

**RIB MOUNTAIN PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE SAFETY COMMITTEE**  
**JANUARY 16, 2020**  
**7:30 A.M.**

Attendees: Chairman Andrea Larson, John Brauer, John Beatty, Mark Clark and Lori Woldt

Excused: Curt Deininger and Paul Clarke

Staff attendance included Administrator Gaylene Rhoden and Town Clerk Joanne Ruechel

Guests: Supervisor Gerry Klein, Supervisor Brad Conklin and Marathon County Park's Department Director Jamie Polley

**Minutes: Motion by Beatty/Brauer to approve the December 19, 2019 minutes. Questioned and carried 5:0.**

Chairperson Larson gave introductions of the guests and explained why the Rib Mountain State Park Master Plan Amendment is so important for the Town to be involved in. The Town would like to see more connectivity with the State Park from the various Town trails. February 22, 2020 would be the last day for the Town to submit ideas to the State for any amendments. Any recommendations from the Bike and Pedestrian Safety Committee would be submitted to the Town Board for their approval. At that point, the Town Board would submit the idea to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Chairperson Larson would like to see us capture ideas and then prioritize the listing so the State can better focus on our suggestions.

***New Business:***

**Rib Mountain State Park Master Plan Amendment:**

- i. Robin to Rib Mountain Inn to Whippoorwill Connection- Supervisor Klein stated that this item has been on the long-range plan for five plus years. He stated that the Bike and Pedestrian Safety Committee should not be focused on funding right now. The Commission needs to envision things that someone, in years to come, might want to do in relation to connection with the State Park. There are several other groups who would like to see a trail from the State Park to 9-Mile Recreation Area. Supervisor Klein would also like to see a loop around the mountain via the State Park.

The Bike and Pedestrian Safety Committee discussed if they could look at possibly using private land for a future use. Supervisor Klein said that if the owner would want to sell the land in the future to the State Park, then the State would have a future use documented for the land.

Supervisor Klein discussed getting to 9-Mile Recreation Area from downtown Wausau. In the future they could use Daisy Road, to Thornapple Road to Red Bud Road. There's a ½ mile between Thornapple and Red Bud that is paved. There is also a large shoulder on Red Bud Road. The Bike and Pedestrian Safety Committee discussed having mountain bikers be off the roads completely and only using trails.

Granite Peak did put in a paved trail in 2019 from the end of Robin Lane to the Granite Peak parking lot. The property owners in the area would like to see the trail expanded to around the State Park as far as South Mountain Elementary School. If it does go to the school, the Town could apply for a Safe Route to School funding grant. This trail could also be expanded to go to Whippoorwill and Thornapple. It was stated

by Administrator Rhoden that there is still a consideration to get the abandoned railroad bed across the river as well.

- ii. Bittersweet/South Mountain Elementary to Park Road Connections- We have trails on County Road “R” and have had a trail put in from South Mountain Elementary School to Park Road. Due to an agreement, a developer will be putting in additional trails in this area. One of the main concerns is people walking on Fern Lane. Fern Lane has a significant amount of traffic due to the school being located at the end of the road. The Bike and Pedestrian Safety Committee discussed what could be done so that the walkers and bikers don’t need to be on Fern Lane. Supervisor Klein would like to see a trail put in behind Fern Lane on the State land. The Town could also apply for a Safe Route to School funding grant if this trail is put in. The Committee discussed how the residents who live on Fern Lane would react to the new trail. They also discussed if a buffer should be put between the trail and the houses.
- iii. Circle Loop using Daisy- Supervisor Conklin stated that there is a nice access point and this would be the perfect road to use to circle the State Park. The gravel trail that is off of Daisy is State property. He also stated that this would be a good location for a potential trail head parking lot. Marathon County Park’s Department Director Jamie Polley stated that part of the trail is in conservancy and has protected wildlife on it. That part of the trail cannot be touched at this time.
- iv. Mountain Bike Trails (CWOCC)- Chairperson Larson stated that it could be a potential draw for people to use by connecting all of the off-road trails. The Bike and Pedestrian Safety Committee discussed if the trails should be paved or gravel. It was decided by the Committee that both gravel and paved trails be submitted to the Department of Natural Resources. Chairman Larson said that Bellflower connects to the Yellow Trail. There is 400 meters of non-official trail. She would like to see the 400 meters as official trail. Supervisor Klein stated that the Town does have a 50-foot easement near this trail, but people need to cross private land to get to the trail. Chairperson Larson would like to see this item added to the Master Plan amendment.
- v. Connectivity to 9 Mile- Marathon County Park’s Department Director Jamie Polley wants to work with the Town and make it a priority to connect 9-mile Recreation Area to the State Park. Beatty stated that the current Parks and Forestry rules state that there cannot be any new trails at 9-mile. Ms. Polley stated that this is a connection trail for safety concerns, so it’s different than just adding trails. Supervisor Conklin stated that this year a trail is being constructed from Trillium Trail to the Foxglove Trail. This trail will be going south to connect with the school forest. The Commission discussed if it would make sense to use the existing snowmobile trail. Ms. Polley said that she would work with the local snowmobile clubs to see if we could use it. We could also put options into the Master Plan amendment instead of giving exact routes at this time.
- vi. State Park Access Point Signage and Official Trails of Current Volunteer Trails (i.e. Begonia, Bellflower, Chickadee, Oriole, etc.)- About a year ago, the Bike and Pedestrian Safety Committee identified what the highest priority for signage is, but it was not supported by the Department of Natural Resources. The signs would state that the trails are for “Public Access”. This Committee would like to see signs put into the Master Plan amendment as well. Chairperson Larson will put together a map of where the Town would like to see State Park Access Point Signage.

