Crozet Trails Crew Meeting Minutes

March 30, 2016, 6:30 pm

La Joya, Old Trail

*Present: Jessica, Dan, Teri, Steve, Terri, David, Clover, John A., Helen, Allison, Phil, Debbie M-L, Tom, Jan, Joe, Colleen, Nana*

1. Big picture discussion of Crozet Trails
   1. John Anderson of Crozet Running talked about developing Crozet as a destination for outdoor recreation. He is especially interested in improving the Mint Springs trails. There are currently 5 miles of trails, but room for more. For example, there are beautiful views and rock outcropping that are rare but are not currently accessible. It would be nice to create trails going up both sides of Bucks Elbow Mtn. John hopes this will become a future focus of CTC. The access to the view may be too steep to develop; we will explore this on our April 10 hike. The Power lines are only 1/3 of the way.
2. Question & answer session with Dan Mahon, County Greenways Planner
   1. Mint Springs Park was created as the Crozet water supply in about the 1940s. But ConAgra had such a big need that they built Beaver Creek Reservoir. Mint Springs was once cleared and full of peach & apple trees, has interesting cultural heritage. Dan inherited a poor trail system; 7+ years ago, worked with early CTC (incl Boy Scouts) to build the Yellow Mtn trail, create maps, etc. The lake loop trail is very old & historic. When Albemarle Co. designs a park from scratch, they get input from all affected groups. But 80-acre Mint Springs evolved more haphazardly, and improvements are needed.
   2. There is no formal strategic plan for Mint Springs, but maybe we could come up with a 5 year plan starting with easier trail development. Traffic counter numbers are available; additional trails would increase this traffic and therefore revenue from park entrance fees. Up until now, upgrading the beach facilities was the focus, but now we can shift to other recreational opportunities there.
   3. Dan's Parks budget is continuing to be cut. He would like to be able to show what revenue is generated by the parks. Walking trails increase tourism, business development, etc. The current generation wants outdoor recreation; we need to demonstrate its economic value. Some changes in zoning may be needed to advance this recreational value. CTC, as a grass roots organization, can help greatly with this.
   4. Dan will lead us on April 10; members requested that we organize another Mint Springs hike on a weekday when more can attend.
   5. Dan / the County is closing in on the possession of the Daly property - woohoo! Library Trail near Parkside Village will be developed. Lots of houses will be visible, only protected by buffer & stream setbacks. We are building a linear park system.
   6. Eastern Ave. is a big concern. Since this requires rezoning, Dan can negotiate. Currently proposing ramped access to trail with a beamed with a culvert crossing of the creek. This would put a big wall blocking the trail. Dan is asking for a second culvert for the trail, with a ramp on one side and a crosswalk. Another option is a double bay culvert. We could express support to Dan and he will forward to the appropriate person. Main trail needs to be ADA compatible.
   7. There is also hope for trail connecting Orchard Acres to Mint Springs. We need a date for dedicating trail behind Western Ridge. Cory Farms bridge can be built on county rather than private property.
3. Building
   1. Bridge at Crozet Park is finished and ready to dedicate. Railings have been erected, plaque has been ordered, will be dedicated Sat. May 21 with both winners & Mike Marshall, 9 am.
   2. Creekside Trail – we need to wait until development of new section of Old Trail is finished. At present there is too much runoff’
   3. Additional trails at Mint Springs-- April 10, 9 am in the Pavillion – recap at April meeting
   4. Need bridges near the Lickinghole basin section of public trail, where the creek widens approaching Western Ridge, so that people can get there without walking on private property. Afraid of disturbing the eagles that are nesting there. Need bridge over Argonaut Creek. The bridges that were originally built by Western Ridge volunteers are not strong. We need to build a new bridge upstream from the bend and reroute the trail. We also need a small bridge where we did a trail reroute, that currently has only logs/boards. This is still Rivanna property, but county parks maintains it. We need to make sure this does not make it easier to get to the dam, which is an “attractive nuisance.”
   5. Dan has signs ready to place along Connector Trail– good midweek workday. Need sign at Dog Park after Daly Property is dedicated, kiosk etc. Also need sign at beginning of Foothill Crossing trail.
4. Other
   1. We would like to have a social at Pro Re Na in May or June. Will plan at April meeting
   2. SNP lecture and hike at Sugar Hollow April 9 – new SNP superintendent will speak. Dan is hoping for a good turnout, carpool, bring lunch. Sugar Hollow is an unmanaged resource, Dan looking at improving, eg better parking.
   3. Pitch in at the Park- April 16, 9-4 – please come in am to help maintain the CTC’s symbiotic relationship. All hands on deck. They let us have our 5K there at no charge. Weeding, planting, mulching, radio bldg.
   4. Crozet Running 5K - May 7, 8 am. Volunteers needed, signup to come.
   5. Crozet Arts & Crafts Festival May 7 & 8. CTC staffs the wine & beer truck. We will send out registration and volunteer signup links. Profits go to CTC.
   6. Chamomile & Whiskey is playing at PRN May 7, featuring Marsh Mahon.

Next workdays:

Sunday, 4/10 (Mint Springs Park)

4/16 pitch in @ Crozet Park

4/23- Lickinghole Basin reroute

May 21- Crozet Park (Bridge dedication)

Next Meeting: Thursday, April 28, same time, same station