

Hallowell “RES”/City Forest RTCA Working Group Meeting
5/1/2018 Meeting Notes - DRAFT
Hallowell City Hall

Attendees:

Burnham Martin, Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA);
Rosemary Presnar, Ben Godsoe and Deb Sewall, Hallowell Conservation Commission (HCC);
Wes Davis, Hallowell Tree Board

Guests:

Diano Circo, City of Hallowell Councilor, Chair of Recreation Commission
Kat Schweikert, GIS/Mapping Volunteer

Rosemary Presnar chaired the meeting.

Notes from April meeting reviewed and approved to post on City website.

1. Continue discussion on management framework for RES: WP Item #7

Recreation Commission role – Diano gave an overview of the Rec Commission’s role and what current challenges are. He noted that the Commission currently meets only as needed, when problems arise. Lack of clear structure for decision-making and crossed lines of communication have resulted in groups not consulting the City about activity at the Res. This is true for all City parks. The Res is a challenge due to its size and multiple uses. He noted the need for a city entity to take responsibility for following through on past planning, including forest management, appropriate funding, and focusing on public recreation at the Res. Diano expressed hope that this can happen in the future.

a. Proposed Models vs current Ordinances

i. Reference attached – DISCUSSION PAPER, City “Ordinances” for Recreation Commission vs Burnham’s “Models for Trails”

--Group reviewed comparison discussion paper (pages 3-4)

--Out of the 10 items from Rec Commission Ordinance, 5-6 items were geared towards establishing a recreation ‘program’ vs parks management or were very general in scope, such as diversity or citizen participation. Since the Ordinance was written, recreation program has been outsourced and is held at elementary school. Most items on list are a very low priority for City Manager.

--Only Ordinance items 3, 4, and 5 seem relevant today – setting operational goals, park budgeting, and planning uses to meet community needs(see Page 3 for full descriptions)

--All agreed Ordinance should be updated to address more about Parks instead of Programs and broaden facilities and services to include trails.

--Should there be a “trail master” role on one of the City’s committees/commissions to be the focal point for communications to/from Rec Commission on trail matters?

c. Proposed management model going forward

--the Working Group needs to continue this discussion since the Ordinance the Rec Commission is structured around is outdated and has minimal relevance. The energy around RES users’ needs to be captured and cultivated, while managing the Parks in a consistent manner to meet community needs and park preservation/conservation. A take away was to try to draft a decision matrix with

communication channels to make the Rec Commission a more effective governing body; consider ordinance changes, if needed. (ACTION)

2. Review assigned Work Plan task updates

a. Rosemary/Burnham: WP Item #3: inventory existing RES resources

i. Trail Mapping volunteers and intern plan

--Trail Mapping – Kat has volunteered to GIS map the RES with colleagues from Blue Marble Graphics. Rosemary will supply current maps (CeMe NEMBA, Snowmobile, Forest Plan, initial bike plan, etc.) as guides. Long-term goal is to have a City sanctioned multi-use trail map with mileages, significant property boundaries, and points of interests. Short-term goal is to have a planning map for June 5 meeting (ACTION)

-- Intern Plan – Burnham does have an intern for the project; will concentrate on additional mapping, trail conditions assessment, and signage plan.

b. Ben/Garry: WP Item #2d: how to collect public inputs on RES uses

--Reviewed draft questionnaire for survey; will continue to flush out different questions for different user groups, Burnham will provide inputs prior June meeting. Will probably use Survey Monkey for online survey once questions are complete (ACTION).

3. Application for RTCA 2019 extension

a. ACTION – Rosemary will submit by end of June based on Burnham inputs.

4. Meeting summary/Homework/Next steps

- a. Continue to listen and learn to establish a communications and decision matrix. Provide recommendations for how the Rec Commission can effectively manage the property (and other City Parks), assign responsibility for creating and maintaining trails, coordinated uses, and resolve conflicts between users that fits into City’s structure; ordinance changes should be considered. The Management Framework discussion will continue; larger issue than initially thought!
- b. Homework > for trail mapping for planning map, trail conditions assessment, and getting NPS Intern engaged.
- c. Homework > Ben and Garry to continue working on survey questions towards a start for gathering inputs via Survey Monkey.

