

Parks Commission
Tuesday December 17, 2019 / 6PM
Meeting Location: Montpelier Police Station Conference Room

Commissioners: Kassia, Shelby, Dan, Carolyn

Staff: Alec, Geoff

MAMBA: Jill, Nolan, Kip

Public: Dona

Meeting Minutes

6:00 December 17 agenda and November 19 minutes
Shelby moves, Dan seconds, agenda and minutes approved unanimously

6:05 Public Comment
None

6:10 Cummings Street Pump Track proposal (Jill Olsen, MAMBA)
Background: The Montpelier Area Mountain Bike Association (MAMBA) is proposing to construct a bicycle pump track on a city-owned lot on Cummings Street across from the Cummings Street apartments. (See attached proposal for more information)

- MAMBA presentation
 - Pump track = series of features and rollers that uses mostly momentum and doesn't require pedaling
 - would be located by Cummings Street Apartments
 - Not located in the floodway
 - Construction has been funded by MAMBA (planning has taken so long that some of the funding may expire if not used)
 - Permitting not yet completed
 - Would be constructed by Sinuosity
 - Clean dirt will be imported and compacted to minimize erosion
 - Seeking permission for primary area, and potential future expansion area
 - There is potential to add parking spaces, but building the parking is not in the budget
 - Footprint of current proposal is 50'x80', but would potentially like to leave room for future expansion
 - Pump tracks are appealing for kids, and with the pool and playground there, this would be a big value added for families
 - Convenient access from the pool parking lot
 - Parks could potentially add a picnic table or bench for improved experience

- What is the vision for this site as a whole?
 - DPW needs it for snow storage, but this use is probably compatible with snow storage and this could probably be worked out
 - This or return to wetland would be the highest envisioned use
- Invasive concerns would be if riders collected and transported seeds, could some invasive removal work be tied into the project proposed now?
 - Invasive control has been ongoing for many years in that area
 - potentially MAMBA could focus on the pump track, and the parks could have an AmeriCorps or volunteer group do some invasives control or native plant plantings
 - Mowing around the edges might be required to keep invasives from going to seed, so that riders don't track seed all over the place. (the area is adjacent to an existing mowing route)
 - MAMBA would happily take on the long term maintenance of the pump track
- Parking would be either on the sides of Cummings, or at the pool
- Include who does what in the maintenance in the MOU
- Could we add a berm/ditch around the edge, to keep melting snow and sediment from draining directly into the wetland?
 - Alec will ask at conservation commission meeting, and possibly Geoff could speak with Brooke about potential designs to see what would be possible/affordable
 - Possibly DPW could build this is parks staff could get the design from conservation commission
- No competitive bids were solicited, MAMBA has a great relationship with Sinuosity
- Can we try to build a positive environmental impact into this project? Improve upon what is there, which is already a pretty bad situation.
 - Tap into Friends of Winooski
- Components:
 - Permitting
 - MOUs with Parks/DPW/MAMBA
 - Invasive plant treatment
 - Native plant buffers
 - Berm/ditch for stormwater control - Conservation Commission/DPW/Staff (partners)
 - Vision for whole site, and long term plans (parks staff)
 - VHCB Conservation Easement Approval
- Shelby moves to: Approve the pumptrack in the 50' x 80' space with the following contingencies:
 - An MOU will include a plan for mowing and other maintenance that outlines the respective responsibilities of the Parks Department and MAMBA
 - Park staff will develop a site plan that addresses Commissioner concerns including erosion, stormwater control, native plants, and invasives.

- MAMBA and the Parks Department receive confirmation that the Department of Public Works has a plan for snow storage
- If feasible, MAMBA will include construction for erosion control in the permitting process for the pumptrack. Under this circumstance, MAMBA may obtain permit(s) that include land outside the approved pumptrack space needed for stormwater control, as recommended by Parks Staff.
- **Dan Seconds.**
- **Motion passes.**
- Public comment
- Parks Commission discussion and possible vote

6:30 Expanded winter fat tire biking in Hubbard Park (Alec)

