

RAMARA TRAILS COMMITTEE MINUTES –AUGUST 11 1:00 PM MEETING via ZOOM ATTENDANCE

Artena Hutchison Chair
Bob Masching Vice Chair
Larry Barton
Annalynn Faulkner
Paul Grunsten
Janet Masching Secretary
Stefanie Moy-Shuster
Steve Weinberg

David Snutch Councillor, Liaison with Ramara
Sarah Karabin Ramara Works Department
Michael Goodyear Trans Canada Trails
Christina Giffen Trans Canada Trails

REGRETS

Ashley Watson Business and Communications Director Ramara

1. Artena welcomed everyone, and in particular Steve Weinberg of Washago who has agreed to join us as a member of the Committee, and Michael Goodyear and Christina Giffen of Trans Canada Trails.
2. **Trans Canada trail section Casino to Airport Road & Information from Trans Canada Trails**
There are 3 parts to this trail which connects to the newly built Boundary Rd-Casino trail:
1--through the Casino: we are awaiting plans from the Casino management, so have no idea of cost. Will follow up with John Pinsent on the plans. Plans may have to await the Rama election on August 28.
2—from the Casino north to Benson Road, about 200 metres, good condition, one downhill grade to a parking lot.
3—from Benson Rd to Airport Road, about 1600 metres. This would connect to the CN rail bed which the County plans to purchase, and result in a trail to Washago. The estimated total cost of parts 2 and 3 is \$50-55,000.
We should request a meeting between Michael, John Pinsent, Dan Shelling of Rama First Nation and Artena as representative of the Committee.
Sarah will forward the contact information for First Nations and will contact Madison to arrange the meeting on behalf of John Pinsent.
Michael Goodyear advised that First Nations should be the applicant for a TCT grant. The Trails Committee may assist with the paperwork for the grant application.
Canada Infrastructure Program “CIP” Funding: Michael advised that there is new federal funding of \$3 billion becoming available for recreational infrastructure. Applicants must apply to the Ontario government (likely through the Trillium Foundation, not confirmed), which vets the application, forwards it to CIP for approval. CIP will provide up to 80% funding, and TCT 20%.

Any funding for trails adjacent to TCT trails? In response to this question from Larry, Michael advised there may be funding for this only if the trail is at a trail head providing better access to a TCT trail. Funding is not provided for a spur, or an unregistered trail. The Casino lands portion of the trail provides important access for First Nations, so is eligible. TCT would also support development of the eastern shore of Couchiching, which is now a water trail.

Name of Trail: The Great Trail is the name of the trail itself; Trans Canada Trails is the organization which develops the trail. There are no results yet from the survey re which name people prefer.

Signage for Great Trail: New signs will be free, materials supplied at reduced cost and no cost for installation. Michael advises to hold off on replacing signs for now.

3. Washago Trail

This trail from Rama Road to Fairgrounds Road is part of the Trans Canada Trail and poses **safety concerns** crossing busy Rama Road and along Simcoe Rd 169 which has heavy cottage and truck traffic. Steve advised Fairgrounds Road is lighter traffic and no trucks, so is safer.

Description of proposed trail starting at the west end:

- crosses Rama Rd on the South side of Simcoe Rd 169
- continues east on Singing Pines Road
- crosses Doner Drive, continues on Little Falls Road which crosses the Green River on a pedestrian-only bridge and continues to east end of Little Falls Rd
- continues east on a path ending at South River Road, then continues on McNiece Crescent
- turns right on Howlyn Pines Trail
- just before Black River where Howlyn Pines veers south, trail goes north toward 169
- trail crosses 169 and the Black River, potentially **under the existing bridge**
- continues east on the N. side of 169 to Fairgrounds Road.

Proposed under-bridge crossing:

- Sarah has been trying to get information from Simcoe County re the digital plans for the bridge and is waiting to hear back
- Ben Reese has his employer's permission to use their software to work on a design for this crossing
- Michael advised that TCT would be interested in this creative approach i.e. a cantilevered trail for safety and access for fishermen to the river.
- Steve Weinberg has agreed to be the contact person with Simcoe County regarding the bridge.

Map of Washago trail and land ownership

Sarah advised the land east of Rama Rd south of 169 is First Nations land. Howlyn Pines Rd is owned by the township but not maintained by it. The land on the north side of 169 east of Black River is township land. Sarah will follow up with John Pinsent re ownership and forward a map.

