



Kassia Randzio, Chair
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Geoff Beyer, Parks Director
Alec Ellsworth, Parks Caretaker

**Parks Commission
Special Meeting
Tuesday November 12, 2019 / 6PM
Meeting Location: Montpelier Senior Center Conference Room**

Meeting Agenda

- 6:00 October minutes
 November 12 agenda
- 6:05 Comments from the public
- 6:10 Greenprint action items from October Parks Meeting
 - Carolyn's meeting with Mike Miller
 - Who can do GIS mapping, when?
 - Kassia's draft "case" for Montpelier Parks
 - Quick overview, general feedback
 - Invite additional, specific feedback outside of meeting
- 6:30 Discuss and Revise [Draft Greenprint Implementation Plan](#)
- 7:45 Confirm specific action items, next steps

DRAFT

Greenprint Implementation Plan

Background: Montpelier Parks Commission, in coordination with the Conservation Commission, developed a “Greenprint” for Montpelier in XXXX. The plan outlines a vision for expanding and connecting Montpelier’s park system.

Vision: In Montpelier, our parks are a vibrant part of everyday life. No resident is more than a ten minute walk from a neighborhood park or playground and no more than a fifteen minute walk from a large protected natural area. A system of interconnected parks and greenways enhances opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to move throughout the City on safe routes that maintain our connection to nature, ourselves, and each other.

Current Conditions: According to the Trust for Public Land, 26% of Montpelier residents live within a ten minute walk from a park, and 7% of Montpelier is parkland. This means that 3 in 4 residents live *more* than a 10 minute from a park. The three largest parks -- Hubbard Park, Montpelier Recreation Field, and North Branch River Park -- are connected via minimal road crossings. Other island parks include Blanchard Park, Mill Pond Park, Elm Court Park, Gateway Park, Peace Park, and Turntable Park.

Partners:

- Conservation Commission
- Bike/Walk Group
- Housing Commission
- History Commission

Influencers:

- Staff Directors
- Local businesses
- Montpelier Alive
- Tim Heney
- Cross Vermont Trails
- Citizens

Goal 1: *Across the city, developers and private landowners reference the Greenprint to inform development decisions, making the City and Commission aware of opportunities to add park land (or access to parkland) before any individual development project begins.*

1. City adopts Greenprint in official planning documents (March 2020)

- Decisionmaker: City Council
- Tools needed:
 - 2019 year in review to share with City Council to promote understanding of current Parks' work/successes
 - 1-2 pager of *why* parks are important to Montpelier
 - Updated Greenprint map showing locations of all parks and including definition of Greenprint
- Timeline:
 - December: Finalize tools
 - November-January: Meet with partners and influencers. Request public support via letter of support, letter to the editor, FPF post, etc.
 - January: Meet with each City Councilor individually, listen to any concerns
 - February: Adapt tools, gain influencers, secure letters of support
 - March: Present to City Council

2. Greenprint is included in City Plan (December 2020)

- Decisionmaker: City Council w/ Mike Miller
- Partners and Influencers:
- Tools Needed:
- Timeline:

3. Greenprint is referenced as part of routine city development decisions (ongoing)

- City staff reference Greenprint when building permits are constructed and alert Parks staff to possible opportunities.
- Downtown Master Plan committee references Greenprint to inform plan updates.
- City Planning staff reference Greenprint goals in vision as part of citywide grant proposals.
- Clerk's Office alerts Parks staff when ownership of priority properties are turned over.
- ...need help from Mike Miller here.

Goal 2: *The Greenprint is a citywide priority, with multiple staff departments, city commissions, citizens, and nonprofit partners working towards a shared vision.*

1. Montpelier City Council and citizens understand the value of Parks

- Cultivate relationships with partners and influencers to help convey and reinforce messaging

- Communications:
 - One email/week from a citizen or business to City Council sharing positive experience in Parks
 - One letter to the editor/month from citizen or business sharing value of Parks
 - Fall 2019 Bridge article with recap of 2019 projects, successes, volunteer value
 - Parks staff share monthly Greenprint update at city Directors meeting.
 - Parks staff include Greenprint update in weekly city report.
 - Bi-monthly Front Porch Forum porch from citizen sharing appreciation for parks.
- Outreach: Share Greenprint vision and challenges/opportunities via personal outreach activities.
 - Develop list of tangible volunteer opportunities, and system for volunteers to sign-up online. Promote on Front Porch Forum, website, Facebook, etc. When possible, share Parks challenges and opportunities with volunteers.
 - Launch “Meet Me in the Park” series summer 2020. Invite city leaders, staff, and experts to lead regular field talks/tours in parks. Seek to diversify which parks are featured, as well as topics/activities.

2. The Greenprint is selected as a citywide priority in Montpelier’s 2021 strategic plan

- Decisionmaker: City Council w/ department Directors
- Partners and Influencers:
 - Individual City Councilors
 - Chairs of Commissions
- Tools Needed:
- Timeline:
 - March: Individually thank each City Council individually for adoption of Greenprint, share goal for Greenprint to be included as priority in 2021 strategic plan.
 - March-April: Individual meetings with influencers (Councilor advocates, Chairs of Commissions, etc.); Staff prep other department Directors.
 - May: City strategic planning meetings. Staff and Chair participation.
 - June: Adoption as 2021 priority

Goal 3: *As opportunities for park expansion and/or connectivity arise, the City is poised to act.*

1. The Commission has a 5-year plan for strategic acquisitions that further the Greenprint

- Use available tools (Trust for Public Land, GIS) to evaluate "park deserts"; prioritize areas where additional parks would serve the greatest number of residents.

- Identify and prioritize the “low hanging fruit” to establish improved access/connectivity to existing parks.
- Identify and prioritize specific parcels with significant community benefit.
- Establish process for evaluating and approving opportunities, including clear list of information needed to inform decisions and system to act quickly when necessary.
- Recruit a Commissioner with real estate, land trust, or property law experience.

2. Procedures and policies are in place to build new management plans and guide development (trails, facilities, etc.) when parcels are added to the Parks system

- Develop and/or update management plans for each park. Compile in a single location.
- Establish overall standards for the extent of development desirable/allowed in each park, including designated natural areas as core or corridor areas.
- Establish a standardized MOU with a process checklist for partner organizations/contractors working on park land.
- Standardize methods for soliciting public participation.

3. Funds are available to support acquisition costs (surveys, easements, purchase, etc.)

- Establish initial fund goal based on anticipated costs to fulfill strategic acquisitions.
- Research funding mechanisms and possibilities.
- Talk with city staff to learn how a fund could be created, restricted, built, and used.
- Establish restricted fund and policies/mechanisms for accessing funds.
- Identify prospective donors, private foundations, and public funds that could be used to grow fund.
- Promote contributions to fund.