

TRAILS ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING
November 12, 2002
9:30 a.m.

PRESENT:

Dan Navarre, Dan Duncan, Chris Doozen, Mike Hartner, Bill Stark, Sharon Greene, Todd Schott, Chris Penna, Todd Kaufmann, Dot Lalone, Amy Murray, Brian Blaesing, Ken Hudak, Larry Falardeau, Rod Cook, Ralph Richard

GENERAL COMMENTS:

In response to Ralph Richard's inquiry as to the group's vision of the role of the Trails Advisory Council and the coordinator position, the following comments were noted:

TAC:

- Formal group rather than informal group, and advisory in nature
- Major mission to pull all interests together without splintering individual groups
- Be structured enough to allow everyone to contribute to and benefit from group, while allowing them to continue making decisions independently
- Help everyone use resources more effectively without regulating
- Describe successful standards but not require standards
- Provide best standards for design, construction, and maintenance guidelines
- Provide range of guidelines on which to make decisions
- Provide awareness of these guidelines
- Provide guidelines to ensure logical and safe connection points between trails
- Provide a range of ideas to be set as guidelines for road crossings and road rights-of-way
- Provide information on what other trails groups are doing and their budgets
- Enable smaller neighborhood trails to connect to larger network

Coordinator:

- Role will mirror TAC's objectives
- Advisor
- Be advocate for the trails in the county
- Speak on behalf of new trails in the communities
- Lobbyist or facilitate lobbying for long-term funding
- Expert in funding resources to expand, renovate, or for new groups
- Clearinghouse
- Promote awareness of trails and resources
- Provide referral information
- Provide information on good and likely grants; provide groups with assistance and/or information to make grant applications more favorable; accompany groups to grant reviews to show support and provide information on how grants link to the "big picture" or have the blessing of the overall group.

Additional comments:

Recommended Road Commission review ASHTO standards and adopt own guidelines for trail groups' awareness.

Group concurred that having the TAC politically aligned with the county will provide "backbone," create a broader network, and improve grant applications.

Ralph Richard inquired about providing the Oakland County Parks and Recreation Commission with a trails user count to show the trails' impact on the quality of life in Oakland County. The group concurred on the difficulty in obtaining any kind of accurate count; but also discussed a trail study being conducted by Kristine Voight at Michigan State University. This 18-month study may be an avenue to conduct a user survey.

Kristine will be invited to speak at a future TAC meeting regarding this survey.

A suggestion was made to conduct a user survey on the trails when communities update their master plan. Mr. Richard agreed to accept that responsibility and provide that information to the TAC.

SELECTION OF INTERIM TAC CHAIRPERSON:

A period of six months was agreed upon for the term of chairperson. Nominations will be requested in time for the next meeting; term to begin in January, 2003.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE, TASKS, MEMBERSHIP:

The group concurred that the current representation on the TAC was satisfactory.

Four subcommittees were suggested covering the areas of mapping, funding, marketing/partnerships, and technical support. Before the next meeting, each member will provide preferences to serve on two subcommittees, plus leave room for a possible third.

The subcommittees can review the roles previously noted and either focus on or expand upon these areas, then report back to the full TAC with their recommendations on duties, responsibilities, and priorities.

NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting will be 9 a.m. on Tuesday, December 3, 2002, in the commission room of the Oakland County Parks and Recreation administration office.

Karen Kohn CPS/CAP