

TRAILS & OPEN SPACE Transcript 11/3/2021

SPEAKERS

Steve Bulger, Mo Wright, Phil Barrett, Jason Kemper, Matt Veitch, Benny Zlotnick, Kevin Tollisen, Several Supervisors, Tom Richardson, Bridget Rider

Kevin Tollisen

All right, welcome to trails and Open Space Committee. I believe we do have a quorum.

Bridget Rider

Yes, you do.

Kevin Tollisen

Alright, so could I have a motion to approve the minutes of the October 6, 2021 meeting?

Tom Richardson

I'll make that motion.

Kevin Tollisen

Supervisor Richardson.

Benny Zlotnick

Second.

Kevin Tollisen

Supervisor Zlotnick. Any further discussion? All in favor?

Several Supervisors

Aye.

Kevin Tollisen

Any opposed? Motion is carried. Mr. Kemper and you get the next few items.

Jason Kemper

Okay, thank you. I've also got Jeff Williams here in the back of the room assisting me. So the first one, everyone has a copy of the memo I sent out. No, since we didn't do it start to finish but just the genesis of this, actually looking back this morning, it was actually late 2018 was the first time we got together on this. So this was a as you see from the memo, a group of representatives representing Saratoga County and the biking community got together initially, just with concerns, I think it all started as signage, basically, you know, we don't label it, we hadn't labeled any bike routes around the County. So Supervisor Veitch was heavily involved. We worked with a number of bicycling groups and over a

course of a couple years there and a pandemic in the middle, we finally agreed on a bike route map. As of right now, no incurred costs. What we'll do is work with DPW and start signing these routes around the County and this will also allow us when future road projects are planned or grant opportunities are applied for, this will allow us to increase shoulder widths, add bike lanes and those sort of things on public facilities, bridges and such. So that's a quick summary, I did email out a scanned copy of the bike route map. I do have a larger copies up here. And this has been reviewed by the County Attorney's office and reviewed by DPW and they've both provided their input on the proposal. So as of right now, the resolution will just be sort of adopting a County Route Bike Map. Now I'll leave it up to Supervisor Veitch if I missed anything.

Matt Veitch

I think you captured everything.

Jason Kemper

Okay.

Kevin Tollisen

I'll note Supervisor Barrett is here with us as well. Do I have a motion for approval of this?

Tom Richardson

I'll move it.

Kevin Tollisen

Supervisor Richardson, is there a second?

Phil Barrett

I'll second.

Kevin Tollisen

Second Supervisor Barrett. Any further discussion? Thank you, Supervisor Veitch for your efforts on this as well. All in favor?

Several Supervisors

Aye.

Kevin Tollisen

Any opposed? Motion is carried.

Jason Kemper

Second one is the Saratoga County Community Forest Project Update. There is a summary there I was originally going to be looking for a general support resolution from the Board this month, we will be waiting on that till next month. We'll work with the County Attorney's office and Mike Naughton just drafting, we will actually have a Memorandum of Agreement in front of the Board next month. We're working on those details right now, so it'll be something more formal for the Board to look at. We did

receive a US Forest Service grant amount of \$391,000. This project ranked number five nationally, that money will be passed through as part of the purchase price. And we've tentatively agreed to allocate up to 120,000 that's in the unallocated open space reserve fund. So all those details will be in front of the board next month. I just wanted to keep the committee up to be up to speed on the progress. This is a joint project. It borders towns of Wilton in Greenfield. And there has been a previous summary that was sent out to the board. Again, no resolution.

Kevin Tollisen

Any questions on this?

Jason Kemper

Excellent. Just quickly, you've got the updates in front of you of what we've got going on in the County Forestland and Zim Smith Trail. First of all, I just sent out an email about an hour ago, wanted to thank DPW, they did some significant improvements at our Loudon Road parking lot. That was, there was some deep trenches going into there from wash outs, large potholes in the parking lot. All that's been fixed, crusher run was placed at the end of last week, and we will be re topping that parking lot in the spring with pavement millings which will be a much more stable surface. So that was something that was, you know, mentioned in Supervisor Veitch's report to the Board last fall as justification for more money for County forest land and trails. So that's completed, I just wanted to thank DPW. We've got a fencing contractor has been selected for the Zim Smith Trail. We're hoping to get that work done along Oak Street in late November. If it doesn't work out, then we'll do that first thing in the spring. We've also replaced all of our existing paper and other types of signs with a new aluminum sign on our County Forestland lots, so now it'll be an aluminum sign and on top of that we've got sheets of plexiglass, so when they're vandalized with graffiti and other things, we just replaced the Plexiglas on the top of them and the signs are staying and they're much more weather resistant or an actually aluminum sign. So we've ordered about, well several of those for the County Forestland parcels and we're getting those placed as we speak. The Champion Trail construction in Waterford is completed now. We have a final punch list and a press release will be forthcoming from Hudson River Valley Greenway on that on that issue. Clearing and grubbing continues on the East Mitigation Site up in the town of Northumberland County Forestland parcels, additional work will be completed in the spring. Our 2021 Open Space grants were awarded our 2021 Trails Grants contracts were all sent out to the municipalities and several of them have been returned and some are in process at the County Attorney's office, so that's moving along. We currently have eight pending Open Space and Farmland Protection projects being administered by the Planning Department. We anticipate early 2022 that two to three of those will be closing. We currently have 30 pending trail projects being administered by the Planning Department all in various phases of approval. And that's our summary.

