



VERMONT TRAILS AND GREENWAYS COUNCIL

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VERMONT TRAILS & GREENWAYS COUNCIL
Meeting January 17, 2002
VT State House, Ethan Allen Room

Chairman Ben called the meeting to order at 9:05 am.

Present – Bonnie Waninger, Joshua Ryan (VYCC), Kevin Russell, Kim Syman, Ed Leary, Paul Moffat, Ben Rose, Dick Mackay, Mike Stafford, Chapin Spencer, Luke O'Brien, Dave Smith, Sherry Smecker, Eric Scharnberg, Kate Carter, Gray Stevens, Amy Bell, Cherie Martin, Jennifer Waite, Carolyn Moulton

Ben asked that we begin with item # 6 and take the agenda in reverse order since Amy Bell would be covering the first 3 items after she arrives at about 10 am.

6. Recreation Trails Grant Program- Sherry... (applications due @ FP&R by 4:30 pm 02/01/02). The 5 person Grant Review Committee currently has one vacancy. A replacement for Amy Bell as the State/Federal representative is needed. Mike Stafford nominated Laurie Adams of AOT for this position. The nomination was seconded By Gray Stevens and passed unanimously. Laurie is highly qualified for this position and will bring her years of experience with the grant programs to this process. **Action:** Sherry will contact Laurie for her acceptance.

5. VT Trail System: Bluff Mountain Community Trail. This is a 1.8-mile Historic Trail that is mostly on Public land and has been significantly upgraded by the VT Leadership Center Kingdom Corps Trail Crew over the past four years (application was included with 01/17/02 meeting announcement). A motion to include this trail in the Vermont Trail System was made by Paul Moffat and seconded by Ed Leary was passed without dissent. **Action:** Carolyn will make up a certificate and the acceptance letter, that Ed signs and will send out to them.

Recess for visit to the VT House deliberations on the West Mtn. Area. Ben turned the meeting over to Amy

1. Bike & Ped. Program. There are 42 active projects and they encompass \$3 to 7 million. With this much construction ongoing and a limited State staff AOT decided not to accept any new projects this year. They will set aside \$250K for \$10 to 20K planning and feasibility studies by Communities (applications due by April 8). The average project takes from 2 to 4 years to complete after initial approval, thus this years planning only grants seemed the right thing to do. Amy gave out a map of all of the 42 ongoing projects in Vermont. Copies available from Amy Bell.

The Missisquoi River Bridge for the Bike Trail will be finished in October. The missing third span will be replaced and new approach trail completed. This project will cost almost \$1 Million and of that \$650K was spent in the planning and feasibility phase according to Amy and Bonnie.

The US Transportation Enhancement Program is up for 6-year renewal. Members should contact their Congressional delegations for support of Trails Funds. Sen. Jeffords is chair of the Transportation Committee of the Senate (his aides – Jeff Squires & Jeff Brown in DC and Tom Barry in VT).

2. Council recommendation for FP&R Recreation Trails Coordinator....See the attached January 16 memo from Sherry Smecker. Apparently Scott Johnstone (ANR) has been aware of the need for a Recreation Staff component and has begun to address the issue in the Long Range Management Plan for ANR (attached report on the formation of a Recreation Advisory Committee and Minutes of ANR 02/28/01 & 06/15/01 meetings). Scott wants all recreation components (not just trails) represented on the committee.

Ed Leary said that there is a hiring freeze and no budget for a Recreation Trails or Recreation Staff position in FP&R next year. It is important that the Council invite Scott Johnstone to meet with us on this issue. ANR is in agreement with the need.

Action: Ben asked that the VT&GC Business Plan Sub-Committee (see October 4 minutes) be Convened by Mike Stafford and provide the Council with a set of recommendations for action at the March 21st meeting. Committee members...Mike Stafford, Beth Ann Finlay, Kevin Russell, Sherry Smecker, Chapin Spencer and Kim Syman.

