



Adirondack Park Agency

SHERMAN CRAIG
Chairman

TERRY MARTINO
Executive Director

DRAFT MINUTES
State Land Committee
July 12 and 13, 2018
Agency Meeting
KF:KDR:mp

State Land Committee July 12, 2018

The State Land Committee convened at 2:00 pm.

State Land Committee Members Present:

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

Absent and Excused - William Thomas

Other Members and Designees Present:

Chairman Craig, Daniel Wilt, John Ernst, Bradley Austin (DED), and Lynne Mahoney (DOS)

Local Government Review Board

Frederick Monroe, Executive Director

Agency Staff Present:

Terry Martino, Executive Director, Sarah Reynolds, Acting Counsel, Paul Van Cott, Mary Palmer, Kevin Prickett and Matt McNamara

Approval of June 2018 Draft Minutes

By motion of Mr. Stegemann, seconded by Dr. Dawson, the June minutes were unanimously approved.

Mount VanHoevenberg UMP Amendment

Mr. Lussi is recused and left the room prior to the presentation.

Mike Pratt (ORDA) gave an overview of the proposed Final UMP. He noted there have been three changes made to the UMP since it was presented to the Board in May: an increase in the size of the Welcome Center/Base Lodge; the proposed trail relocation near private property; and inventories/mapping of existing snowshoe and mountain bike trails were added in response to a request from the APA.

Ms. Feldman asked about the infrastructure for the new snowmaking reservoir, and what type of piping will be used. Mr. Pratt said that plan is conceptual at this time and specific engineering will have to be done. The size of the reservoir is 8 million gallons. The piping will be traditional air and water lines, approximately 4" to 6" in diameter.

Mr. Austin asked if the transport coaster will go in both directions. Mr. Pratt answered affirmatively, adding that the details have not been completely worked out at this time.

Ms. Feldman asked for a motion to authorize proceeding to public comment on APSLMP Conformance.

By motion of Mr. Stegemann, seconded by Chairman Craig, authorization to proceed to public comment was unanimously approved.

High Peaks Wilderness Complex and Vanderwhacker Wild Forest UMP Amendments

Mr. Ernst is recused from the discussion and left the room. Mr. Lussi returned to the meeting.

Tate Connor and Rob Ripp (DEC) presented the proposed final UMPs. Kevin Prickett and Matt McNamara were available regarding discussion points related to the APSLMP conformance of both UMPs.

Dr. Dawson said this is a very large plan and is pleased that it is moving forward. He acknowledged the Wildlands Monitoring Plan in the UMP and suggested it also be added as another whereas paragraph to the resolution if the Board decides to adopt it. A commitment made by the Agency and Department to work on a monitoring plan is important, especially when it comes to carrying capacity. He suggested setting a realistic date to produce the plan. Mr. Stegemann agreed and said staff can add another whereas section to the resolution if the Board requests.

Ms. Feldman asked if the Wildlands Monitoring Plan would be subject to public comment once it is produced. Ms. Feldman also agreed that putting timelines on these actions would be useful. She asked if DEC has discussed timelines. Mr. Connor said timelines have been discussed internally and they are to hoping start within the next few months.

Mr. Craig said this is the most sophisticated planning document he has seen since his time on the Board, and there are no problems with any conformance issues. Mr. Craig stated that he is very positive about the plan and implementation, but is concerned the Department does not have adequate staffing or funding.

Mr. Austin said he also agrees with moving forward with the plan, as the recreational opportunities will have a good economic impact for the surrounding communities.

Dr. Dawson suggested opening the discussion on monitoring to special interest groups and consultants that have experience with this type of planning. Trail stewards can be trained to help with monitoring under the direction of DEC staff. If staff are going to move forward with this experimental plan they will need more hands to get it done.

Mr. Stegemann noted that there have been a lot of UMPs done over time and there has been talk about how some of them have been addressed. It should be acknowledged that we are at a point in time where a UMP of this size is more formal. We have new lands and more resources, as well as new knowledge, and staff are trying to combine it all in a manageable approach.

Ms. Feldman agreed, noting that sometimes new is scary. These are some of the most comprehensive plans the Board has seen. This is complex planning and she hopes this plan sets the stage for the future. She also stated that she likes the phased approach to management actions, and hopefully that will also give the public the opportunity to see what works.

Dr. Dawson suggested the Board get educated on the phases of the UMPs, and go in the field to see what has been done and review what is upcoming. Dr. Dawson stated there is a need to work together on issues and projects.

Mr. Monroe said the Review Board is pleased with the plans. Mr. Monroe stated he is encouraged about moving forward with comprehensive planning. He added that he is also pleased with the attention to accessibility for the disabled.