Background: At the Parks Commission's November meeting, MAMBA's proposal for winter fat tire biking in North Branch Park was approved. In addition, MAMBA proposed allowing cyclists to connect from Hubbard Park roads, which already allow bikes, to North Branch via the trail from the top of Seven Fireplaces and the Parks Connector. Suggested dates: December 1 - March 15 (weather permitting) and extendable to March 30th weather permitting. Before approving winter fat tire biking on these new Hubbard Park trails, the Parks Commission directed parks Staff and MAMBA to put together a communications plan and return to the December 17th meeting for approval of winter biking. (See two attachments for more information: proposal and map)

- Staff presentation of sign and communications plan (attached)
 - An alternative proposed route using the parks connector trail and the nature center trail for the winter biking was discussed, this area of the park is very wet, the parks commission feels that it is not appropriate for biking. In addition there are restrictions on the property from VT Fish and Wildlife that prohibit this type of use.
 - Signage plan attached
 - Signs will be at all trail junctions where use changes, and information will be at all the kiosks, and posted on the website and shared on social media
 - MAMBA will share social media posts on their platforms and show seasonality of trails on trail hub
 - People should be warned that some portions of roll call are very steep and potentially icy and may be dangerous
- Public comment
- Parks Commission discussion and likely vote
 - Carolyn moves to approve for the 2019-2020 winter season fat tire biking in Hubbard Park as shown on the map "Proposed Trails for Winter Fat Biking in Montpelier Parks" created by MAMBA in October 2019. Dan seconds. Motion passes unanimously.

6:50 Summer 2020 trail construction in partnership with MAMBA

- MOU - still being drafted by parks staff and MAMBA, to be presented at January meeting
- Kids Trail - *At Parks' November meeting, staff and MAMBA proposed moving the "kids trail" from above Cummings Street Apartments to the nature/weed interpretation trail between the apartments and the North Branch of the Winooski. This would ensure "easy" access (flat),*

would be adjacent to other mountain bike trails (North Branch and possible pump track), and would invest construction dollars in an existing trail (rather than creating a new trail). This change would require new permitting, so would have to be approved this winter in order to facilitate 2020 construction. Some concerns were expressed for adjacent wetlands.

- Staff presentation
 - MOU still being negotiated, not being discussed tonight.
 - Kids Trail:
 - It was originally proposed to be parallel to the river trail, but that site was very wet, it was proposed to be moved to the invasives trail
 - Geoff proposes the option of adding some small features beside the river trail/corridor crossing, so that riders could do features that they are comfortable with and skip ones that they are not.
 - The invasives trail is a nice education piece and people find it meditative, converting it to a mountain bike trail would harm that experience
 - MAMBA cannot go back to the original proposal, that trail would be way more money than they have to construct
 - Corridor crossing with 4-6 features added beside, for kids to add some interest, from Cummings Street to the North Branch bridge
 - Dan moves that we alter the plan for the NB multi use trails so that the corridor crossing trail (from Cummings Street to the bridge) would now be improved to serve as the kid's trail. The Corridor Crossing trail improvements would include 4-6 features that would be constructed along the trail, as well as any other improvements needed to make the trail kid-friendly. The kid's trail that was previously approved by the Parks Commission would no longer be constructed. Carolyn second. Passed unanimously.

7:10 Winter grooming beyond Montpelier city boundaries (Geoff)

- Staff presentation
 - Groomed portion of Morse Farm trails last year, and have an offer to access even more trails this year.
 - Bill Koch has a groomer, snowmobile, and driver.
 - Last winter Parks trail preparation and grooming was approximately 40 hours.
 - Will only groom with staff time when available. Lowest possible priority. Bill or other volunteers may groom more frequently with his equipment.
 - Staff are applying to VOREC for a grant to purchase additional grooming machinery, staff support, and marketing.
 - Received positive feedback from public about extended ski opportunities last year. It was a good replacement for loss of Morse Farm.
 - Keeps recreation local, decreases driving to access skiing.
 - We should look for additional partners to sustain over time.

- Shelby: Moves to support grooming on designated East Montpelier Trail extension of the Montpelier Trail Network, as shown on map dated 12/17/2019 provided with minutes as staff time permits. Carolyn second. Aye.

8:15 Staff Update - Discussion/Questions on written update provided by staff (attached)

8:19 Budget - Updates on and discussion of budget congress and next steps

- Nothing was removed from the Parks' budget. Proposal included balancing the grant expenses and grant revenues (appears as a net increase to budget, even though nothing has changed)

8:21 Filling Fabienne's position

- Carolyn will ask Assistant to the City Manager

8:25 Emerging trail project - Move to January 7th Greenprint Meeting

8:26 North Branch Trail Names

- Shelby likes bird names, but would like to see local names (ex. Gray Jay is a Vermont bird, but isn't near Montpelier)
- Carolyn - possible community engagement opportunity to get public participation?
- Give staff agency to assign names to trails. Commissioners would like names to be nature based and local.

