Andrews Forest Sub-committee Notes from meeting with potential facilitators for public engagement process on revised Management Plan

Documents shared with facilitators

[Expanded Additional Responses](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Archive/2018/04/Expanded-Additional-Responses-to-ACF-Committee-Re_-ACF-Ecological-Trail-Design.pdf)

[Community Feedback on Trail Design](https://www.richmondvt.gov/fileadmin/files/Archive/2018/04/ACF-trail-proposal-comments-spring-2022_v.220531.pdf)

1. 8/1/22 Zoom Meeting with Jenna Koloski Community Engagement and Policy Director & Jessica Savage Director of Community Collaboration

<https://www.vtrural.org/>

Melissa Wolaver and Jim Monahan met with Jenna and Jessica on Monday 8/1/22 over Zoom for about 30 minutes. This was an initial meeting to see if there was a possibility of Vtrural helping us develop and facilitate a public engagement meeting for the proposed management plan revision.

We gave them a quick overview of our process and where we are currently at in this process of management plan revision. We explained how the revision of the MP was triggered by the trail plan and that the scope of the revision encompasses more than just trails. We explained that we wanted the public to view this revised MP prior to going to the select board for approval. We shared the 25 themed responses that Nick and Caitlin prepared. They were VERY impressed with this process and response.

**Jenna:** Explained that they act in the role as a neutral facilitator and they help facilitate discussion around broad topics for towns. She explained that this is much more focused discussion around specifics of the MP revision topics that could be controversial such as the trail design.

**Jessica:** She felt that the themed response document did an excellent job of allowing public input and responding to those concerns. She also felt that by dropping the ridgeline trail we had demonstrated that we did indeed incorporate public opinion.

Both Jenna and Jessica thought that we had done a great job of allowing the public opportunities to give input and therefore the public process around displaying the MP revision should be more celebratory fashion in a cafeteria or Library. This would require more planning than facilitation. They explained that the revised trail plan had already been voted and approved by the committee so there was not a need to take more input on that aspect of the MP. Their main question was what is your goal for this process? Are you looking for more input that will create changes? Or just looking to show the public all of the work that has been done during this process to create this revised MP.

Below is their offer to help us via email:

Our team met today to discuss your facilitation request. We could offer Richmond 1-2 hours of consultation at no charge to help you design an event where you can celebrate, inform the public of the updated plan and how you got there and take their feedback. We can't facilitate this event ourselves, but would be happy to get your committee ready to do it yourselves. This support would come in the form 1 or 2 Zoom meetings with me this fall.

1. Via Email: Melissa W. contacted Rebecca Stone:

Rebecca Stone from Community workshop will not have availability until late fall or 2023. A one day facilitation with prep would run roughly $2,700. She does not recommend a public forum and participation process for a topic that is late in development, or close to being a finished product. I would say similar concerns about that to what Jenna and Jessica expressed.

She suggested meeting with stakeholders to review the revised Management Plan.

1. Meeting with Melissa Levy from Community Roots Wednesday, 8/17 @ 2:30 pm.

Their website is [community-roots.com](http://community-roots.com/) if you want to check them out, and her email is melissa@community-roots.com.

Melissa helped us with thinking about how to structure this public process along with asking the essential question of how do we structure feedback in such a way that is helpful in moving us forward.

**Feedback:**

She suggested that we put guardrails on input. This would help us focus on specific areas that we need feedback such as signage, bench locations, and parking signs.

We need to have feedback but it should be a bit directed during small breakout groups and then report back to the whole group.

**On-site component?**

She suggested a possible on-site component as we assume that everyone may be familiar with the Andrews forest. It might be helpful to have this as a component to public sharing. Our questions are what would this look like? MW & I brainstormed a few ideas below. Not sure how this would fit into our meeting time.

* Short walk on existing trail
* Nature walk with birder
* Hardcore deepwoods walk
* Virtual exploration/walk with go pro and/or drone footage

**Rough Outline for Meeting**

Melissa L. gave a rough outline of what the meeting might look like.

* 1-1.5hours to complete the meeting. She felt this was long enough to keep people focused.
* Introductions & Ice-Breaker (where do you like to recreate? Or favorite trail? Favorite recreational activity to do in the woods?) Melissa L. would facilitate.
* Overview of Revised Management plan with Key points (done by someone on the committee)
  + Powerpoint with maps
  + New revised Map
  + Indigenous Naming rights
  + Grammar and Headings condensed
* Small Breakout Rooms to help focus feedback. Melissa L. would facilitate.
* Breakout rooms report back to the main group. Melissa L. would facilitate.
* Celebration/Closing/Acknowledgment Melissa L. would facilitate.
  + Celebrate all of the work and public input to create balanced plan
  + Acknowledge specific people that helped make this possible. (Easement holders, Andrews Family, etc…)

**Melissa Levy Costs & Availability**

Her time 5-10hours of work $120/hr

Help with Build agenda & Facilitate meetings & break out groups

She is available to help us in the coming months and this winter.

Richmond Town Forest Management Plan Facilitation

Scope of Work

August 2022

Estimated Budget

Task Hours Cost

Task 1: Initial Meeting 1hour $120

Task 2: Session Planning 6 hours$720

Task 3: Meeting Facilitation 3 hours $360

Total 10 hours $1,200

Task 1: Initial meeting. An initial meeting will involve defining what we want to accomplish with the public meeting and how we will do it, including goals, methods, logistics, etc. This scope of work assumes that the Richmond Town Forest Committee will handle meeting logistics,

including meeting space and refreshments (if needed), meeting marketing/outreach, and any printed materials.

Task 2: Session Planning

Assist with language for meeting marketing/outreach and printed materials. Develop meeting agenda and script. Develop PowerPoint.

Task 3: Facilitate Meeting

Help set up the space.

Facilitate and move through the agenda.

Debrief the meeting.