

Trails Committee Minutes
March 27, 2012 – 4:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Kinowski; Supervisors Veitch, Wright, Wormuth, and Richardson; Devin Dalpos, Saratoga Springs; Jason Kemper, Planning; Jennifer Stevens, CCE.

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

On a motion made by Mr. Veitch, seconded by Mr. Wright the minutes of the December 14, 2011 meeting were approved unanimously.

Chairman Kinowski announced the appointment of Mr. Veitch as committee Vice Chair.

Mr. Kemper distributed a handout of a map outlining the areas from the Timber sale for 2011-2012. He said when combined there would be 330 to 400 acres in the Town of Moreau that would be ideal for equine use.

Ms. Stevens said she is a community educator at Cooperative Extension with her primary focus being equine. She said she has been working on getting people who use the trails to come together by attending the trails meetings for Moreau State Park, and inviting equestrians in to talk about land conservation and stewardship. She said, most of the people attending the meetings come for trails, so they have decided to have an informational meeting about trails. She suggested having an event to open the trails where she could get the word out to the equestrian community through their weekly E-News letter.

Mr. Kinowski asked how much acreage there was for riding. Mr. Kemper said he estimated that there would be approximately 10 miles of trails once all the logging is completed. He said there is money in the budget for signage on the trails and parking lots.

Mr. Kinowski requested assistance from Ms. Stevens to administer a press release after the timber thinning is done and the trails are ready to be opened, followed by a ribbon cutting ceremony.

Mr. Kemper said he was hopeful that the timber thinning would be complete in the next couple of months.

Mr. Kemper said there is some sewer work being done just south of Zepco Lane, but it should be complete by the end of the week. There have been a couple of complaints from Oak Street, where signs were ordered last September. The posts have just arrived as of last Thursday and are scheduled to be put up within the week.

Mr. Kinowski asked at what time in the spring are all county trails traveled to find out if there are any problems on the trails. Mr. Kemper said that is done as soon as he can get on the trails. He said there are partners who help in that initiative.

Mr. Kinowski asked if there was something already at the county planning level that when any township submits for a major subdivision or a PDD, does the county look in cooperation with townships, for any additional or adds to trails for a town purpose as well as a county purpose.

Mr. Kemper said he has discussions with those municipalities and if they choose to pursue those options, Planning strongly backs that.

Mrs. Wormuth said if it is within 500 ft. of a State or County road it is also reviewed. If there is a natural connection that has been suggested in a master plan that referral comes back to that municipality, not as an edict to have it done, but as an item that is something that has been identified as a possibility.

Mr. Kemper said DEC has finalized the survey and deed description, which has been submitted to the County Attorney. A complete package is being sent which will then be forwarded to the APA for subdivision approval to subdivide out the top of Spruce Mountain.

Mr. Kinowski said that Mr. Kemper was able to get the package in for National Recognition of the Zim Smith Trail. Mr. Kemper said he should hear by June 7th or 8th if they did qualify. He said this would open the door to significantly more funding if we are approved.

Mr. Kinowski said as far as the extension of the trail toward Mechanicville, there is a meeting scheduled with NYSEG and National Grid that has to do with finalizing the next steps for the power companies to take the trail along the Zim Smith Southern Connection scheduled for early next week.

Mr. Kinowski said he has had discussions with Mrs. Wormuth about obtaining properties in Halfmoon. Mrs. Wormuth said people who own property along the ridge are concerned about how the rail yard originally presented their operation and how it exists today and how it impact the future on their property, both from a quality of life standpoint and a value standpoint. Mrs. Wormuth suggested that a meeting be setup, coordinated with all the residents involved with the easements, and have the county be the one to come in and talk about why the connection is important, separating it and making it more of a countywide initiative rather than a town initiative.

Mr. Kinowski said he would like to meet with Mr. Kemper to establish a power point presentation, which would then be brought to the Halfmoon Town Hall for approval.

Mr. Richardson said discussions have taken place for over a year about a county trail addition from the City of Mechanicville to Waterford. The trail would run behind Momentive Performance Materials with a connection of a piece that Waterford has done or is doing for the Champlain Trail, which is going to go from Waterford to Whitehall. Mr. Richardson said the City of Mechanicville is prepared to give a parcel to the county that he has disclosed was once a dumping site. He said the City of Mechanicville will always be liable for that, and they are willing to put that in writing. He said more importantly, are the connections to get the trail to Halfmoon and into the City of

Mechanicville. Mr. Richardson said he is the Chairman of the Saratoga-Washington Partnership and they are currently working on the Dix Bridge, which is a huge connection between the Champlain Trail and the Washington County trails that go through Washington County and into Lake George.

Mr. Kemper said he spoke with the County Attorney about concerns with liability should the county take over the property. An option that he has discussed with Mr. Richardson is to look into an easement for the county, which would allow the county to go after grant funding. Mr. Kemper said he believes that there will be grant funding available in the future that will allow the connection to be made and the county could help to make that happen.

Mr. Kemper said eight or nine months ago when he was originally contacted by Mr. Richardson he had contacted EPA and there were no issues. EPA is anticipating a trail in the future. Mr. Kemper said he would get some backup information and detail for the committee, and will send a memo out of what is exactly the existing proposal in the area of all the property owners.

Mr. Kinowski said the next steps would be:

- EPA contact
- Contact internally with the County Attorney
- Presentation from the Trails committee to raise it to the next committee
- Update and recommendation from Supervisor Lawler

Mr. Kinowski said he has met with Saratoga PLAN, who is a critical part of the committee to bring together everyone that uses the trails, and asked them to come up with agenda items for the committee. He said he met with them recently and by April 17th they will have six agenda items for this year that the committee can work on. Mr. Kinowski said he knew one of the items would be the northern end of the Zim Smith.

Mr. Veitch said he had a meeting with the City of Saratoga Springs to talk about some of the potential pathways for the northern end of the trail, but it is at the preliminary stage at this point.

Mr. Kinowski said Audrey Ball, Julia Stokes and he met at Global Foundries with National Grid, where they found out that it is a policy of National Grid not to allow equine travel on their major paths. Mr. Kinowski said he would be meeting with congressional leadership to see if the policy can be made flexible in any way.

On a motion made by Mr. Wright, seconded by Mr. Richardson the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Sansom