Next meeting will be at 5:30pm on Tuesday, June 05, City Hall Council Chambers

DISCUSSION PAPER ONLY on ORDINANCE VS “MODELS”

Current – What we have

Recreation Commission model/role:

1. In conjunction with the Mayor, Council and City Manager, formulate and promulgate policies to provide effective management of park and recreation facilities.
2. Assist City Council and City Manager in carrying out legal responsibilities related to the operation of the park and recreation facilities.
3. Develop a set of objectives and goals for the operation of each City-owned park and recreation facility.
4. Work with City Manager to develop financial plans and budgets for park and recreation facilities and activities.
5. Assist the City Manager, other staff, and community volunteers with the planning of a variety of programs, facilities and services to meet community needs effectively.
6. Inform and educate the public as to the need for a park and recreation program, facilities and services.
7. Maintain an effective public relations program in all communications media.
8. Maintain close liaison and co-ordination with local community groups and encourage maximum community participation.
9. Encourage citizen participation to include racial and minority groups.
10. Regularly evaluate City Recreation Programs to maintain an alignment with the Commission's objectives and desired goals.

What we need - Models for trail system management; 04/04/18 – v2

Trail management functions

1. Manage issues: complaints, conflicts, problem solving, education, maps, events
2. Address changes: new trail uses, new trails, trail closures, environmental changes
3. Address trails on adjacent land: communicate with landowners about existing trails, negotiate new trail links to address landowner concerns or connect open space/other trails
4. Maintain trails: regular frequent monitoring, seasonal tasks, emergency repairs, planned large projects, signs
5. Manage volunteers: stewards/adopters, community volunteer days, volunteer trail crew, school students
6. Manage hired crews: youth conservation corps, contractors
7. Coordinate management and maintenance with trail clubs
8. Coordinate with other activities: timber harvest, developed recreation area, invasive species removal
9. Create budgets: estimate amounts and costs (including volunteer hours and in-kind support) of materials and work hours needed for project completion
10. Fundraising: seek funds or in-kind donations for trail construction or other tasks
11. Maintain liaison with City Council and other committees, departments, and staff

DISCUSSION PAPER ONLY on ORDINANCE VS “MODELS”

Questions

- What other functions/tasks should be included in the list above? Should any be deleted?
- What functions are currently managed well and what areas fall short?

General conceptual management models

1. Create or identify and strengthen an entity to manage only trails
 - a. Only on the Res
 - b. On all city-owned property
 - c. On city and private conservation land
 - d. On city and private conservation land plus private land
2. Create or identify and strengthen an entity to manage trails and other recreation
 - a. Only at the Res
 - b. On all city-owned property

Specific possible trail management models

1. HCC or Hallowell Recreation Committee creates a subcommittee for Res trail management with representatives from appropriate clubs and user groups
2. Hallowell creates a city-wide trail committee to manage trails on all city property in coordination with trail clubs
3. Hallowell creates a city-wide trail committee to manage trails on all city property plus private property trail connections in coordination with trail clubs
4. Hallowell creates a Friends of the Res group (coalition or nonprofit) to manage trails at the Res in coordination with trail clubs and under an agreement with the city
5. Hallowell creates a Friends of Hallowell Trails group (coalition or nonprofit) to create and manage trails throughout the city in coordination with trail clubs and under an agreement with the city
6. Other ideas?
 - Harbor Master model
 - **Augusta Conservation Commission has a Park Steward role**

