

Parks Commission
Tuesday, April 15th, 2025 / 6:00 PM
Location: Zoom and City Hall

Mission: The Parks Commission advances a long-term vision to ensure that parks, gardens, greenways, and natural areas are vital to Montpelier's community identity and are forever available for the enjoyment of all.

Parks Commissioners: Jessa, Lincoln, Andrew, Kassia, Emily

Staff: Alec, Keir

Public: David Delcore, Emily Seifert, Colleen Kearon, Jim Coppock, John Gerdel

Meeting Minutes

- 6:08 Commissioner Introductions
- 6:09 April 15th Agenda, March 25th Minutes. Andrew moves to approve, Lincoln seconds. Unanimous.
- 6:10 Public Comment for items not on the agenda. None.
- 6:10 Staff Update, Review Incident Reports
- Budget impacts:
 - Capital budget cuts
 - No money for New Shelter outhouse
 - City budget cuts impact total funds available for multi-use trail connector (\$100,000 still available)
 - FEMA unlikely to extend any projects after October 31st
 - Mud season:
 - With change in dog rules, when roads are closed down to pond it's harder to access off-leash area → Promote parking at CCV, stump dump, etc. and/or other areas like Country Club Road, Cross Vermont Trail near U-32
 - Hemlock Hill Trail has been closed due to mud. Likely due to having been constructed so late in the fall, no time to compact. Don't expect this to be a problem in future years.
 - → Review mud season strategies at a future meeting
- 6:28 Hubbard Park Multi-Use Connector Trail: Review bids, make recommendations for 4/23 City Council Meeting.
- Received 9 bids, Alec did 3 pre-bid walks, online Q&A, deadline was today at noon
 - Range of contractors with various types of experience
 - All bids *do not* include materials and time for any of the boardwalks. All bids use most/all of the available budget. Jessa: If trail is built without boardwalk, would the incomplete trail be totally blocked off? Would people be walking through the wetlands/wet areas? Alec: Could construct

some boardwalks in-house. Trail sections there now could remain useable, but may want to close some areas.

- Kassia: Worth revisiting phasing? eg. Windham - Seven Fireplaces, and Seven Fireplaces to North Park Dr. Alec: Would save on total costs by not having to mobilize contractors twice.
- → Meet Friday 4/18 at 8am on Zoom

6:50 Review of City Plan sections relevant to Parks (Land Use, Natural Resources, Community Services).

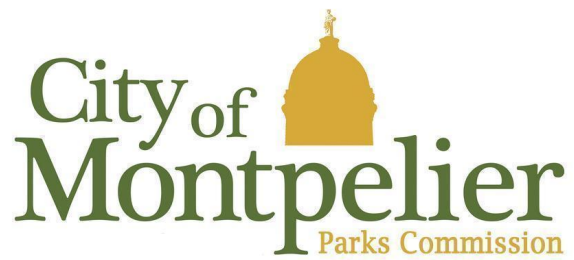
- Read proposed edits for relevant sections of the City Plan, incorporated edits

7:38 Review FEMA Projects for implementation this field season.

- Repair Tower Rd and Old Shelter Rd.: Will require fairly large machines in the park, will need to close portions of the trails when construction is in progress. When complete, trails will look like Universally Accessible Trail, but 11 feet wide (as compared to 6 feet wide). Contractors would use erosion fencing near wetlands, vernal pools, etc.
- North Branch Park sections:
 - North Branch River Path: Resurface, replace culverts with bridges, renaturalize streams. Likely closed sections during construction while work is in progress.
 - Rebuild Gould Hill Bridge: Abutments were compromised during the flood. Will make wider so it's less vulnerable to streambank erosion. Will also make it stronger so a rescue vehicle can cross into the park.
 - Repair/Rebuild Lower Sparrow Farm Trail: Walking only. Will need reroute design and construction. Envision a 4-5 foot walking path feel. Would travel outside the current washed out "gully." May not be wide enough for XC skiing. Goal would be to get people to "Five Corners" (junction with Barred Owl Boulevard and Pileated Pass)
 - Kassia: Would like to ensure that the seep ash forest natural community, identified as a priority in ecological assessment, sees limited impacts. Alec: Will ensure all contractors see the Ecological Assessment
 - Andrew: Would like to see a walking only trail up to the high elevations.
- Lincoln motions to approve Alec putting these projects out to bid to procure a contractor to complete the work as outlined tonight. Jessa seconds. Passes unanimously.

8:12 Existing Project Quick Updates

- Stonewall Meadows Management Plan and Survey – Survey complete, ready to distribute. Field walks are scheduled, will begin between now and May Parks meeting. Alec will share on social media, Lincoln will share on Front Porch Forum. Jim will distribute flyers to as many nearby/adjacent landowners as possible. Lincoln will ask City Councilors to distribute via email distribution list.
- Pump Track Expansion/Cumming St. Engagement plan – no update → Kassia follow-up with Jessa on this
- Abenaki Land Use Agreement – no update
- Summer Street Park – Plan to remove trees towards back that are in poor health. General agreement not to remove all trees all at once. Will do in phases. Melding of a management plan and a tree plan.



Kassia Randzio, Chair
Andrew Brewer
Lincoln Frasca
Emily Donaldson
Jessa Barnard

Alec Ellsworth, Parks Director

- 8:10 Agenda items, date, and location for next month's meeting
- Friday, 4/18 at 8am on Zoom: Multi-use connector trail contractors
 - Tuesday 5/20 at 6pm
 - City Plan check-in
 - e-Bikes discussion
 - Stonewall Meadows progress so far