



Adirondack Park Agency

SHERMAN CRAIG
Chairman

TERRY MARTINO
Executive Director

DRAFT MINUTES
State Land Committee
July 14, 2016
Agency Meeting
KF:KR:mp

State Land Committee July 14, 2016

The State Land Committee convened at 1:05 pm.

State Land Committee Members Present:

Karen Feldman, Chair, Chad Dawson, Arthur Lussi, William Thomas and Robert Stegemann (DEC)

Other Members and Designees Present:

Sherman Craig, Chairman, John Ernst, Barbara Rice, Daniel Wilt, Lynn Mahoney (DOS) and Bradley Austin (DED)

Local Government Review Board:

Frederick Monroe, Executive Director

Agency Staff Present:

Terry Martino, James Townsend, Kathy Regan, Kevin Prickett, Mary Palmer.

Approval of June 2016 Draft Minutes

By motion of Mr. Thomas, seconded by Mr. Lussi, the June minutes were unanimously approved. Dr. Dawson, new committee member, abstained.

Planning Division Report

Ms. Regan noted the planning division report. There were no comments.

Ms. Regan noted that State Lands has three agenda items. She said Rob Ripp (DEC) will be presenting two Public Drafts, one for an amendment to the Vanderwhacker Mountain WF UMP and the second a UMP for the Horicon Boat Launch Intensive Use Area. She added that staff are requesting authorization to go to Public Comment simultaneously with the Department. She reminded members that simultaneous public comment is optional and staff will not make this request for more complicated UMPs or amendments.

Ms. Regan noted that Kevin Prickett will be presenting the UMP amendment for Wilmington WF, including a summary of public comment the Agency received and will request the Board adopt the resolution on conformance with the SLMP.

Ms. Regan also gave an update on the pending classification package. She said Agency and Department staff have been developing the list of parcels which need to be classified or reclassified. This list currently contains 102 parcels needing classification, ranging from less than one acre to over 16,000 acres, and 12 parcels to be reclassified. That list will be finalized shortly and then the Agency will make a determination of significance under SEQR. Staff will be writing a DSEIS for this action and hope to present it to the Board at the October Agency meeting.

Vanderwhacker Mt. Wild Forest UMP Amendment

Mr. Ripp gave an overview of the proposed management actions for different areas of Vanderwhacker Mt. Wild Forest. The UMP amendment proposed the following actions: creation of facilities for persons with disabilities in the vicinity of Palmer Pond, improvement of the Moxham Mountain Trailhead and Balfour Lake parking areas, and the replacement of a footbridge across the Boreas River.

Mr. Wilt asked what the approximate size of the footbridge would be. Mr. Ripp said depending on the location it would be about 35 to 40 feet long.

Mr. Thomas asked if the proposed addition of 5 parking spaces would take care of the problem of cars parking along the roadside. Mr. Ripp said that extensive parking occurs on some busy weekends and the additional spaces may not meet the full demand, however sight constraints and wetlands limit further expansion.

By motion of Mr. Lussi, seconded by Mr. Stegemann, the Board unanimously approved proceeding to simultaneous public comment with DEC.

Horicon Boat Launch UMP

Mr. Ripp said the proposal is to create a gravel lane from the current inspection area to the proposed location of a wash unit. He said it would utilize a pre-existing woods road and once in place would improve the flow of traffic.

Mr. Monroe asked if all boats would be inspected as they came in. Mr. Ripp said yes and the proposal makes it difficult to enter the launch without passing the inspection station.

Mr. Stegemann said that another benefit of the gravel lane is it would help keep the boat launch uncluttered by people who will not be launching from that site.

By motion of Mr. Thomas, seconded by Mr. Stegemann, the Board unanimously approved proceeding to simultaneous public comment with DEC.

Wilmington Wild Forest UMP Amendment

Mr. Prickett gave an update on the final amendment and proposals. He said in 2005 a UMP was approved for this area that provided for the construction of several multiple-use recreational trails. Over the past 10 years these trails have been built and the area has seen a growth in recreational use including mountain biking.

Mr. Prickett said this UMP Amendment proposes about 5 miles of additional recreational trails and addresses several management issues. He said that new trails will provide improved access to scenic areas for persons with disabilities and provide options for beginner mountain bike riders. A picnic area will also be built near a scenic view.

Mr. Prickett said there are also plans to close or reroute some trails that are poorly laid out, eroding or have significant natural resource problems.

Mr. Prickett said some additional management proposals in the UMP include designating the Cobble Lookout Trail as a nature and interpretive trail, updating the classification of hiking trails, listing trails that will be closed to mountain biking as some trails are not appropriate for mountain bike use, calling for trail design and construction to consider cross country ski use, and canceling several projects that were proposed in the 2005 UMP.

Mr. Prickett said that the Agency's Public Comment period was from May 23, 2016 to June 10, 2016 and staff received 13 letters, faxes or emails during that time and all comments supported the proposals outlined in the UMP. He added that no comments expressed concerns regarding SLMP compliance.

Mr. Prickett said the Board is being asked to determine if the Wilmington Wild Forest UMP Amendment conforms to the SLMP. He added that the purpose of the SLMP is to provide management direction that ensures the protection and preservation of the natural resources of the state lands, and permit and encourage use and enjoyment, so long as the resources are not degraded.

Mr. Prickett said that snowmobile trails are also part of this UMP Amendment. He added that SLMP guidelines for snowmobile trails should be designed and located in a manner that will not adversely affect adjoining private landowners or the wild forest environment. He said staff believe this has been accomplished in the UMP.

Ms. Feldman noted the difference between approval of simultaneous public comment for the first two UMPs. She said this one is at a point where the Board is approving the UMP in compliance with the State Land Master Plan.

Dr. Dawson noted that there is management trail guidance for snowmobiles and asked what there was for mountain bikes. He added that going forward there will be more of these UMPs and each will require decisions on these issues. Mr. Prickett said that we are seeing the forest preserve as a resource for communities. He added that with more

people coming more conflicts may occur. He said staff are in the process of developing guidance for mountain bike trails.

Dr. Dawson asked how staff monitors the impacts of trails. Mr. Prickett said agency staff had training for systematic evaluation of trails and do photo comparison. Mr. Dawson said he would encourage staff to put in some type of two or five-year plan for monitoring the impacts to the trails.

Mr. Lussi said following up on Dr. Dawson's comment that it was good to go forward with monitoring as it has proven to work. He added that doing things like not using leaf blowers during hunting season helps with the conflict of hunters. He said it does help to put knowledge into a plan so it can be replicated throughout the Park.

Mr. Feldman asked if the proposed management action for ski use states "where practical, new trails, reroutes, and trail structures will be designed and constructed to accommodate and enhance ski use" and sections of trails that have steep slopes may be cut wider, if that was something that DEC would have to come back to the Agency about. Ms. Regan said not if the trails are being developed where they currently exist.

Mr. Feldman asked if trees would have to be cut for the proposed parking areas. Ms. Regan said that the Department has to fill out a State Land Consultation form if they are building a parking area that involves tree cutting, which provides a tree tally.

By motion of Mr. Thomas, seconded by Mr. Lussi, the Board unanimously adopted the resolution that the UMP was in conformance with the SLMP.

Old Business

None

New Business

None

Karen Feldman, Committee Chair, adjourned the meeting at 2:00 pm.