existing guide towers along with a wooden tower and a couple of buildings, returning the area to what it was prior as much

as possible. This has all been signed off on and approved, and all requirements have been completed with the Adirondack Park Agency.

Mr. Lent said under County Attorney, Mark Rider, he approached the APA to discuss with them the possibility that we may be asked to sub-divide part of the property. That part of Spruce Mountain that is inside the park has a minimum ten-acre requirement for sub-divisions. This parcel is significantly less than ten acres, so it would be a non-conforming sub-division.

Mr. Kinowski said the DEC had previously contacted the Friends group to let them know that funds could be made available to restore the Spruce Mountain Fire Tower, the trail and to pay for Summit Stewards, as soon as the tower is turned over to NYSDEC and the adoption of a Natural Resource with the Spruce Mountain Fire Tower Committee is in place.

The Friends of the Spruce Mountain Fire Tower committee have been very engaged in this since prior to 2009. In addition to being very vocal, they have been very active in identifying what it could do for Saratoga County.

Mr. Kinowski said if the land is made available for use as a trail system with Tower access it could potentially bring approximately \$175,000 into the local community, based on 35,000 visitors a year. This would add an economic boost to the area at no cost to the county.

Mr. Kinowski said the next move forward would be to identify viable options to transfer and discuss county owned land, to achieve county trail expansion, and fire tower enhancements.

Mr. Kinowski said that he would be willing to put together a meeting with the right combination of people to come up with options that could be passed on to next years committee.

A motion was made by Mr. Richardson, seconded by Mr. Veitch to forward options on to the Trails Committee for 2012. Unanimous.

On a motion made by Mrs. Wormuth, seconded by Mr. Gordon the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Sansom