8:31 Adjourned by unanimous consent.

Upcoming Meetings:

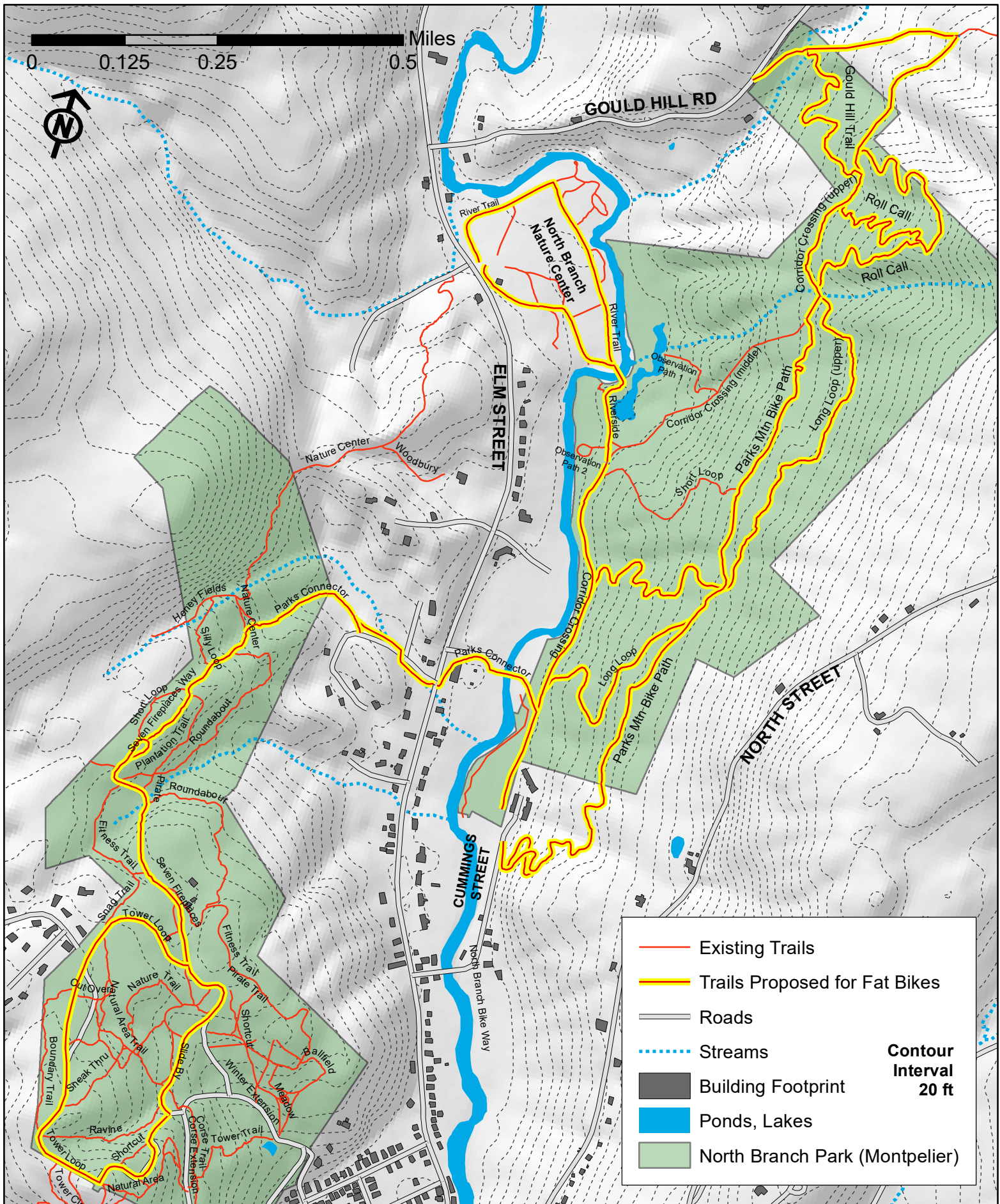
- **January 7:** Parks' Greenprint Discussion, 6-8pm, Senior Center
- **January 21:** Monthly Parks Commission Meeting, 6-8pm, Police Station

