

Bicycle/Trails Advisory Committee Minutes of April 27, 2009

Voting Members Present:

Christina Teeuwen – Chair
Richard Fisher – Vice Chair
Debbie Hanson
Connie Smith
Steve Guiliani
Susan Harris
Beth Reitz
Jackie Grubb
Jennie Virden

Staff Present:

Mark Shea, Planning
Donna Hill, Parks and Recreation
Steve Froncillo, Public Works

Others Present:

Phil Shucet

Mr. Shucet gave the Committee a presentation regarding the construction of the new South Norfolk Jordan Bridge. He went over the various design features and expected time line. He emphasized that the bridge would have paved shoulders that bikes could use. In addition, the bridge would contain a barrier separated multi-use path. A committee member asked about the feasibility of light rail. Mr. Shucet stated that it could be incorporated into the design of an expected second bridge.

The meeting continued with consideration of the minutes from January. Ms. Harris made a motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Hanson seconded the motion and the motion was approved.

Mr. Shea briefly went over the Dismal Swamp Canal Trail exhibits which were shown at a Public Hearing on April 23, 2009. Four committee members attended the Public Meeting. Many committee members expressed enthusiasm with the permanent improvements. Several committee members had suggestions or comments. The Committee summarized them as follows:

- Can the Douglas Road wayside accommodate kayaks?
- A permanent restroom facility is needed at the Ballahack Road parking lot. If the Refuge Visitor Center is built nearby, it would suffice.

- A shaded picnic table is needed at the southernmost point of the trail.
- A paved asphalt strip is needed to connect the trail to the southbound Route 17 lanes just to the south of the trail. Bikers riding from North Carolina northbound would have to crossover at Ballahack Road.

Mr. Shea announced to the Committee that the City has won approval of \$1.3 million of federal enhancement (stimulus) funds to extend the trail north to either the proposed 225 acre Deep Creek Park or further to Cedar Road. The general design would be a 10' hard surface path between Route 17 Business and the Dismal Swamp Canal.

The final order of business was discussion of goals and objectives of the Committee. Ms. Teeuwen stated that VDOT is moving away from classifying trail facilities. Mr. Froncillo replied that having a specific designation is very helpful when his division reviews development applications. Right of way reservations are based on this information. Ms. Smith felt that if the roadway has a speed limit of 55 mph it should be a Class I or II facility and not III. Ms. Reitz inquired to what is the Committee's overall goal. Mr. Fisher stated that every road should have a dedicated facility. Mr. Shea asked if the Committee would be interested in prioritizing facilities. Ms. Smith stated that priorities would be good. Mr. Guiliani stated that a strategic bikeway plan is needed that describes the City's vision for trails. The Committee agreed to e-mail back and forth to develop this vision. Mr. Shea was asked to distribute the updated e-mail information. There was also some discussion of dividing into subcommittees (horses, bikes, water trails, etc.) to discuss the vision/plan.

Ms. Hanson gave the committee an update on the Heritage Park plans. The first feature to be developed at the park site was a network of trails. She discussed the Economic impacts of bringing horseback enthusiasts to the City. A question was asked as to whether the trails were just for horses. Mr. Shea stated that the plans show horse and hiking trails. Mr. Guiliani asked about public access to the Centerville Park. It is advertised as public but has a locked gate when not used by the soccer organization. He also asked for an update on the questions for staff at the last meeting. Mr. Shea stated that the 225 acre park in Deep Creek would be connected to the residential areas. Also, the trail that is being developed with the Battlefield project is ultimately planned to connect to Virginia Beach. The Navy has been contacted about the use of their road between Whittamore Rd. and Long Ridge Rd. that crosses Fentress but Mr. Shea has not heard back from them.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 6:30 p.m.