WorkPlan v5.0

The RES Planning Project(RTCA) Workplan	Outcome / Deliverable/ Who	Timeline
1. Create a core working group <u>(that can work towards solutions / will have homework!</u>	Rosemary Presnar– reachout to participants, keep RTCA/RES project work under the HCC and tied into existing monthly meetings.	Jan 2018-complete
a. Include representatives of appropriate city boards/committees	Deb Sewall – Conservation Ben Godsue– Conservation & Brownfields Wes – Tree Board	Jan 2018-complete
b. Include representatives of interested trail users	Paul Giguere – Manchester Snowmobile Club Garry Hinkley – Central Maine NE Mountain Bike Assoc / Manchester CC	Jan 2018-complete
c. City of Hallowell – keep informed/copied on minutes and activities	Diano Circo – Recreation Committee Nate Rudy – City Manager City Public Works, HCC, Tree Board, Planning Board	Diano invited to May meeting
d. Discuss purpose/scope of working group & project	Group will focus on RES uses, existing trail network, management framework; final report will recommend longer term priorities validated from past reports.	Feb 13, 2018
e. Discuss and adjust workplan/tasklist		Ongoing
2. Vision and goals for management of the property		
a. Summary of existing plans	4 past plans – Burnham to review and summarize	Jan2018- complete
b. Review of existing plans summary	common threads, follow-ups, conclusions Inputs/common thread findings from 2/13/18 past Plan Summary review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for an inventory of existing trails and for signs, blazes, mapping to make it use-friendly** • Need for a management plan 	Feb & Mar 2018 meeting reviews Use as inputs to future planning.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to identify who is going to make decisions about how the property is managed • Need for a maintenance budget <p>**Some initial, low cost recommendations may be considered with existing HCC budget and/or solicited donations.</p> <p>Longer Term needs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for a decision about whether to actively manage forest resources • Trail Connectivity to other communities 	
c. Current, updated boundary survey	<p>Diano Circo advocating for 2019 City Budget 3/28 – City Manager confirmed RFP will be written 5/22 – HCC providing inputs to City Manager by June 4</p>	Open
<p>d. Citizen/Public input – (see how RES is used by public, try to get overall picture of RES use, including trails)</p> <p>- Consider residents and non-residents</p>	<p>?others – maybe bring in for interviews: family w/young children, dog walkers, Maine Naturalists, bird club, Augusta Trails, Cohen Center, Planning Board, Recreation Comm</p> <p>See March minutes for additional ideas/notes for Field Days to tie in guided walks for interested groups – snowmobile and bike trail overviews, land owner consent, hikers, birders, dog walkers, history, etc.</p> <p>See Item 8 – and surveys (vol 2 of Open Space plan has survey questions and results from 2007) See Item 4 – if survey, capture why folks do or do not use RES; also concerns/issues</p>	<p>Mar meeting – Ben and Garry April Update (see attached RES Project Outreach draft outline) May – draft in process</p>
e. Specific recommendations for the trails	<p>See item 6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – inputs from outreach – future management 	
3. Inventory <u>existing</u> resources	<p>Existing maps (WWW, MBA (have copy), Maine Trail Finder?) City map – from RTCA application</p>	<p>March meeting - Rosemary, Maureen, Burnham to take on.</p>

	Manchester Snowmobile Club –have copy CeMeMBA guide – have copy	NPS will have intern in summer to assist. May- Kat S. (GPS volunteer) will proceed with planning map
a. Trails (location, characteristics, condition)	Do trails cross private land, where, who?	
b. Important natural and cultural features (acres to avoid, acres to use)		
c. educational & historic aspects		
4. Identify issues related to trail use	part of survey in 2d?	
5. Review good practices for trail design/management (for problem solving, see management/structure bullets below) /maintenance		
6. Discuss and agree on recommendations for:		
a. Vision and goals for the trail system		
b. Improvements and maintenance for the current system		
c. Management group/structure for dealing with issues such as user conflicts, group use, or holding events	Started discussion in April; reviewed existing Ordinances for Rec Commission, Tree Board, and Conservation Commission; ties to 2010 Comm Plan – will continue.	In progress: April discussion; Burnham draft of models (see attached v2)
d. How to Address new trails or uses		
7. Develop outline of management framework	Started discussion in April – will continue	In progress: April discussion; Burnham draft of models (see attached v2)
a. Written document with recommended guidelines/approaches	Include inputs from 6.	

b. Recommend management team (include Communications, Volunteers – liabilities, insurance, etc.)	see 6c.	
8. Seek public input as needed	see 2d.	Outreach plan in progress.
Suggestion: Public walking meeting in the spring		
9. Write draft plan		
10. Revise, submit final plan		
(Include any short-term and long-term financial needs in management plan;		
Future planning/process for other enhanced recreations uses;		
Options for conservation/preservation of the property)		
Options for grant opportunities		
11. Engage in appropriate municipal process for review by interested boards and committees		
12. Continue management team meetings and actions		