Unfinished Business

- Hubbard Park vegetation management
- Hubbard road mitigation
- North Branch pump track lingering questions and MOU
- ADA improvements to Hubbard Park
- Spring Hollow easement opportunity
- Kids mountain bike trail location specifics
- Hubbard fat tire biking

Policies in Progress

- Finalize memorial policy
- MOU for groups doing work in city parks (standards/policies)



Proposed trails for Winter Fat Biking in Montpelier Parks

Montpelier Area Mountain Bike Association - Updated October 2019

HUBBARD PARK

Montpelier, VT

0 250 500 1,000 Feet

City of Montpelier GIS - Updated August 2011



HUBBARD PARK

- 3** 3 Pack of signs:
- Think B4 You Sink
 - Fat Bike Etiquette
 - Trail Courtesy

Think B4 You Sink Walkers Edition

Trail Courtesy

No Fat Bikes

All signs will be double laminated, and screwed to 1" posts. Posts will be hammered into ground or held up by cones.



State Capitol Building



Hubbard Park Tower



Parking



Outhouse



Picnic Shelter



Picnic Table



Park Ranger



Water Body



Park Boundary



gravel - no vehicles



gravel - vehicles ok



roads - paved



main trail



connector trail



winter trail



Mountain Bike Path



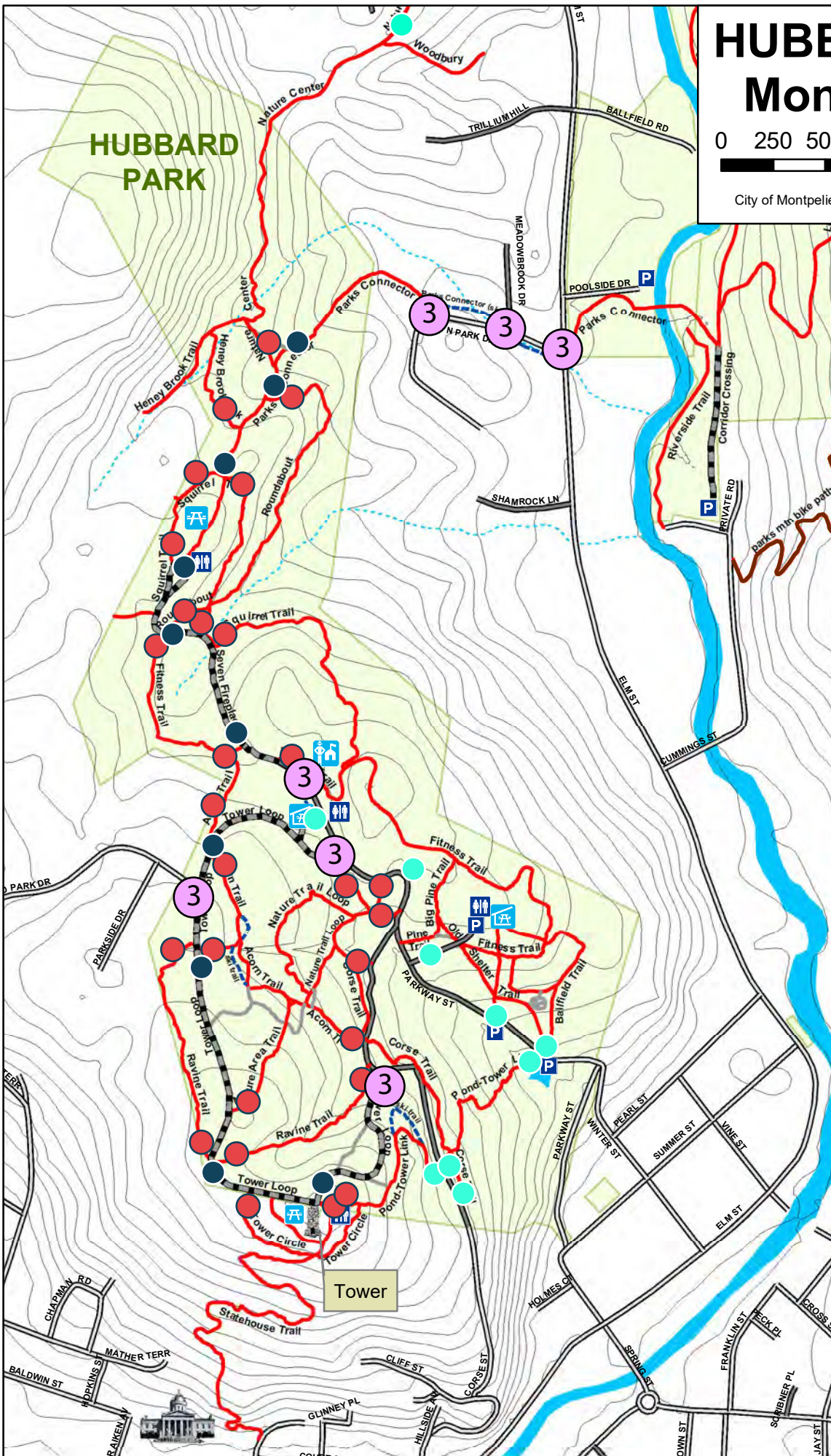
City Boundary



streams



20 ft contour



Proposed Bicycle Pump Track
Cummings Street
October 8, 2019

The Montpelier Area Mountain Bike Association (MAMBA) is proposing to construct a bicycle pump track on a city-owned lot on Cummings Street across from the Cummings Street apartments. A pump track is a “circuit of rollers, banked turns and features designed to be ridden completely by riders ‘pumping’—generating momentum by up and down body movements, instead of pedaling or pushing.” https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pump_track.

The Montpelier pump track, like most pump tracks, is a bicycle recreational activity primarily for young people, although riders of all age will be welcome to use it. Many similar pump tracks are located throughout Vermont. <https://vtsports.com/pump-vermonts-newest-pump-tracks/>. The Montpelier project will be designed and built by Sinuosity. <http://sinuosity.net/trail-building/pump-tracks-and-bike-parks/>. The project will be funded primarily through private donations and grants.

The proposed lot appears to have been used at some point for fill. It is dry, even in the spring, and is filled with low vegetation (weeds). A portion of it also appears to have been paved. A walk-through of the site was conducted with Vermont District Wetlands Ecologist Shannon Morrison, who did not raise any concerns about the proposal.