Marathon County Park's Department Director Jamie Polley will be writing a letter of support for having 9-Mile Recreation Area connect to the Park. The other item that the County is questioning is how the State Park is going to be managed. If trails are going to be added, how are those trails going to be maintained. Ms. Polley stated that the County is going to be a partner with the Town to get this amendment done correctly. She reminded the Bike and Pedestrian Safety Committee about the public hearing on January 29, 2020 from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the D. C. Everest Middle School that deals with the Master Plan amendment. Supervisor Klein asked that the first draft of the amendment goes to the Town Board on January 21, 2020 and the final draft would be presented on February 18, 2020. Administrator Rhoden suggested that we take the discussion items and place them on the Town Board meeting agenda for January 21, 2020. Ms. Polley left the meeting at 8:34 a.m. Supervisor Conklin brought up bringing camping back to the State Park as well.

- vii. Addition of Trails within Park such a Loop Option Getting to Quarry from Red Trail or in SE corner of Park to Daffodil -Chairman Larson mentioned that Charles Skinner planned at one point to get rid of the Turkey trails on Granite Peak so that they can expand. The Bike and Pedestrian Safety Committee discussed where they would want to see trails within the park. Ms. Woldt asked if another water fountain could be placed at the trail heads for re-filling water bottles. Mr. Skinner was also considering another set of bathrooms that can be used year-round near the chalet.

Administrator Rhoden asked that whomever is available from the Bike and Pedestrian Safety Committee attend the Town Board meeting on January 21, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. Supervisor Klein is going to update the maps. Supervisor Conklin stated that on the DNR website, there is a place for public comments.

### ***Old Business;***

51/29 Tunnel Mural- Chairperson Larson stated that she spoke with Mr. Opall-Wahoske from Wausau who has headed up putting murals up in Wausau. She would to form a sub-committee to come up with a plan for the costs and which artist should be doing the murals. The Bike and Pedestrian Safety Committee discussed that the tunnel is wet and what could be done to protect the art work. It was discussed to use panels in the tunnel. Administrator Rhoden recommended Pam Clerk be on the sub-committee and Andrea Larson facilitate the sub-committee. Mark Clark recommend that we put something on Facebook to see if anyone else from the community would like to be on the sub-committee. The Committee also discussed having a contest with people to submit their art to be displayed.

### ***Staff Reports from Scott/Gaylene:***

Trillium Trail-Chairperson Larson said that the request for proposals were coming in with the trail being completed by the Fall of 2020. Administrator Rhoden stated that MSA is in charge of the project and that Chad Lemmens was hired to do picture of the trail as it is being developed.

**Report from Members** – Lori Woldt reached out to the owners of Glass Nickel Pizza and asked if a bike rack could be put at the business. They have not gotten back to her yet.

Andrea Larson stated that we will need to meet in February to get an update on the Master Plan amendment.

Administrator Rhoden informed the Committee that the Jared Wehner, the new Community Development Director would be bringing the Comprehensive Plan to the next meeting.

Lori Woldt and John Brauer will not be able to attend the February meeting.

**NEXT MEETING DATE:** The next meeting will be on February 20, 2020.

**Adjourn: Motion by Clark/Beatty to adjourn at 8:56 a.m. Questioned and carried 5:0.**

Submitted by  
Joanne Ruechel  
Town of Rib Mountain Clerk