

Town of Verona
Open Space and Parks Commission Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, January 8, 2014

Present: Mathies, Stellick, Keen, Jellings, Hoffman and Miller (arrived 7:35 PM)

Absent: Siehr

Also Present: John Wright, Clerk-Treasurer (C-T)

Called to order at 7:31 PM

Approval of Agenda

Motion made by Mathies to approve the agenda as presented; 2nd Stellick. Motion carried.

Public Comments

There were no public comments.

Approval of Minutes

Motion made by Stellick to approve the December minutes as presented; 2nd Jellings. The motion to adopt the corrected minutes from the December 4, 2013 meeting carried.

Discuss Ideas for Future Conservation Efforts within the Town of Verona Including the Possible Use of a Newsletter to Solicit Public Input

Chair Keen suggested posting maps (Exhibits A-D) from the 2012-2017 Town of Verona Parks Plan on the Town website. Keen would like to see no structures within the floodplain as defined on Exhibit B, although trails would be acceptable. Keen noted that the areas adjacent to local navigable waters defined as an Environmental Corridors on Exhibit C should have an equal amount of area defined on either side of the banks; he proposed a distance of 100 feet from each bank that would be devoid of development.

There was a general discussion regarding a desire for open spaces to be contiguous. The group then wondered whether an easement was possible to link Prairie Moraine County Park with Scheidegger Forest County Park and possible land recently acquired by the Natural Heritage Land Trust (NHLT) from the Bruce Company. Member Stellick reported he walked a trail from Prairie Moraine Park along the ridge to CTR M that is maintained by the Ice Age Trail Alliance, the Wisconsin DNR, and the National Park Service. Stellick further stated that he walked trails within the Prairie Moraine Park made by foot traffic.

Member Mathies would like there to be further emphasis upon the prevention of unwanted runoff into navigable and seasonal waterways. Chair Keen described an erosion control method that is staked along riverbanks which promotes the propagation of natural ground cover that acts to reinforce the structure. It was noted that some intermittent creeks pass through farmland and a question was raised as to whether permission should be sought from the landowners to limit the erosion through improvements. C-T Wright agreed to research the data layers available on the Wisconsin DNR Surface Water Data Viewer and will report the findings back to the group, particularly those elements that could be used in support of grant applications. Chair Keen recommended the River Alliance of Wisconsin as a potential partner when drafting grant applications. He further noted that the NHLT would be a good source of data when completing applications and that Madison Area Technical College offers workshops on grant writing. C-T Wright noted that the Town has a budget available for training expenses.

There was a general discussion regarding the existing parking area for the Prairie Moraine County Park which is scheduled to be eliminated and a new lot to be located further to the east on Wesner Road. There was further discussion as to whether this park would be enlarged into the other

contiguous areas owned by Dane County. Chair Keen agreed to contact the Director of Dane County Parks, Darren Marsh. Member Mathies suggested a review of the current Town of Verona Parks Plan to determine possible short-term and long-term goals. Member Jellings wondered if cross country ski trails would be possible to develop within the viewshed for Epic. A possible location for a loop ski trail was discussed, located to the north of Valley Road. Such a trail could take advantage of the land owned by the Wisconsin DNR, who constructed a surface lot at that location in 2013; this could possibly extend east into the land owned by Wingra Building Group with their consent.

Chair Keen requested that C-T Wright print copies of the maps contained within the current Parks Plan for review at the next regular meeting; without objection. Wright was further instructed to produce a GIS-based map to capture the parcel shapes, building outlines, and owner names for the area between the Prairie Moraine Park, Scheidegger Woods, and the land acquired by the NHLT from the Bruce Company; without objection. Chair Keen agreed to make inquiries regarding future plans for trails on the land acquired by the NHLT. Member Mathies wondered if there is a database available of conservation easements within the Town of Verona that could be reviewed by this body. Member Stellick wondered if the Ice Age National Scenic Trail Alliance has any potential interest in offshoots from their trail system that they would not manage. There was brief discussion of a possible link between Epic land and the Ice Age Trail as well as Midtown Commons Park and the Ice Age Trail.

Continue to Craft a Sample 30-Day Notification Letter for Removal of Plantings Referenced in the Proposed Revisions to the Brushing and Trimming Policy to Incorporate Town Board Comments/Revisions

Stellick moved to recommend approval of Brushing/Trimming Notification Letter by the Town Board as revised; 2nd Jellings. Motion carried.

Update on Planting Recommendations Included in the Annual Newsletter and Town Website

This item will be added to the February agenda; without objection.

Establish an Agenda for the February 5, 2014 Meeting

Call to Order; Approval of the Agenda; Public Comments; Approval of meeting minutes for January 8, 2014; Review Maps and Continue to Discuss Ideas for Future Conservation Efforts within the Town of Verona; Update on Open Space and Parks Commission Postings on the Town Website; Update Regarding Attorney or Town Board Reactions to Recommended Brushing/Trimming Notification Letter; Establish March Agenda; and Adjourn.

Adjourn

Motion to adjourn made by Stellick; 2nd by Miller. Motion carried at 9:03 PM.

John Wright
Clerk-Treasurer

Approved: February 5, 2014