The pump track will be built entirely with clean dirt, most of which will be imported to the site. It will be compacted to limit erosion. A 50 feet x 80 foot area will be cleared, although we are requesting a permit for a larger area to allow for potential future expansion. We are also requesting approval for up to ten parking spaces. Gravel may be used for the parking area.

MAMBA has had several discussions about the project with Alec Ellsworth of the Parks Commission, including a brief site visit.

The proposed site is ideal for many reasons:

1. It is located across from Cummings Street, which is home for many low-income youth who can frequently be seen bicycling in the area. It has the potential to be a significant source of recreation for these young residents.
2. It is located in close proximity to the new North Branch mountain biking trails. The parking spaces can be used to support these popular new trails.
3. It is located a short distance from the Elm St. recreation facilities. These facilities can be reached by bicycling a few hundred yards along an existing trail.
4. It can be reached by bicycle from downtown Montpelier.
5. It is flat with limited vegetation. Clearing costs should be minimal.
6. It is located adjacent to an existing nature trail. MAMBA intends to submit a plan to the Commission to upgrade this trail to allow for its use as a kids mountain biking trail.

October 7, 2019

Expanded Winter Biking in Montpelier

Building on the groomed, multi-use trail success during the winter of 2018/2019, this proposal sets forth a plan to add winter biking to the Montpelier park system for the 2019/2020 winter and beyond. Bikers, skiers, snowshoers, and other winter users will continue to be able to share the same trails in what MAMBA believes was a very successful partnership during the pilot 18/19 season.

The Montpelier Area Mountain Bike Association (MAMBA) asks for fat bike access December 1st through March 15th, the typical winter months in Vermont where freezing temperatures and durable riding surfaces can be expected, or as conditions dictate. The proposed loops within North Branch Park and Hubbard Park and the adjacent neighborhood-connecting trails will be dependent on trail conditions to be determined by park personnel and MAMBA board members with TrailHUB access. Trail closures, cautions, and general notices will continue to be posted on TrailHUB.org, a website that bikers (and many other trail users) check year-round for local trail conditions. All trails along the proposed route and main kiosks at park entrances will be signed indicating multi-use designation and will indicate that bikers will yield to other winter trail users: skiers, snowshoers, and walkers.

