

# Minutes of the Fairfax County Trails & Sidewalks Committee

June 11, 2008

**Members Present** – Brent Reynolds, Chairman (Braddock), Peter Christensen (Mount Vernon), Robert Michie (Lee), Jan Reitman (Mason), Jenny Pate (FCPA), Mark Tipton (FCFCA), Ann Pimley (FADSB) Mary Flowers (Clifton Horse Society)

**Staff Present** – Sheng Leu (DPZ)

**Guest** – Bill Niedringhaus (Fairfax Trails & Streams & Potomac Heritage Trails Assoc)

**Call to Order** – Brent Reynolds convened meeting at 7:32 p.m. Brent asked for any changes to the Agenda. There were none. Agenda approved.

**Approval of Minutes of April, 2008 Meeting** – No minutes available

**Approval of Minutes of May, 2008 Meeting** – Meeting in May was cancelled...no minutes available.

**Need for Secretary.** Brent mentioned the need for a “permanent” secretary. None of the members present volunteered. At this point, the task of taking the minutes will continue to be rotated among members of the committee.

**Potomac Heritage Scenic Trail.** Jenny Pate reported that there is one reroute to do. They plan on using a youth conservation corps to work on building trail. They expect to take about a month to build the trail.

**Discussion of One-Year Plan and Sub-Committee Assignments.** The following list of assignments were discussed and possible priorities given to the items:

--Web Site

Discussion: Jan mentioned that a Safety Sub-committee is on the County Web Site. He was not certain who was on that sub-committee and even if that is the best place to list it. Committee members felt safety issues fit better in Best Practices for Bicycles or Pedestrians.

--Best Practices for Bicycles

Discussion: It is assumed that Charlie Strunk and Dennis Frew would be on this sub-committee.

--Best Practices for Pedestrians

Discussion: Ann Pimley offered to work on this sub-committee

--Special Maintenance and Snow Removal for Specific Trails

Discussion: After some discussion, it was agreed to remove this item from the list. It is doubtful there is any money available for snow removal and very little priority would be given

--Integration of Non-motorized Transportation Projects into all County Construction Projects.

Discussion: It is important that any time anything is built, this Committee should be included in the discussion/planning stages

--Quick Take Authority for Trail Projects

Discussion: It was mentioned that since Virginia is a big property rights state, that maybe we should ask the County Attorney to study the issue of Quick Take Authority. It would be good to give the County Attorney an example. Some one mentioned that Paul Johnson may have an example.

--Metro Station Pedestrian and Bicycle Access

Discussion: None.

--Safe routes

Discussion: Brent mentioned this was the Safe Routes to Schools and this was more a federal item

than county. It was decided to remove this item from the list.

--Special events: John Mason's vision of "Personally, I'd like to see Trails Day (in June) grow to a big, fun day for thousands of walkers, joggers, bicyclers, and senior citizen walks." Bike to Work Day May 16 and Trails Day (June 7), etc....

Discussion: None

--On-road Bike Lanes; VDOT liaison

Discussion: It was mentioned that the liaison would be Charlie Strunk's job. Brent wondered what VDOT's commitment is when they repave a road. It was thought that they would add shoulder for bike lanes. Brent said he would check.

--Maintenance funding

Discussion: Bob Michie wondered what were the priorities; that no one seems up to speed on it. We would need to take it up with others and see if we can come up with a proposal. We should also look at intrusions on trail areas such as tree roots and who would fix them. There is a need to catalogue the issues. Would be able to come up with a list of priorities of need. We should check with Maintenance first though to see if they don't already have a list.

--\$500 million fund for trails and sidewalks; to estimate countywide yearly expenditures vs. estimated need

Discussion: Brent asked where this number came from. Jenny mentioned it was a huge ballpark figure. She also said that the \$500 Million was based on the Pedestrian Task Force. She said there were no funds in operating budget for the next couple years. It is included in the budget as a very small percentage of the total budget. Bond money is the only way we can get any funds for trails and sidewalks.

--Trails mapquest

Discussion: Brent thought that the easements would go into the GIS System that would be part of the trails mapquest. It was thought that Wade and Charlie would be on this sub-committee.

At any rate, Brent will summarize the list of sub-committees and send out an e:mail to everyone. He mentioned that one of his goals for the committee is to see more communication with the Board of Supervisors, including recommendations. He asked committee members to send a note to Brent if you can think of anything the committee can make an impact on, such as Tysons maybe.

### **Presentation.**

Bill Niedringhaus and Mark Tipton provided a slide show presentation of two trail issues on the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail. There are two gaps on the Trail that should be completed. They are located on the Madeira School property and at Ft. Belvoir. Bill showed the area on the Madeira School that would connect Great Falls Park to Scotts Run Nature Preserve. The trail runs along the Potomac River and is on the Countywide Trails Plan. However, the school officials are against this segment stating security reasons. Bill showed a couple alternative routes, but felt the trail along the river is the most scenic.

Mark moved that the committee support a trail easement within the Madeira property along the river which would connect to Georgetown Pike then doubleback to the River. It was seconded. However, during the discussion it was decided he would withdraw that motion. Mark agreed to come up with a new motion and send it out via e:mail to committee members.

At Ft. Belvoir, Bill said they would like to see a scenic trail on Belvoir property, using some of the old trails that are there. The Army stated, for security reasons, they would prefer we have an alternative trail along Route 1 at an estimated cost of \$6 million, without providing funding. Peter was concerned that if we push for the scenic trail that we would lose the Route 1 trails, which is on the Trails Plan already. Bill assured him no, we would support the Route 1 trail but would like to see a more scenic route, with no cost to the government, on the Belvoir property. The committee decided to table this discussion for now. In the meantime, Mark would change the paragraph in the committee letter to emphasize our support of the Route 1 trail and add the Belvoir scenic trail.

**Staff Reports**

Sheng Leu reported that effective July 8, he will be retiring. Consequently, this meeting was his last meeting. The committee unanimously thanked him for all his support and help over the years and told him that every one of us would miss him greatly.

Sheng Leu mentioned that he has just received the 2007 aerial photos that will help identify gaps in the trails. These photos will go into the GIS. Also, Public Works, Zoning, and Staff are getting together on Thursday to discuss the trail waiver issue.

He said the Dept of Information Technology is concerned about mapquest and buying a program to locate a trail for the county web site. They haven't bought it yet. A question was raised about the DIT staff including the trail map on the web site. Sheng Leu said he would check and see if it isn't already in the My Neighborhood section.

**Motion to Adjourn** – Meeting was adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mary Flowers, Acting Secretary