

Lake Vermilion Trail Steering Committee
Meeting #17 Notes
7/19/17 – MN DNR Office, Tower

Called to order at 10:03 AM

Attendees

John Bassing – *Greenwood Township*
Carol Booth, chair – *Wakemup Village Resident, Cook*
Joan Broten – *Minnesota DNR*
Cathi Hively – *Beatty Township*
Holly Larson – *National Park Service*
Steve Lotz – *Vermilion Lake Township*
Lee Peterson – *Greenwood Resident*
Greg Dostert – *Breitung Township*
Elizabeth Storm – *City of Cook*
Sue Wolfe – *Owens Township*
Tim Johnson – *Cook Business Owner*
Russell Habermann – *Arrowhead Regional Development Commission*
Jim Henneberry – *Greenwood Resident*
Josh Gillson - *Lake Vermilion Resort Association*
Lisa Austin – *MnDOT*

1. Updates

a. Committees

- i. The West Committee met on 7-18-17 in the evening. Three were in attendance and took a walking field trip in the Wakemup area.
- ii. The East Committee met on 7-19-17 at 9 AM with seven in attendance and examined and discussed route alternatives and agreed to contact several land owners.
- iii. The Middle Committee met following the 10 AM meeting with five in attendance and examined and discussed possible routes and agreed to contact several land owners. Additional maps are needed.

b. Others

- i. No other updates were provided.

2. Administration

- a. Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) legal review - Holly Larson distributed the July 2017 version from Tower's attorney Andy Peterson. Holly reported that attorneys for Bois Forte and Cook have reviewed this version and did not recommend any changes. John Bassing reported that this version had been sent to Greenwood's attorney Mike Couri and he is waiting for a response. Steven Lotz listed changes made by Andy Peterson in this version and expressed

concern about some added language. These were passed on to Couri. If Couri recommends changes these will be brought back to Tower, Bois Forte, and Cook for review.

- b. Breitung Twp Participation - Greg Dostert indicated that Breitung Town Board Chair Tim Tomsich was discussing dropping out of the Steering Committee because the McKinley Park to Hoodoo Point segment was not shown on the map on the Trail website and that Breitung was seeking funding to construct this segment on their own. Holly and Russell Habermann indicated that the McKinley Park to Hoodoo Point segment was on current maps and that the map on the website is not the current version. The website map is to be updated. It was noted that the segment was first added at the February 18, 2017 meeting and was among the segments ranked at the March and April meetings. There was a discussion of the segment's rank and it was determined that it was ranked medium priority in April. Discussion ensued and the McKinley Park to Hoodoo Point segment was bumped up to high. Holly, Tim Johnson, and Steve plan to attend the next Breitung Town Board meeting on July 25 at 6 PM.
- c. Scheduling 2nd round JPA presentations - The need to have at least one person from the Committee attend the 2nd round presentations to the Boards/Councils was discussed. The following people agreed to attend these presentations: Vermilion Lake - Steve, Bois Forte - Carol, Tower - Joan, Greenwood - Tim, Owens - Sue Wolf, Kugler - Joan & Steve, Beatty - Cathi Hively, Breitung - TBD, Cook - Elizabeth Storm.
- d. Revised power point or handout for presentations - Holly will contact the Clerks, get on the agendas, and send the JPA and handouts, identifying the items that have changed, to the Clerks. The hope is to attend the August meetings. Because of the meeting schedules and the uncertainty with regard to the JPA Vermilion Lake and Greenwood in particular may have to wait until their September meetings.
- e. Update on Application for NPS/RTCA (Holly's assistance for FY 2018) - Russell has submitted an application for NPS/RTCA, which would provide for Holly's continued assistance. Such an extension is usually approved and the Committee is hopeful.
- f. Update on ARDC availability/funding - At present Russell and the ARDC have spent \$7,500 of the \$10,000 available LVRA funds on the JPA and meeting costs from September 2016 through April 2017. The \$2,500 balance is being held in reserve. Currently the ARDC is using regular transportation grant dollars for technical assistance and general leadership costs and can step back in with the \$2,500 balance of LVRA funds as needed.