Ben is to invite Scott Johnstone to our Annual Meeting May 16 at Green Mtn. Horse Assn, Woodstock, VT

3. Vermont Trails and Greenways Plan (1993)... Manual revision Sub-Committee: Amy Bell (convener), Kate Carter, David Smith and Kevin Russell. Amy Bell memo submitted at the December 12,2001 Directors meeting indicated that a Grant request for \$6K from the 2002 NRT Funds would be looked upon favorably by FP&R. The Council would “co-sponsor” this application with FP&R. Ed Leary said that the Department could pay the bills and then reimburse the account from NRTF set-aside Funds.

Action: Amy Bell and Sub-committee to prepare the Grant request for 02/01/02 submission (Ben to sign). In parallel with this an RFP is to be prepared for a contractor to quote on this task. Kevin and Kate have secluded themselves from this task.

4. Trails & Greenways Newsletter: Jennifer Waite agreed to continue to be the Editor with assistance from Kate Carter. Those assembled stated that the Fall issue was excellent. Cheers for Jennifer and Kate! It was suggested that the next issue feature the “building” of the VT Trails System (including the newly approved trails). The future of the State Recreation Program is a question to be addressed also (Ben? Ed?).

Deadline: Newsletter articles to Jennifer by March 27. The spring issue to be available for Annual Meeting May 16.

Action: The Newsletter funding issue to be on the agenda for the fall meeting of the Council- Paul/Carolyn

New Business:

Governors Conference on recreation- Send suggestions for the Trails Track to Sherry Smecker. Ben is on the program.

Round table:

Westmore Trails (Paul): Newsletter has article on the excellent 2001 Bald Mtn. Trail work by the Kingdom Corps of the VT Leadership Center. We plan to continue work with VLC in 2002.

Green Mountain Horse Assn. (Kim): There will be a Digital Mapping workshop at the HQ in Woodstock next week- 3 to 5pm all are invited

Mad River Trails (Kevin): Have a grant to build the bridge for the Kingsbury Greenway Project.

VYCC (Josh): Currently reviewing applications and RFP's for 2002 trail work.

NW VT Regional Planning Comm. (Bonnie): Rail Trail parking area expansion projects have run into Act 250 interpretation issues. If more than 1 tenth acre has been disturbed over the history of the parking area(s) including the new work then an Act 250 Master Plan may be requested.

Cross VT Trail (Eric): Several meetings with Towns have been completed (Williston Today) and a corridor agreed upon for the entire Trail with the exception of the Duxbury segment. A meeting with that Town is scheduled.

FP&R (Sherry): NRTF and VRTF State list of f/y 2003 projects to be funded is almost complete. This year there will be about \$ 705K available in total of which 50% will be set aside for these State FP&R projects. The \$ 352K balance will be for successful applications recommended by the Trail Funds Ranking Committee in February.

LWCF Grants-Sherry has been instrumental in the Grant Writing Workshops held in various Towns this year. A bonus of 5 points will be given to those applications from towns where the workshops have been held. She expects that there will be more and better applications as a result of the Workshops.

CTA (David): A half time person has been added to the CTA staff to work with landowners on Trail Easements. CTA (Lenore Budd e-mail): Trail protection emphasis has been successful in Lowell with Governor and Mrs. Dean's 1.7mile section gift and a 1mile section on the shoulder of Jay Peak in Westfield. Also CTA obtained easements on a 2-mile section in the Camels Hump Ski Area from 3 landowners in the Town of Huntington.

VOGA (Gray): Two well-recognized Italian athletes are skiing/hiking sections of the Catamount Trail to write a long article on their experience. Camping equipment and provisions have been provided by VOGA.

VT/NH Trails (Dick): the State Railroad Transportation Commission has not acted upon The Lamoille Valley Rail corridor proposals.

GMC (Ben): See his report in the current VT&GC Newsletter.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Moffat
Secretary