There was discussion on the wording of a Wildlands Monitoring Plan for the resolution and Mr. Craig noted that he is hesitant to assign dates. Karyn Richards (DEC) read the whereas clause staff drafted: the Agency and the Department are committed to immediately forming a working group which will develop a Wildland Monitoring Plan within two years with an opportunity for public involvement. Dr. Dawson said he was comfortable with the wording and Mr. Craig moved to have the addition made to both the High Peaks and Vanderwhacker Mountain resolutions.

Ms. Feldman clarified the red-line resolutions for both the High Peaks Wilderness Complex and Vanderwhacker Mountain Wild Forest have an additional clause on SEQR. She clarified that the wildlands monitoring changes will be put in both resolutions.

Ms. Feldman said that the resolutions for the UMPs will be voted on separately and asked for a motion to approve the High Peaks Wilderness Complex UMP Amendment Resolution on APSLMP Conformance.

By motion of Mr. Craig, seconded by Mr. Stegemann, the resolution was unanimously approved with the proposed changes.

Ms. Feldman asked for a motion to approve the Vanderwhacker Mountain Wild Forest UMP Amendment Resolution on APSLMP Conformance.

By motion of Mr. Craig, seconded by Mr. Stegemann, the resolution was unanimously approved with the proposed changes.

Dr. Dawson said that while some will not be enthusiastic with what the Board just did he hopes this is a step to introduce monitoring in UMPs across the Park and to think more broadly about plans at a larger scale with complex planning. Ms. Feldman agreed and added that this marks the beginning of a new and different approach for the future.

Mr. Stegemann said it was an extraordinary effort and commitment for both agencies. Ms. Feldman thanked staff for their work on these UMPs.

Mr. Craig closed the meeting and said the Committee will reconvene at 10:00 am.

Friday, July 13, continued

Mr. Ernst is recused from the follow-up discussion for High Peaks and Vandewhacker and left the room.

Ms. Feldman followed up on the resolutions for High Peaks and Vanderwhacker UMPs. Red-line versions of both resolutions which reference SEQR and the whereas clause suggested by Dr. Dawson noting both agencies commitment to form a working group to develop a Wildland Monitoring Plan within two years.

Ms. Feldman said Ms. Regan's memos explain staff's position that both UMPs conform with the APSLMP. Conformance questions were raised by the public with respect to both UMP amendments. Questions for the High Peaks UMP included the concurrent public comment period, over-use and fixed anchors for climbing. Additional questions for Vanderwhacker included day-use area terminology, Forest Preserve road mileage, community connector snowmobile trail placement and the application of the mountain bike guidance. Staff responded to all issues which is reflected in both memos and is included as an appendix in the UMP amendments.

Ms. Martino emphasized that Agency and Department staff worked hard together in their deliberations and review to ensure that management issues and APSLMP conformance issues were addressed.

Mr. Austin thanked staff for their work, noting that the 133 pages of response to public comment was thorough and the best that has been presented to the Board.

Travel Corridor UMP

Mr. Ernst returned to the room for the presentation.

Ms. Feldman noted that this item is for Board action to proceed to public comment. The comment period would be four weeks, ending August 10, 2018.

Ed Frantz (DOT) presented the proposed final UMP.

Mr. Stegemann asked if the over-use issue was addressed directly in the UMP. Mr. Frantz answered affirmatively.

Mr. Wilt commended the DOT for the short time it took for the culvert project on Route 30 to be completed.

Mr. Ernst said with the issue of road salt, Towns are making an effort to reduce their use, and asked where DOT stands on that issue. Mr. Frantz said DOT has been attending meetings that are investigating ways to improve practices while keeping roads safe for drivers. There are also impacts on waterways that are adjacent to roads. The DOT is looking at improved training for its drivers. DOT has two new pilot areas (Wilmington and Lake George) and have already been working with Paul Smiths for about six years. Although there have been no drastic changes to date, DOT is committed to continuing the conversation for improvement.

Mr. Stegemann said the communication between DOT, involved agencies and stake holders on issues like connectivity has improved. It is very important to have reliable communications as these decisions are being made. Mr. Frantz agreed that open communication is needed and that DOT has been improving their communication with the public through the production of its annual report.

Ms. Feldman said it was good that the Public Draft UMP for this Generic plan was amended to clarify that each individual travel corridor UMP will be reviewed under SEQRA as a Supplemental EIS and will have an additional public comment period. She asked if there have been discussions regarding the impact of intense storms on the State roads. Mr. Frantz answered affirmatively.

Mr. Lussi said he feels that the communication between agencies has improved since he has been on the Board and said people point out their concerns and they get addressed. Mr. Lussi applauded DOT for listening to the people of the State in addition to the sister agencies. Mr. Frantz agreed communication between the agencies has improved along with the level of knowledge.

Ms. Feldman asked for a motion to authorize proceeding to public comment on APSLMP Conformance

By motion of Dr. Dawson, seconded by Mr. Craig, authorization to proceed to public comment was unanimously approved.

Old Business

None

New Business

None

Ms. Feldman, Committee Chair, adjourned the meeting at 11:05 am.