3. Master Plan

- a. Revise Vision & Goals Statement - There were several issues with the Vision Statement and multiple alternatives were compiled at the June meeting. It was decided that the Vision Statement shall be "The Lake Vermilion Trail will be a premier, paved, scenic route providing an opportunity for healthy, safe, non-

motorized, year-round, transportation and recreation connecting Cook and Tower/Soudan in the beautiful natural landscape south of Lake Vermilion for residents and visitors.”

- b. Equestrian Use on the Trail was reviewed and a number of issues were discussed - problems of mixing horse traffic and pedestrian and bicycle traffic on a narrow right of way, the potential for horses to be intimidating to other trail users, and increased maintenance due to hoof/pavement impacts and horse residue. The committee decided to remove equestrian use from the Master Plan as it was not compatible.
- c. Accessibility guidelines for hard surface trails - Holly provided a number of design guidelines. Specific guide lines vary by funding source.
 - i. Surface - must be firm and stable.
 - ii. Width - there must be a minimum clear trail width of 36 inches with a passing width of 60 inches provided at least every 1,000 feet. DOT funding would require a minimum width of ten feet.
 - iii. Obstructions - vertical obstructions must be no more than one-half inch.
 - iv. Openings in the surface must be no greater than one-half inch.
 - v. Slopes or grades - Generally the slope must be no greater than 5% (one foot rise in twenty feet of run) but the slope may increase to 5 to 8% if rest areas are provided at 200 foot intervals or 8 to 10% with rest areas at 30 foot intervals or 10 to 12 1/3% with rest areas every ten feet but no more than 30% of the trail may exceed 8 1/3%.
 - vi. Cross slope must be no more than 2%.
- d. Public review process for the Master Plan - To meet Regional Significance requirements a public review of the Master Plan is required, which raised the question of what would satisfy the public review requirement. While an open house had been held some years ago and comments solicited and while members of the public were participating in some subcommittee meetings it was decided that once the Master Plan comes together the Plan and the trail concept would be presented to the public to gain public participation, input, and comment. The Plan will likely be in a form to present to the public sometime this winter. Once the Plan is ready if the Joint Powers Board (JPB) is a functioning body then the JPB will present the Plan and if not then the Steering Committee will present the Plan. Public review opportunities will be held at Cook, Greenwood, and Tower.
- e. MN DOT funding and application - Lisa Austin reported that Transportation Alternatives grants are available through MN DOT with about a four year span between initial application and actual funding. A letter of intent is requested in September but the cut-off date would be October 30. A review of eligibility would be carried out in mid-November and if eligible a full application would be required in mid-January.
- f. MN DOT projects – Lisa also reported that MN DOT is presently working on a bicycle plan for District 1, which is the Arrowhead area of Minnesota. Lisa,

Russell, and Carol Booth are members of this committee. Feedback on the plan is requested by September 1 but will be accepted throughout September. More information will be available at the September meeting.

5. Communications/Public relations

- a. Report on the Tower 4th of July - Carol indicated that the pre-race environment at Tower made presenting information on the Lake Vermilion Trail difficult at best.
- b. Promotion at upcoming July & August Festivals & Events - Carol reported that Camp Vermilion has a blue grass festival July 29 where she plans to provide trail information. Carol has the display for these events. An effort will be made to have Trail brochures available at the MN DNR booth at the St. Louis County Fair.
- c. Banner Purchase – Carol is still working with Andrew’s Cameras with the banner.
- d. Carol reported that Char Conger has set up the Trail’s Facebook page.
- e. Post cards/business cards – Joan Broten had contacted the Timberjay about printing cards for economical distribution of basic information and the cost is quite reasonable. It was decided to include the logo and web site. She will work on the design and have more details the September meeting.
- f. Reimbursing Promotional expenses – Steve offered a sample Request for Reimbursement form.

6. Fundraising

- a. Tourism grants are available from the IRRRB.

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, September 13, 2017 @ 10 a.m. at the Greenwood Town Hall