MAMBA took pride in working closely with park personnel during the 18/19 winter season to create a welcoming trail experience for many different snow travelers on the North Branch trails. Many of our members had telling interactions with folks excited about the increased opportunities to experience a backcountry-feeling outing in the safety and familiarity of a frontcountry setting. In working with the Parks Department and MAMBA volunteers, this proposal seeks to increase accessibility to Hubbard and North Branch Parks. (See details on accompanying proposed winter riding map.)

Thank you for your consideration of this proposal. It is MAMBA's belief that providing diverse, healthy, inclusive recreational opportunities in our town will enrich this community and benefit all.

GROOMED TRAIL USE ETIQUETTE

THINK BEFORE YOU SINK

IS YOUR FOOT
SINKING MORE
THAN 1" DEEP?

PLEASE CONSIDER
WEARING
SNOWSHOES!

FREE LOANER SNOWSHOES ARE
AVAILABLE AT THE PARK OFFICE AND
ONION RIVER OUTDOORS



STOP!

RESPECT

THOSE BEHIND YOU



SHARE

THE TRAILS



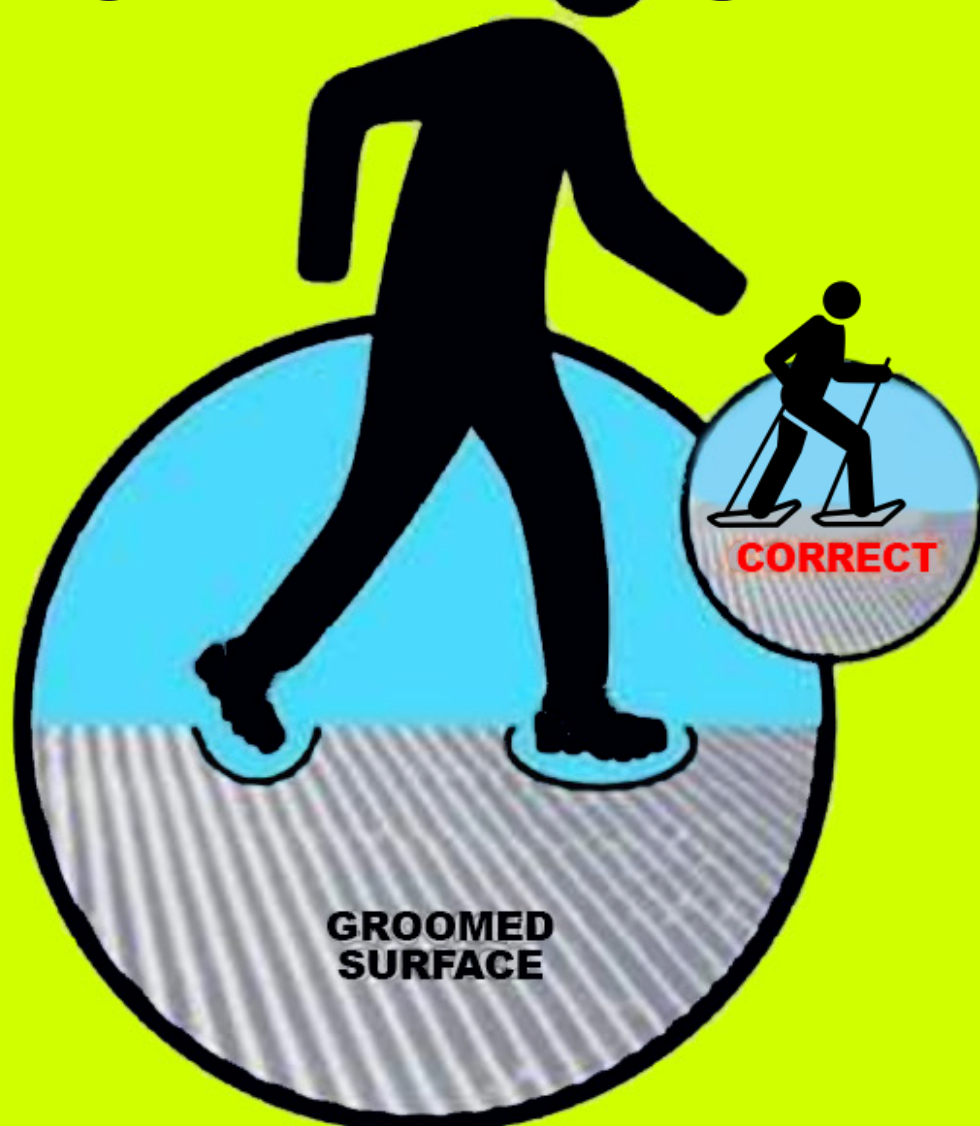
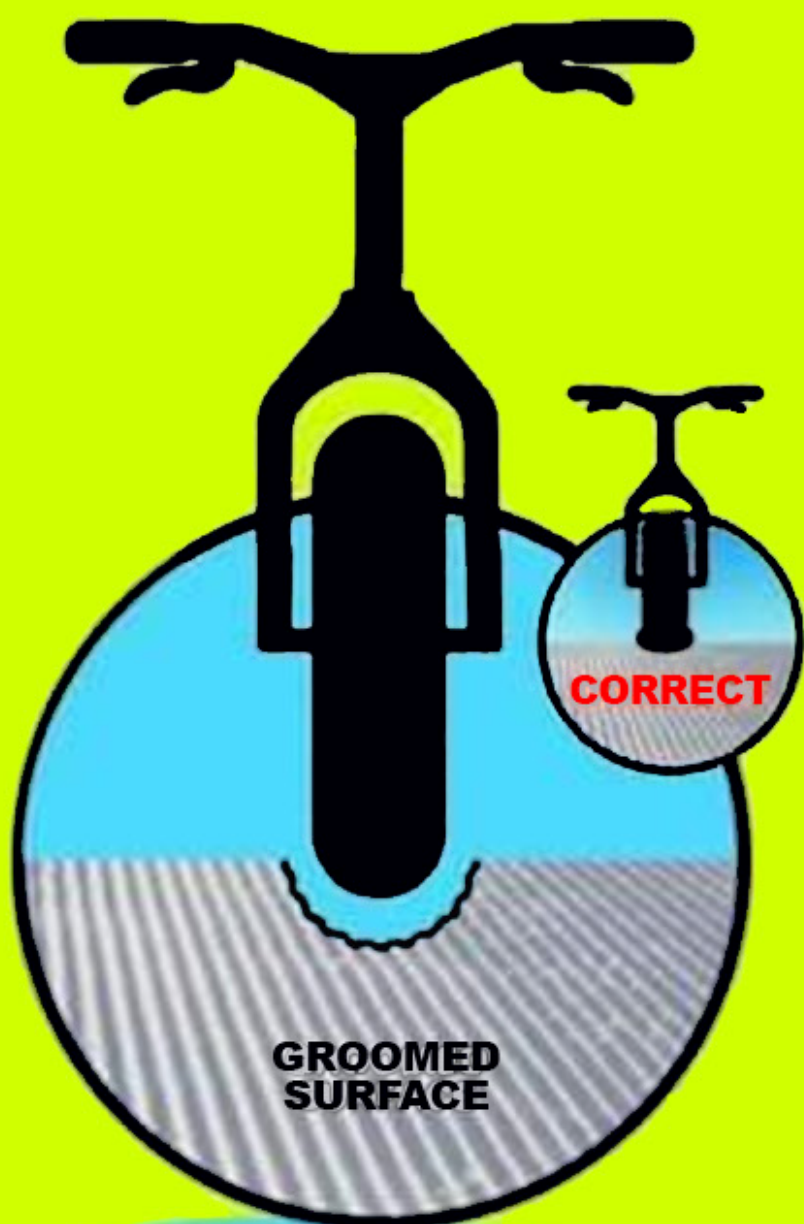
**Help us keep our trails
working for everyone!**

City of
Montpelier
VERMONT



GROOMED TRAIL USE ETIQUETTE

THINK BEFORE YOU SINK



STOP!

IS YOUR TIRE OR FOOT SINKING
MORE THAN 1 INCH DEEP?
PLEASE CONSIDER LOWERING YOUR
TIRE PRESSURE OR USING SNOWSHOES.

RESPECT

THOSE BEHIND YOU



SHARE

THE TRAILS

**Help us keep our trails
working for everyone!**

City of
Montpelier
VERMONT

