

RCC Mtg May 10, 2022

Members of the Public: Jeanette Malone, Dan Wolfson, Nancy Zimny, Ian Stokes,  
RCC members: Bob Low, Judy R, Max Krieger, Dan Schmidt, Kate Kreider, Elizabeth Wright

Public comments and introductions

Appointed minutes taker. Reviewed April minutes. They were approved as amended.

**CRF Request from Trails Committee (TC) for materials for Rivershore trail repair – Jim Monaghan** (who was not present for this meeting)

Judy will send a note calling for RCC volunteers to help rebuild the bridges when the time comes to work on them. \$9,500 is the request. It's a bit more for materials, but the Trails Committee can always return the overage.

Max corroborates that materials costs are rising and the estimate may not be enough at this time. He supports the idea that this is a very important trail in town, is a highly public-facing. It's important to maintain these bridges. The Trails Committee will likely go quickly to the Select Board for the money.

Daniel: The bridges are in very poor shape! He put his foot through one of them. If delayed until fall signs ought to be posted about the dangers.

Bob's motion about the bridge. Ibit Seconded.

The following motions was approved unanimously.

**Motion goes here**

Ian Stokes: He's happy the TC is asking for money from the CRF, and is happy we are so supportive.

**Request for time to address the RCC from Brad Elliott**

Brad shared only to thank us for the time for himself and other members of the Friends of the Andrews Community Forest (ACF).

**Andrews Community Forest Committee – request for comments from RCC – continued discussion**

Judy set the stage for all RCC members to speak about the ACF trail proposals so we all understand where each of us stands—4 mins for each of us to speak with 10 mins for the public.

Kit Emery: She's part of the Friends of the ACF group. She acknowledges obvious procedural issues and lots of issues to be vetted before decisions should be made. There are specific landscape issues that are not conducive to biking. We need to take the time to thoroughly vet the issues.

Max: He's proud of the Richmond community and feels this is a super imp. discussion to have. Our RCC roles are to be observers. If we are solicited to make a comment, great, but we have entrusted the ACFC and they've done a good job. He's pleased with the process so far and appreciates that the public is engaged and involved. He's content. He's on the Vermont Mountain Bike Association's (VMBA) Richmond chapter, but the ACF is everyone's

woods and there's a balance to be had. Overall, he's very pleased with the process. The community has done a good job communicating. The precedent this process sets is very good, and he hopes this will be a model for other town forests.

Daniel: He comes at all this with 3 lenses: his job at VYCC, as a liaison between the RCC and ACFC, and as a Richmond resident. He has these sorts of conversations all the time at VYCC. He thinks it's an unprecedented bringing together of Sinuosity and Arrowwood. As a liaison with the ACFC: the mgmt plan calls for trails to be built. Best intentions have been involved.  
As a resident: This process is part of all we...

Bob: We have been asked to contribute our feedback; we are not just observers. He wants lots of information—from all parties—before he can respond or know how he feels about the trail plan.

Kate: She appreciates the huge undertaking of the ACFC. She would rather see no trails built on the ACF, but knows there have to be some. She sees drawbacks to the current plan, but she knows no better plan. Recognizes the perspective of the importance of connectivity with other trails, like Sip of Sunshine, but....

Ibit:

Judy: The importance of perspective. Zooming in or out, the perspective changes. We have gotten into a dilemma.

We have different understandings of what has taken place. If this were a park, there would be several professional, paid people making these decisions. There are lots of questions: like why does the ACFC want to change the mgmt plan? We need to get people to have their questions answered so everyone has equal access to the information. She wonders: Did we ask the right questions and get the right answers? She's not in opposition to the plan now, but wonders if there are better options. We have options: no comment to ACFC...???

Bob: We ought to say something. We ought to say what we can as soon as we can.

Daniel: Wondering about people who feel they don't have enough info. The ACFC is tasked to make the decisions. The public is not expected to know everything and to keep track of all the info.

Judy: We have to be able to follow the info. and the process of the decision making. There needs to be accountability so we all understand how one thing led to the next. ??

Max: ACFC has made the process open to the public. ON the record, there HAS been a good public process with open mtgs and they have answered questions.

Judy: There are some steps that could have helped the public follow their decision making.

Bob: Certainly, it's tough for everyone to know everything. Bob has tried to surround himself with people who know more about the issues than he does. Lots of opportunities for public to participate. In many settings, like the mgmt plan, there has been lots of public forums. The crocodile is that if the plan goes forward without public support, there

will be trouble.

Judy: When Caitlin produces her responses to all the concerns that will be helpful. She's wondering which...???

Daniel: The concept map was drawn just on a map, then it was proofed on the land. Mgmt plan gets updated as a result of the ground truthing.

Judy: How should we respond? Still wondering.

Bob: Arrowood and Sinuosity never shared why they think changes need to be made to the plan

Daniel:

Judy: We will each...

Ian: The trails proposal was produced on schedule a year ago, and the result has caused conflict and frustration among members of the public. He thinks the ACFC needs help and the RCC can't fix the problem. He has a view that could help. The mgmt plan allows bikes and wonders if the mgmt plan need to be...?? Couldn't the trails that fit with the mgmt plan go through, but the other plans for new trails be held up? He supports a phased approach. Preference would be a whole package, but ...???

Nancy Zimny: She is part of the general public, who cares passionately about nature. This process is classic: people want recreation through conservation, and with such a booming recreation interest it's tough. Conservation while providing recreation—we ought to pay even more attention to the conservation part. There's no voice for nature, except through us. Of course there are lots of economic

ramifications involved here. There doesn't seem to be enough connection between the proposals of the consultants and the mgmt plan. She has read the documents involved and dug into the details.

Daniel: What would be the forum for the larger conversations between conservation and the mgmt plan?

Nancy: A neutral mediator could help in a public forum. There are a lot of people interested in the information.

Judy: There's no one way. We ought to involve different ways. Perhaps we ought to use a mediator. ACFC ought to ask for money from the CRF to request a mediator.

Brad: Trails can be moved from the Mgmt Plan. "Extensive public input" is called for.

Daniel confirmed there is going to be another public forum soon sponsored by the ACFC. The public mtg will inform everyone about any changes to the trail plan and the mgmt plan.

Max: At the ACF it's the worst tick season ever, it seems to him.

Dan Wolfson: Thank you. He appreciates us all looking at this issue and listening to the public's thoughts.

Judy: It takes a community, too, get a good plan going.

Bob: So we will each offer some comments about the trails

and the trail decision process, share them with Judy, and she will collect them in a document. We can summarize what we said tonight, modify it if we'd like, and she will pass the document to the ACFC.

## **Green Up Day review –**

Ibit:

Brad: Invasive of garlic mustard could we in the future connect with Richmond Root Out. INvasives and Green Up. Map the invasive as we clean up??

Fiddlehead fern signs—we didn't get signs out, but Max said most of our signs from last year survived.

### **Matters arising:**

Brad Meredith Naughton's, former FN, original ACF researcher, contract employee meta research report. She gave a webinar on this recently. He wants to send the URL

Meeting was adjourned.