

OAKLAND COUNTY
TRAILS ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING
October 8, 2003

The meeting was called to order at 9:06 a.m. in the commission room of the Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission's administration office.

PRESENT:

Chairman Christopher Doozan, Marge Gatliff, Joe Figa, Larry Falardeau, Kristen Wiltfang, Todd Scott, Dan Stencil, Sharon Greene, Mike Hartner, Kathy Fraser, Wynn Berry, Kristen Myers, Dot Lalone, Linda Bloch

MINUTES:

Moved by Mr. Falardeau, supported by Mr. Hartner to approve the minutes of the August 13, 2003, as submitted.

TRAIL SAFETY AND ETIQUETTE DISCUSSION

Discussion regarding the safety, etiquette and rules for trails was postponed due to the absence of Dan Navarre.

FALL PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITY:

Marge Gatliff reported on the Fall Promotional Activity taking place October 8, 2003, at 3:30 p.m. in conjunction with "Walk to School Day." Representatives from all the trail groups were encouraged to take part in the program.

TRAILS NETWORK COORDINATOR REPORT

Drafts of the proposed new trail letterhead were presented. It was suggested that all communities involved with OTAC be noted on the stationary as well as Marge' s title.

Marge presented an up-date on:

- ❖ "The Heritage Program "
- ❖ "Friends of the Clinton River Trail"
- ❖ "Clinton River Watershed"
- ❖ The Greenways Conference
- ❖ MMBA Event at Stony Creek
- ❖ "Polly Ann Trail" Event

An acknowledgement of Dan Kiefer' s outstanding work on behalf of Michigan Trails from the Greenways Initiative was read. It was moved, supported, and carried that OTAC send a letter of congratulations for this current recognition. Also it was suggested that he would be an excellent candidate to be nominated for the MRPA Special Citizen Award.

Marge thanked the OTAC members for their support of Oakland County Parks and Recreation' s grant application to acquire the Sullivan Property adjacent to the Addison Oaks County Park.

An up-dated draft of the Map/Brochure for Oakland County Trails was passed for review with recognition given to Kristen Wiltfang, Larry Falardeau and Oakland County Planning & Economic Development for their efforts on this project. Marge requested that each trail group leader submit their best photos and most important information for inclusion at the November OTAC meeting. A final draft will be presented to OTAC at a future meeting. Costs and funding for this brochure has not been finalized.

The trail website is not yet complete. They are adding links and new information. It should be ready within a few weeks and thereafter made available to the public. Marge Gatliff, Larry Falardeau and Christine will keep OTAC up to date.

Arbor Day Grants are now available. Marge noted that these are small grants for tree plantings that could perhaps be utilized by the trail network. Each individual trail could submit an application and by submitting them at the same time a larger impact could be made to enhance the trails. Marge will verify eligibility requirements. Contact Marge for more information. Grant applications are due by October 31.

ALLOCATION OF ROAD FUNDS

Current Federal funds (MDOT) are primarily designated for highway construction. The award is determined, in part, by a point system, which includes safety issues as a means to acquire points. Fourteen percent of all fatalities are non-motorized fatalities. Todd Scott is attempting to have this factor incorporated into the safety points used by MDOT as a tool to select candidate to acquire a grant; with 14% of the safety points reflecting engineering/design to allow greater safety for pedestrians/bikers. Scott distributed copies of the letter he has presented on behalf of the Michigan Mountain Biking Association, Inc.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

---Marge Gatliff presented copies of a letter from Mike Rogers, member of Congress, regarding the letter and resolution the Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission sent supporting the funding for the Transportation Enhancement Act continuing for bike trails and pedestrian pathways. Todd Scott remarked that the funding had been extended for 5 months only and after that time the legislation will move on this issue.

EQUESTRIAN SURVEY UPDATE

Sharon Greene represented the Oakland Equestrian Coalition. She reported that the survey is not yet complete, however, they have calculated that there are approximately 700 horses in Rose Township. Information from Merle Richmond from their monthly meeting was distributed. Ms Greene also noted that developments can be encouraged to work with the township to incorporate a right-of-way for trails to accommodate horses, etc. and gave successful examples.

OTHER BUSINESS:

---Todd Scott offered an update on current concerns regarding state owned acreage that may be diverted to other uses and the detrimental effect it would have on the county' s future. Chris Doozan expressed the opportunity for trail advocates to take every opportunity to work with developers and townships to provide easements to accommodate trails and allow linkage to other trail networks. Due to the current state and federal financial crisis, trail advocates concerns should be addressed to the State and National Park services.

---Islands of open space in Oakland County should be considered as they relate to trails. It is important that viable relationships develop among diverse groups for future endeavors. It is a good time to keep an open dialogue regarding quality of life issues.

---Marge Gatliff noted that a CD to promote the Macomb Orchard Trail was distributed at their function. It is available for viewing upon request. Marge suggested that it could be considered as a valuable promotional tool for OTAC.

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting will be 9 a.m. on Wednesday, November 12, 2003, in the commission room of the Oakland County Parks and Recreation administration office.

SJB, Oakland County Parks and Recreation