- Will the township allow the Committee to continue work on this project through David Snutch if Simcoe County takes over.

4. Advice from TCT re projects and funding

--Michael advised that Simcoe County should take ownership of the Washago trail project because of its scale and also the County owns 169 and the bridge. He believes the cost of this trail could be in the range of \$100,000.

--he suggests a meeting/ discussion between Ramara and Simcoe County re this trail.

--Washago trail would be eligible for Infrastructure Canada CIP funding up to 80 % and TCT 20%

--The Casino trails project is do-able with TCT funding

--re funding of the "missing link" [Lagoon City railbed-Sideroad 15- Concession 7) needed to complete the circuit of Lake Simcoe, this would not be funded by TCT, but he would be willing to look at the proposed trail and provide feedback. He believes the boardwalk would be an attractive feature and bring more users to the trail. This trail could be eligible for CIP funding and is part of Ramara's Active Transportation Plan.

David Snutch: Ramara has already applied for \$700,000 in CIP funding for other projects.

Artena thanked Michael and Christina for their attendance and contribution.

5. Proposed Meetings with Township Staff

--Sarah will contact Madison re arranging a meeting with John Pinsent to discuss the **Lagoon City- Side Road 15 trail** to discuss: follow up on meeting with landowner, the boardwalk option, applying for a CIP grant for this trail, side road 15 work, budget, permission re a no vehicle sign on Talisker property.

--Ashley has requested to meet with members who will be applying for **grants**. Artena and Janet agreed to meet with her via Zoom, once we know which trails are to be applied for.

--A third meeting re **Casino- Airport Road trail** with TCT and Rama First Nations referred to in par. 2 above could take place at a later date.

6. **Work bees** We agreed to work in cooler weather ie September on the bridge railings, removal of silt fences and installation of the heritage sign. Larry will contact us on fairly short notice.
7. **Heritage sign** The painting was completed. Thank you to Larry and Donna for organizing and hosting and all those who helped with painting. It will cost about \$1000 to install. Paul and Bob have both been working on getting necessary permissions.
8. **Trail Mapping** Larry sent the map information for the existing trails to Simcoe County a few months ago. The maps are not on the Simcoe County web site as he was told they would be, by late summer. Larry will send the contact info to Stefanie to follow up. Stefanie notes Ramara site just has a link to the Simcoe County site. Sarah: Ramara needs Simcoe to do it first, then the trail map would be on Ramara's trail page. Stefanie: if map info is given to Orillia's Lake Country, they will publish it, they are looking for trails information; she will follow up.
9. **TCT Hike Challenge October 1-31.** TCT is looking for photos of the trail and people hiking on them for this event. It will help "sell" the Ramara trail. Annalynn will submit this information, with help from Paul.
10. **ATV's on trails** Ramara has a by-law prohibiting ATV's on the Ramara(Atherley portion) trail. Paul and Larry placed loose "no vehicles" wood barriers on the Boundary Rd.- Casino trail section at the north end to warn of the slope to the Casino driveway. Re permission from

Talisker to place barricade: Sarah will ask John Pinsent to ask Talisker, and to let us know if direct contact with Talisker is okay.

11. **Contributions from Other Sources & Fundraising** Annalynn has contacted the Orillia Snowmobile club, Larry the Carden Snowmobile club, neither has got back to them. Also no word yet from Mr Pinsent re a contribution from Talisker to the Lagoon City trail.
Fundraising online: The committee is allowed to do an online fundraiser. The conditions are that Zach Drinkwalter should be kept in the loop and the money deposited in a Township bank account earmarked for Ramara Trails.
12. **Resignation** Jack Green has resigned from the committee. Many thanks to Jack and Judy for all their work on the trails. They will be missed.
13. **Road signage** Our request for approval of the “share the road” and Bayshore parking signs (referred to in paragraph 3 of the July 8 minutes) was denied. There is money in our budget for these signs. Artena will write to the township to be added to the next Council meeting agenda, to ask that this decision be reconsidered. Safety concerns should outweigh the concern re the cost of maintaining the signs.
14. **Municipal Accommodation Tax update** This is not a major source of revenue for this year. Only 11 applications were received for the short term accommodation license.
15. Our next meeting is Wednesday September 16 at 1:00 p.m. via Zoom.