Kevin Tollisen

Any questions from the Committee? Supervisor Barrett.

Phil Barrett

Jason under the first bullet it says fencing contractor has been selected for fence repairs on Zim Smith Trail anticipated work to begin November 2021 Weather permitting, is that, where is that exactly? Is there multiple locations?

Jason Kemper

So that

Phil Barrett

And the only reason why I ask, and I can maybe save you some time and your answer, is if you start in Round lake and you head down to over the overpass, the not the overpass, the bridge that goes over the Tech Park.

Jason Kemper

That's overpass. Yep.

Phil Barrett

Yep.

Jason Kemper

Yep.

Phil Barrett

So, and then just down to the right is a 1.9 trail that takes you to the Tech campus.

Jason Kemper

Yep.

Phil Barrett

If you go down that trail, little ways, not that far, a tree fell down, hit the fence.

Jason Kemper

Okay.

Phil Barrett

And it didn't look like it was dangerous but those are the types of things you know, we should fix and keep in mind when we can and getting some more money in the budget, as we discussed, for maintenance of the trail is important. But along those lines, you know, one thing we have in Town as we've expanded our parks network is we have people that kind of take on the ownership of it, and they'll they're in there all the time and then I'll let me know if there's issues. Do we have anybody like that with the Zim Smith Trail, because I don't think it would be too difficult to get, unless you already have people doing that.

Jason Kemper

Unofficially, or officially? Because I hear

Phil Barrett

Either way.

Jason Kemper

I hear within minutes usually, if we have an issue.

Phil Barrett

Sounds like, sounds like it's taken care of.

Jason Kemper

Especially if it's off hours, it seems like but that's fine. We don't have anything formal. There's a lot of bikers, and folks that use a trail sort of their own sections that you know, pretty routinely notify me if there's anything.

Phil Barrett

Oh, good.

Jason Kemper

All the way down to leaves on the trail. so

Phil Barrett

That's good enough.

Jason Kemper

In this this section of Zim Smith Trail, the fencing is from Oak Street down. It's that when we originally built it, the railroad required us to use three posts cedar, and it wasn't pressure treated, and they've all rotted off, so this is for that section. The section of the trail you're referencing by the bypass is controlled by Saratoga Plan and the Town of Malta. So I'll let Alyssa down there know about that because she usually is very informative to me when something happens on our side.

Phil Barrett

Yeah, it's a pretty it's pretty high metal fence.

Jason Kemper

Yeah.

Phil Barrett

But the tree came down. And it looks like the tree was removed, but just something to keep in mind.

Jason Kemper

Okay. Thank you.

Kevin Tollisen

Anyone else?

Steve Bulger

Mr. Chairman, just a quick question for Jason, for my own information, is vandalism of our County signs on the forestland, has that been a real issue?

Jason Kemper

Yes. Yep. And it's, it's, we didn't really have, you know, I mean, the quality of our signs, you know, we started out with paper, and they would tear them and, you know, this, both the kiosks that we build, that DPW builds should I say, and the signs have been often vandalized, as well as the aluminum sign sometimes for the entranceways and such. So that's why we do we do monitor some of them with cameras, you know, when these issues arise, and have caught some individuals and solved some of the issues but obviously it's, they're usually pretty remote parking lots, you know, and the Sheriff's Department absolutely does swing by them, and we have caught folks that way but it's oftentimes trying to catch somebody in the act.

Steve Bulger

Interesting. Thanks.

Jason Kemper

Yeah, I do, we do have much less vandalism on the Zim only because I think we have you know, daily patrols or every other day from the Sheriff's Department and it's just our usage has gotten so significant on the Zim it's almost policing itself much better.

Kevin Tollisen

Anyone else? Any other business to come before this committee? If not motion to adjourn?

Tom Richardson

So moved.

Mo Wright

So moved.

Kevin Tollisen

Supervisor Richardson Second, Supervisor Wright. I should have let Supervisor Wright do it.

Mo Wright

I don't care.

Kevin Tollisen

All in favor?

Several Supervisors

Aye.

Mo Wright

Still a pretty long meeting, ten minutes.

Jason Kemper

We still beat the over under so.

Kevin Tollisen

Any opposed? Motion is carried. Have a good afternoon, everyone.