

Town of Dover Trails & Recreation Committee
Meeting Minutes
via Zoom
Tuesday, April 13, 2021

Members present: Sarah Shippee, Paul Fisher, Steve Petrik, Alison Ferris, Mike Purcell, Patricia Sweeney, Kristin Mumford

Also present: Shannon Wheeler, Eric Durocher, Diane McCormick, Andy McLean, Julia Lagrange, Mike Garber, Barbara Hyde, Jeremy Kirk, Tera Adams, Joe Mahon, Avery Jenkins, Dan Baliotti

A recording of this meeting can be found here: <https://youtu.be/QicwhA0T8ys>

Meeting called to order at 6:32 PM by acting Chair, Paul Fisher

I. Public Comments:

a. *Tim Shannon* – stated his dissent as an individual for disc golf on the Horace Hill property.

II. Approve minutes from February 9th meeting (No quorum for March 9 meeting):

a. Motion by Alison seconded by Sarah - approved by all in attendance in February.

III. Ridge Project update:

a. *Steve Petrik:* Eric and I have been talking and need to potentially meet with Act 250 about the parking lot. Our district no longer has a permit specialist, so we need to work with the Rutland specialist who is quite overwhelmed. Need to meet with them to determine if Act 250 is enacted on the project as the first step. To clarify USFS refers to these distinct sections as all part of the Ridge Project: lower area/parking & trailhead; the actual trails and the backcountry ski trails and the Ridge Trail are the 3 sections of the project.

b. *Patricia Sweeney:* has flagging the potential trail started? Do they need volunteers? *Steve confirmed this is initial rough flagging and not for public help. We will ask for help when it is time for pin flagging.*

c. *Andy McLean:* asked if Steve or Eric has yet made contact with Act 250 permit specialist and what is the next step. *Steve responded no, they first have to complete a request to meet with the specialist. And would it be wise to hire someone to get this done? Once we enter the actual permit process I think that's a great idea, but I can handle this application and step. Andy reminded the group to help make these meetings most successful, please wait for the Chair to recognize you to speak and not have conversations between members.*

IV. Trail A- update:

a. *Eric:* This group's recommendation of Fuss & O'Neill as the municipal project manager was approved by the Selectboard at their last meeting and they will start moving forward. We do not expect construction this year, but they are readying it as soon as possible.

b. *Patricia:* Is there the potential to continue the sidewalks from that point South?

c. *Eric:* Any future expansion of the trail would require a lot more conversation. The original conversation did end where A- goes to.

d. *Sarah:* as that section would go along Rt 100 we would need to involve the State. Sections that have already been approved were done with state approval and state money. We'd be looking at a partnership with the state on what areas they'd be willing to be involved with financially. I believe there was a possibility they discussed of going further North to Mount Snow. Bringing it South does make sense and we should bring it up to them. It won't be something this committee that decides, but we would be the ones to suggest.

e. *Alison:* asked about trail plans going North. *Sarah responded that there were surveys and scoping done to see where it could go. Handle Rd or Route 100. We can make a wish list and*

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bring it to them. Alison clarified it was meant to aid the Mount Snow International workers walking along Rt 100.

- f. *Joe Mahon:* There are preliminary plans on a map in the Town Offices. We have had some scoping done and VTRANS was looking for us to head North before we'd ever continue South. *(Shannon will try to find and send to the group)*
- g. *Mike Purcell:* I have been pushing since the beginning to get A- down to past Tollgate down to the sign plaza of Dover Green.

