

Bayfield Area Trails Committee Meeting Notes

Tuesday April 13th @ 3 – 4:45 pm

Present: Finn, Fahrenkrog, Jeannette, Kitchell, G. Johnson, K. Wegerson

Absent: Bratsch (on leave), Lang, VanBergen, Van Stappen

Round Robin Reports from Committee members: (20 min.)

- Ashwabay (Finn) (sign MOU?)
 - Getting ready for Big Top merger
 - AWB seriously considering a campground in the future. Sanitation is going to be a challenge.
 - Planning to do more for summer trail use, including more mowing
 - AWB to Valhalla link efforts continue
 - Supportive of the hatchery to Jolly connection
- City (Kitchell)
 - Pine Bluff Trail remains closed. Thanks to all who have been very compliant. The Facebook post was helpful and had LOTS of viewing.
 - Order placed for the Big Ravine maps & directional signage. Should be up by early May.
 - Next step is larger trail maps w/ icons at 5 trail access points: Sweeny, North Ravine, Martin, Hilltop, West Rim.
 - Exploring potential funding for and construction of connecting trail between the school and Gil Larsen Trail.
 - Awaiting decision from Wisconsin Coastal Management about grant to renovate Waterfront Walk.
- County (Bodine) (sign MOU?): not present
- Landmark (Lang)(not present, but sent email)
 - People still going around barrier on Brownstone Trail.
 - New re-route signs for Brownstone Trail have been installed. Seem to be well-received.
 - Planning to meet with Dan Maki soon about possible re-route of Brownstone to avoid the curve on Hwy. 13
- NPS (Van Stappen): not present
- Red Cliff (VanBergen): not present
- Town (Fahrenkrog) (sign MOU?)
 - Plan Commission has completed Comp. Plan revision and has recommended it to the Town Board. This will be considered at the Board's 4/20 meeting, including possibly hosting public hearing.
 - Presentation to Town Board on 4/20 regarding Big Ravine efforts: 1) buckthorn control; 2) request funding for trail maintenance; 3) proposal to acquire Big Ravine headwaters wetlands
 - Sanitary District working with campground off of County J on issues.

Communications Reports (Jeannette & Kitchell) (10 min.)

- Travel Wisconsin Trail Reporter: participants agreed to add BATs to this program and website.
Kitchell will follow-up
- Comm. Plan: Kate (with help from Liz, Genevieve)
 - Comm. Plan framework has been drafted
 - Subcommittee is working on core messages framed around: 1) Safety; 2) Respecting others; 3) Environmental protection and stewardship.
 - The messages can be communicated via trailhead signs, website, Facebook and Instagram.
 - When ideas are fleshed out, the subcommittee will bring them to BAT Comm. for consideration.

Group Purchase of Trail Counters: any interest? If yes, schedule separate conversation (5 min.)

- Some interest from Landmark & AWB. Carol will ask Tom Gordon at Town about interest.
- Consider pursuing a grant for trail counters?

Proposal to acquire 10-acre Big Ravine Headwater Wetlands (Kitchell, Fahrenkrog, Lang) (5 min.)

- Exploring potential for DNR grant. Due 5/1
- Have had initial discussions with landowner, who appears receptive.
- Will discuss at Town Board meeting on 4/20
- Benefits: 1) protects Big Ravine headwaters; 2) protects wildlife & wetland habitat; 3) creates wildlife viewing trail opportunity, extending from East Rim trail and parking area on Meyers-Olson

Mobilizing Volunteers to Implement BAT 2021 Work Plan (Kitchell) (with help from Ipsen & Wegerson) (30 min.) (Att. calendar)

- Season kick-off virtual training & meeting:
 - **DECISION:** plan to host Friday May 14th & Sat. May 15th 9 a.m. – 10:30
- Review items on schedule for April, May, June
 - **ACTION:** Add project in August/September to further upgrade E. Rim Trail with rock & gravel in low, wet areas.

Private Land Trail Crossings (30 min.) (Att.:1) strategy; 2) easement agreement; 3) trail use agreement)

- Discussed documents that have been drafted.
- Goal: adopt strategy & templates(?) at May meeting.
- At next meeting, start on E. Rim, Bayfield Hill, Orchard area: Initiate with receptive landowners
 - Thank you to the Finns for leading the way
 - Drew Froeliger is supportive to establishing/signing a connection from Betzold to County J to connect to Fire Tower hill
- Key Points of Discussion:
 - Building landowner relationships and trust is ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL
 - Communicating with the landowner on regular basis is important: consider halfway through the season to be able to address issues and at end of season to wrap up and reflect.
 - Trail monitoring is key: can use volunteers.
 - The strategy can/should be vetted with BAT member organizations in the upcoming months.
 - City Parks and Rec. Comm. is already considering it.
 - Present it to Town when there is a first new crossing that is being established with a landowner (possibly Fire Tower Hill connection?). **Perhaps in June?**

Fiscal sponsorship: Initial discussion of establishing this arrangement with RFR to manage donations and funds for cooperative multi-jurisdictional projects. **Finn & Kitchell will bring to BAT Comm. when ready.**

Future Agendas: Should we go back to 2-hour meetings? Other options?

- **Adopt Private Land Trail Crossings Strategy & Templates.** Initiate focused landowner outreach.
- Communications Team Recommendations: Plan & Core messages
- Fiscal sponsorship: Finn & Kitchell will lead exploring this with RFR to manage donations and funds for cooperative multi-jurisdictional projects.
- Re-engaging other partners in meetings etc: How to re-engage CAMBA and NCCA and other partner groups in our meetings and activities. They are on our email outreach list, but we could take more initiative. 1) Invite partners on the MOU to regular meetings? 2) Open meetings to email list?
- Requesting Donations: from work plan priorities, identify project for which to request donations

Adjourn: NEXT MEETING: May 11th @ 3 – 5:00 p.m.