

MINUTES OF RAMARA TRAILS COMMITTEE MEETING –June 10, 2021 7:00 PM via ZOOM

ATTENDANCE

Larry Barton	Chair
Bob Masching	Vice Chair
Paul Grunsten	
Janet Masching	Secretary
Steve Weinberg	
Mary Miller	
Stefanie Moy-Shuster	
Sandra Banks	
Basil Clarke	Mayor Ramara Township
John Pinsent	CAO Ramara
Ashley Watson	Ramara Business & Communications Coordinator
David Snutch	Councillor
Jennifer Fisher	Councillor

REGRETS

Tigera Longstreet
Laura Readman
Dave Readman
Kate White
Jack Heitzner
Annalynn Faulkner

1. Larry welcomed everyone to our 14th Zoom meeting. Recent trail adventures: Larry cycled from Victoria Harbour to Midland and back on the biking trail, mostly in shade, by the water, a 22 km round trip. This weekend featured the Cycle Simcoe Butter Tart festival along this route. Janet & Bob hiked part of the Coopers' Falls trails from the north end off Houssey's Rapids Road near Fire Lane 4, where there is a parking lot. It's a beautiful very rugged trail but with lots of bugs this time of year. The "boardwalk" in parts consisted of boards laid over logs.
2. Minutes from May 13 were already approved, no questions.
3. **Financial** Bob advised no change since the last meeting. The total budget is \$70,000 for this year, there is \$66,000 in work that has been done or estimated (this includes an estimate of \$60,000 for Side Road 15). The TCT spring grant will be spent in full, to be spent by June 30th. There is 2500 in reserve for any extras on the Lagoon City trail.
Ashley has not yet heard from Simcoe County re the matching TCC [Trails Connecting Communities]grant.
4. **Video taping of meetings** Everyone should be aware that our meetings are being recorded. They are not live streamed. The township keeps them only as a record of what was said or happened at meetings.

5. **Orkney Heights and Fountain Drive** Mayor Clarke: The landowner of a strip of land which has been a link in the cycling trail along the lake has for many years allowed cyclists to walk bikes across his property. However since this link was put on the Ramara & Simcoe maps, traffic increased. There was an altercation with a couple of cyclists refusing to dismount. Access across this land will continue for the summer. Mayor Clarke will get stop signs installed at each end to draw attention to the existing signs.

A work-around route is now shown on the Ramara map going along Plum Point, across Hwy 12 to Side Road 25 then down Concession 11 and back across Highway 12. [Stefanie notes that a lot of cyclists use this attractive route.] This avoids a hill on Highway 12 which has been the site of several serious accidents. The route previously shown along the shoulder Highway 12 in the Active Transportation Plan 2010 is unsafe.

A possible future route would be up Williams Street, then west to Orkney Heights.

6. **Rebecca Taylor's Storyboard Deputation**

Rebecca made a presentation to Council which approved the proposal. She emailed us suggestions for placement of the boards at 5 locations throughout Ramara, for a couple of weeks each.

The Committee is very supportive of this project and makes three suggestions: to have Lovely Park in Atherley as the first location, as the number of geese increase throughout the season; to schedule Lagoon City in August when the mosquito population is reduced and herons have left; because of vandalism concerns at the Brechin playground to consider removing it as a location.

7. **LSRCA Permit & Side Road 15** Ashley advised that Josh has filed the application. She will inquire from Josh and send a copy of the application. Re the private driveway portion there is no issue: there will be no change in grading, no extra gravel, no barriers.

There has been no lease extension agreement with the rail bed owner despite a verbal commitment in January. Mayor Clarke suggests we proceed with the Washago Trail if we are unable to get the lease agreement on the Lagoon City trail. Both Janet and Larry emphasized the many delays in moving forward with Side Road 15 trail construction, and given that it is the committee's number one priority for 2021, we feel it is very important to move forward with the project.

Bob notes that if we do Washago and not Side Road 15, we would give up about \$20,000 of the TCC grant from Simcoe County. John Pinsent offered to contact Simcoe County if necessary to ask for this funding to be carried over into next year.

John will be contacting the owner bi-weekly to complete the lease agreement.

8. **Updates on Washago Trail Grant Application** Steve has given Ashley four letters of community support. Thank you to David Snutch for the contacts with 3 local organizers. Also a Donor Drive group supplied a letter. Steve also drafted a signage plan. Ashley and Janet worked on the application. Ashley will file it tomorrow and will send the committee a copy.

Larry has the quotes for the survey of the Howlyn Pines-169 section, and will hire the surveyor once we know if we get the TCT grant.

9. Public Consultation on Washago Trail

Ashley prepared the materials for the two public consultations. Larry noted the width of the trail should be shown as 1-2 metres as there will be no snowmobile use. The base will be 3 metres with landscaping to conceal the edges. The lateral cross slope will be minimal, only a slight slope for drainage. We will advise on the running slope from Howlyn Pines-169 when we have quotes and know the size of the culvert.

10. Public Consultation on Lagoon City Trail

Re the draft consultation, Larry advised the length of the boardwalk should be shown as 600-700 metres. As the boardwalk is not a certainty, on page 5 it should say “the last part of this project will be to construct a boardwalk **or other trail option** to connect Side Road 15...”

The cross slope will be flat. The running slope will be less than 10%. No bench is proposed now because of budget and space must be allowed for the groomer. It may be added later.

11. Special Trail Features

Mary and Sandra have done a lot of research. Re the yarn bombing idea: not everyone likes it, issues of maintenance, potential harm to the trees, who will put it up and take it down regularly, and cost. They are proposing instead an idea from the Lagoon City Community Association LCCA and Orillia to do butterflies cut out from real estate agent signs. We may be able to get miscut signs free to reduce costs. The community and local artists would paint them, we supply material, use colour coding to identify trails. They are durable with a spray coating. The cost for 40 butterflies is \$250-300. They will be installed high on trees to reduce vandalism, with a ladder and using plastic ties. A plus for the environment: the corrugated signs are used as nests by bees. The committee approved this project.

Sandra: the painted rocks will be done by her class at the same time, with positive messages. A yard of river rocks is needed.

Timing: the first week of August to install butterflies. They could be replaced by other motifs in later years, and the butterflies moved to the Washago Trail. Ashley: a partnership with the Recreation Dept using kids’ art could add more interest.

12. Social Media Update Ashley advised the Committee is now allowed to post re trails on Instagram and Facebook. Ashley will forward the policy guidelines for social media posting. Kate will be taking over the Instagram account.

13. Volunteer Hours Larry reminded everyone that we should be posting our volunteer hours, using the link previously emailed by Bob on May 23rd. This will be helpful for future fund-raising, grant applications and presentations to council.

14. Work Bees We are permitted to do work bees outside with ten people unmasked, or masked if working less than 2 metres apart. Work to be done using \$849 remaining from TCT spring grant: screenings at trail head at Atherley, placement of rocks at heritage sign, screenings at the heritage sign, digging up a pipe to raise it to proper grade near Fern Resort where there is a big hole in the trail. Also screenings to be restored from the edges where trail is eroded beside the boat yard at Lagoon City.

Annalynn or Paul will hire someone to move the rocks at the heritage sign.

Larry/Paul will get a date for delivery of screenings, then a work bee date will be set.

Bob thanked Ashley for all her hard work on many aspects of trails including the TCT application, the materials for the public consultation, the template for volunteer hours etc.

The meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Our next meeting: Thursday July 8 at 7:00 p.m.