

Richmond Trails Committee Meeting

March 20th, 2018

6 PM – 7:30 PM

Present: Ian Stokes, Ed Wells, Jim Monahan, Callie Ewald, Willie Lee, Martha Marciel, Kate Sudhoff (guest)

Quick updates before guest Kate Sudhoff from the State Forrest Legacy Program arrives:

- Jim spoke with Eric Krull (MMU) – May 4th set for high school advisory day – Jim to take lead on sizing up and having material on site, they will haul in material and build.
- Andrew's Forrest Land has asked RTC to come up with trail plan and build one short trail in the field this summer (just thru lower field to connect to other road). Existing GPS tracts a possible good place to start. Willie will reach out to Guy and Berne to ask about any moneys that were allocated to trail mapping, then we can follow up. First impression from the group is that it seems to be outside our scope to actually perform the work, however we're happy to support. More discussion on this next meeting.

Group discussion with Kate Sudhoff regarding Preston Easement:

The group discussed the current and future state of the Preston Trails. Kate shared the difference between foot path traffic and mountain biking – and what that means in the easement. Easement requires use of foot path, but does not speak to mountain biking specifically, that is completely under the control of landowner. The trail corridor specified gives the public right to access for walking.

The group shared that likely no more trails will be added to the Preston land, possibly one to connect to Thompson Rd, but no plan in the works. Kate shared that the number of trails is currently fine, but if more are added, the state would likely want to evaluate other factors.

Trails closure (during hunting, poor trail conditions) – can close trails, but will need to shoot Kate an email to let her know as the footpath is not supposed to ever be restricted access. Can prohibit mountain biking without permission, but if you want to prohibit people walking, need to contact Kate to have them evaluate. Spring – If it's muddy and we want to close trails, we don't need to get into touch with Kate - blanket approval. Also discussed closure of trails during hunting specifically – could include signs with education and pointing towards areas where hunting doesn't take place, specifically Sleepy Hollow and Catamount, to give another option of where to go.

Features on trails, movement of earth, trails on visceral – are these in line with easement? If more trails will be built, need to consider other uses – is it impacting other aspects (wildlife, trees). Important to have all of this documented in forest stewardship plan – plan should include map of trails, etc. Billy needs to update that. For future trails, Call Kate and she could come out to look at proposed trail location.

Stewardship plan – what are the committee's responsibilities? Provide a trail map and small blurb about trails and how they are managed for the revised plan Billy is putting together. Paragraph below describing how trails are managed for Kate and Billy, accompanied by a map with existing trails and features:

“The trails on the Preston Forrest Legacy Preserve are narrow gauge multi-use paths. The trails are maintained by a town appointed committee and local volunteers. The trails are mainly on the Preston property, but also extend onto neighboring properties with written consent for use. The trails were constructed with boardwalks and drainage features according to the International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA) standards, which is common for sustainable multi-use trail building. Trail maintenance is performed routinely throughout the year. Maintenance includes clearing downed trees, adding boardwalks when necessary, and mitigating erosion. Trails are monitored and education is provided to users to limit trail use when risk of erosion is high, when the timber is being harvested, and during hunting season.”

Critters – Kate’s recommendation is to be reasonably balanced. Currently no studies that we know of that say bike trails are detrimental to wildlife.

Action Item: Provide Billy and Kate with a blurb (as stated above) and plan with trails and boardwalk to submit for revised plan.

The next trails committee meeting will be **Tuesday April 17th – 7:00pm** – at the Town Center

Respectfully submitted-

Callie Ewald