

Countywide Trails Initiative

AGENDA

Wednesday, October 13, 2021, 5:00 pm

Location:

**Saratoga County Planning office
50 West High Street, Ballston Spa**



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I. Administrative

1. Seth Dunn to join Charlie Dake as Co-Chair DONE
2. How to coordinate with the Trails & Open Space Committee (Supervisors) Trails and Open Space Committee created, elevated from previous ad hoc committee. This group can provide input to this committee. More formal process, more say in trails and open space matters. How does this group mesh? Work in progress on how to best communicate and influence. Question: what is purpose of the committee? Anything related to trails and open space: 3000 acres of county forest, grant programs, Zim Smith, snowmobile grant program. Committee will make approvals. This committee will be the first step. Jim Ruhl points out, this is a decision making committee, not advisory. Follows open meetings law. Regular meetings schedule (monthly). (FYI, there is a separate ad hoc bike route group – Tina)
3. Agenda Changes NONE
4. Funding Updates:
 - i. Jason: fully funded 10 trails projects, total of ~\$82,000 (in excess of \$75,000 allocated). Details available upon request. Can be for planning or construction. Resolution next Tuesday for Open Space going forward, \$222,900 in Open Space funding proposed, in front of Board on Tuesday. Tentative budget will be out this month, several supervisors asking for background and expressing interest in these programs.
 - ii. Liz: Ballston Spa has applied for TAP grant to fill in sidewalks and connect to Zim Smith, for planning and construction. Linkage grant as well.
 - iii. Saratoga Springs / Wilton: has a small grant on a Technical Assistance study looking at corridor Northway exit 15 to get down Loudon, Weibel, mall area to County Forest. Scope prior to feasibility study.

Tina: Champlain Hudson Express – a municipality got \$80,000 for sidewalks in public benefit money. Jason to follow up with her. Surface projects related to this project will be coordinated through County Planning.

Mike offered that this committee ought to begin to consider maintenance of trails,

including funding, use of volunteers and how to keep this infrastructure in good order.

II. Education: none tonight ... please submit topics of interest.

III. 2021 Priorities:

1. Zim Smith (Jason Kemper):

- i.** Kudos on Zim Smith to Jason. Jason defers to others.
 - ii.** Feasibility for Zim Smith North is completed. Grant application to fund a portion of that. Significant discussions among Supervisors to invest in this effort. Budget looks like about \$8 million. Good meeting with long range planning committee, talking about investing in design to make it shovel ready. Several phases, each with alternatives.
 - iii.** Board is recognizing additional use, therefore there is a push to increase maintenance funding.
 - iv.** Major relining project going into next year, trail closure will be minimized but sewer line is the priority.
 - v.** Additional mile markers to go in ... as soon as you enter Mechanicville it will be mile zero. Part of the driver is increased EMS incidents.
 - vi.** Safety question: have gotten away from illegal uses to conflicts among users
 - vii.** Electric bike regulations? No, have not determined any standards. Have had several instances of complaints where power approached a motor bike. Use policy dates back to 2008, so there are some things to be updated. Can be a great mobility option, keeping them in balance with other uses.
 - viii.** Jim (ADK) User conflicts are going to get worse ... this isn't new. A few things:
 1. Graphics – who has right of way
 2. Changing behaviors ...
 - a. authority of agency (e.g. Sheriff)
 - b. Authority of the resource ... connecting people with the authority of the resource (why we're here) it is effective
 3. Leave no trace principles: if County got on board... two in particular:
 - a. Be considerate
 - b. Plan ahead and prepare (know that you can or cannot partake in a particular activity)
 - c. Awareness course and trainer course ... leave no trace trainer allows you to train others
 4. Plan for it because you know its coming.
- 2. Champlain Canalway Trail (John Mitchell and/or PLAN)**
- i.** Waterford portion, Hudson River Greenway, County ready to go early November

IV.

Updates from Communities:

1. **Saratoga County** – *Jason Kemper*
 - i. *2022 Budget for Trails & Open Space* – coming soon
2. **Saratoga Backcountry Horsemen** – *Bill Lasher* (see above)
3. **Snowmobile Groups** not today
4. **Clifton Park** – *Jen V.;* *Jim Ruhl*
 - i. Riverview along Mohawk. Start in Halfmoon and end up in CP, ~10 miles of trail. Whipple Bridge parking lot is quite full. Can go from Vischer Ferry to Route 9. Bike, walk, its wonderful. Ducks, waterfowl, eagles.
 - ii. Every subdivision now requires a review by Open Space and Trails committee; focused on trunk trails, but there are constant increments being added. Formal process for review of plans submitted to the Planning Board to be aware of connections. Town will take ownership of trails at the end. DPW okay with maintenance? No funding, just incorporated into their duties.
 - iii. Stony Creek Reservoir: spent a lot of time on it. Hoping new administration in Colonie will be favorable. OSI is involved. Divergence between asking price and appraised value.
5. **Halfmoon** – *John Mitchell* working on nature preserves, which have some trails in them. Erie Canal towpath trail – would like to rename it. Repaving historic Crescent trail. Halfmoon putting trails into all PDDs and trying to piece them together.
6. **Mechanicville** – *T. Richardson*
7. **Waterford** – *Dave Woodin* Jason stole my thunder ... South of Village there is a 1 mile stretch of Champlain Canal Trail, it's a superfund site. Project to be completed sometime in late November. Had to cut down trees along the trail. Will need to rebuild the trail. Have not seen any plans on how it is to be rebuilt. Town has a plan hoping to acquire property where dredging of old canal has been done; if successful put a bridge to get across canal and connect to the trail. It's about 1.25 mile trail, would be a spur.
8. **Malta** – *Alyssa Benway* Kaydeross, Town of Malta Comprehensive Plan goal to acquire land on the Kaydeross. Learned that Ballston Spa owns a piece of land in Malta. Currently used as a dump. Village looking to build a garage there.
9. **Ballston** –
 - i. *Veterans Bike Trail connection to Zim Smith*
10. **Ballston Spa** - *Liz*
11. **Milton** – *Barbara Kerr*
 - i. *Local - Boyhaven trails and connections to Middle Grove State Forest*
12. **Saratoga Springs** – *Tina Carton* Bridge design for Bog Meadow design. Improve access for maintenance and EMS. Got 3 maintenance people for trails proposed in budget. Open Space Plan update considering trail connections and connections of open space resources. Pitney Meadows Community Farm opened their trails this past weekend.
13. **Wilton** – *Joshua Carlsson* Already covered above.

14. Northumberland -

15. Corinth - William Clarke

16. Greenfield – Charlie Dake Budget meeting tomorrow, Charlie hoping to bring this up. Keep tuned to the election and results as current supervisor not running.

17. Saratoga PLAN –

- i.** Galway Preserve parking lot upgrade
- ii.** Glowegee Creek Trail – exploring improved accessibility

Other municipalities not yet represented: Stillwater, Saratoga, Northumberland, Edinburg, Moreau, Charlton, Day, Hadley, Providence, Galway

User groups not represented: mountain bikers, gravel bikers ... others?