V. Horace Hill future plans:

- a. Disc Golf Info: *Jeremy Kirk:* This is something that can support local youth who don't have a lot of options out of Winter; it's a very easy sport to get into. There are other local options but they are not the level of facility that we have proposed. Those that enjoy disc golf can be athletic or non athletic participants. Weston & Sampson thoroughly vetted a lot of what is in this project in their report, including some of the points Tim brought up. They felt confident recommending it and along with mountain biking on the property. The budget I sent is a max budget – as recommended by Eric's predecessor, Steve Neratko. Even at a max budget of \$50,000 it is less than an entry level skate park. This project takes about 3 months to totally produce. Avery Jenkins is here who is a former world champion disc golfer, a main contributor to the industry and would be one of the bids for designing the course.
 - i. *Avery Jenkins:* Having disc golf be a part of any facility is a great way to integrate multiple activities. It can be anywhere, there's no landscape that doesn't cater to what we do. Locations that might not be able to host other facilities can be used for disc golf. We've seen big growth in the sport during the pandemic. We'd be happy and gracious for the opportunity to be involved with this Vermont course.
 - ii. *Alison:* Where would it be on the property? *Jeremy – it would wind through it, around the trails. Carved out within the newer trees in the woods. It negotiates through the woods. The cutting is small, none of those large maples will be touched. Alison:* and you can do it in the Winter? *Jeremy: Yes, there are some hardcore users that will be there year round, your recreational players will be there March – December.*
 - iii. *Sarah:* Avery, you spoke about the explosion of growth the last 12 months. What's the sense in the industry of are you expecting to maintain some growth for 2 or 5 years or are we maxed out? *Avery: 10-15% growth rate for the last 30 years. There is a national tour of Pro events, we're not seeing any signs of slowing down but we don't expect the same double up growth in the next year.*
 - iv. *Andy:* I was unfamiliar with disc golf until Jeremy and seeing how the people of Dover overwhelmingly asked for this in the Weston & Sampson process. Many folks have issues thinking about Disc golf working with mountain biking. I'm wondering specifically if you're aware of any other places where disc golf and mountain biking work together? *Avery: it comes down to design and how it's safely integrated. In Vermont there are only 44 courses so that may be why you haven't heard much of it.*
 - 1. *Jeremy:* Brattleboro course does offer biking and hiking and they haven't had any problems yet.
- b. Trails: *Steve Petrik:* Shared a map: to gain the 4.5 consistent trail grade that is common, we will be able to work through this. There are hiking and directional mountain biking trails to keep users somewhat segregated. It would be roughly 36" wide with stabilized soil and adaptive inclusive. This is not a finalized plan for the property but you can see how trails and other

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potential uses can lay out. We need to work with a civil architect or someone to design the property around these uses. The main point is to be able to connect it to the Crosstown trails.

- i. *Sarah*: that's a proposed map, right? How much of that trail system is already there?
Steve: just the 2 blue temporary trails and the beginner loop that went in a year and a half ago.
- c. Motorized Trails: *Paul Fisher*: December 15- April 15 snowmobile season is the only motorized vehicles we're looking to have in Horace Hill. The Sawmill has requested we extend trails from Horace Hill to their lots for customers. Also on our radar is the green trail from Steve's map and what we will need to do to improve and prepare that.
 - i. *Steve*: yes, we did talk about if we're going to have machines in there working on the trails we should use them for the snowmobile trails at the same time.
 - ii. *Mike*: Steve's map - just to remind that this property was intended also to complete a loop to walk around and end at the Sawmill, I don't want to forget about those users. Think of that loop as a cart path and everything else becomes exit ramps.
 - iii. *Andy*: I had heard the Sawmill owners were looking to gain snowmobile access through Horace Hill and was disappointed. The trail they would use bisects the areas where people normally snowshoe and cross country ski. I just don't see those uses coexisting well, with snowmobiles running through the middle of it. Is there any way for them to accomplish their goals in another way? *Paul*: there are a couple of options, I'll say as the DVSJ rep it's a priority to keep things safe and as segregated as possible. If there was no way to do that without keeping those in mind we would not entertaining doing it. We'll work with Steve to walk it out and see how it works out and bring it back to this group. *Andy*: I think that's ahead of the game. None of the visioning included snowmobiles through the middle of the property. I think we need to take a step back and hire someone to design Horace Hill based on Weston & Sampson's recommendations – which don't include that snowmobile trail. *Steve*: for all user groups this past year, there are a LOT of new users that weren't represented when we did the initial envisioning.

VI. Youth Member Status

- a. *Eric*: We don't yet have a voting youth member which I think is important. We had some interest and they attended a meeting but nothing has moved forward. If you have anyone that is interested please send them our way. This does need to be a Dover resident aged 12-18.

VII. Choose Date for May meeting (May 11 is Dover Town Meeting Informational Zoom)

- a. Motion to select Monday, May 17th at 6:30 PM via Zoom by Steve, seconded by Sarah

VIII. Choose Chair for May Meeting:

- a. Patricia Sweeney volunteered

IX. Motion to adjourn by Patricia at 7:41 PM, seconded by Sarah.

Respectfully submitted,

Shannon Wheeler
Economic Development, Town of Dover