



Meeting Minutes

Date: September 1, 2020—6:00 – 7:30pm

Location: Via Zoom

Project: Girdwood Trails Plan Subcommittee Meeting

Girdwood Trails Plan Subcommittee Voting members are defined as Girdwood residents or property owners age 18 years or older who have been appointed by the Girdwood Trails Committee to be a member of this subcommittee.

The Girdwood Board of Supervisors, its committees, and subcommittees are subject to the Alaska Open Meetings Act as found in Alaska Statute 44.62.310 and Anchorage Municipal Code 1.25 - Public Meetings.

Attendance

Holly Spoth-Torres (GTP Contractor), Taylor (Huddle AK),

Committee Members: Ron Tenny, Deb Essex, Eileen Halverson, Brenden Raymond-Yakoubian, Paul Crews, Nick Georgelos, Carolyn Brodin, Jonathon Lee, Paul Crews

Not present: Craig Schubert, Brian Burnett

Municipal Staff Members: Kyle Kelley (MOA), Shelley Rowton (MOA HLB)

Members of the Public: Jessica Szelag, Julie Raymond-Yakoubian, Brianna Sullivan, Debra Croghan,

Call to Order

H. Spoth-Torres (HST) wants to confirm we have a quorum

N. Georgelos joins the meeting and quorum is met

R. Tenny asked for a motion to approve the September agenda

P. Crews made a motion

N. Georgelos seconded

HST proposes that the committee amend the agenda to include 'old business' and 'new business' to remain consistent with other Girdwood committees.

K. Kelley concurs that this should be included for consistency with GBOS.

P. Crews removed his motion and made a new motion to amend the agenda with new and old business included

N. Georgelos seconded

K. Kelley asked for vote via role call on the amendment not on full agenda

The motion passed

R. Tenny asks for a motion to approve the amended agenda

N. Georgelos made a motion to approve the agenda with amendments
P. Crews seconded the motion
E. Halverson asked a clarifying question about how 'new business' works
The motion passed

R. Tenny asked for a motion to approve the August meeting minutes
N. Georgelos made a motion to approve the August meeting minutes
B. Raymond-Yakoubian seconded
The motion passed

The meeting was called to order at 6:20pm

HST began with debriefing from the 8/31 Report Workshop and opened it up for discussion among the group.

B. Raymond-Yakoubian was happy with the way that things went but wished there had been more time to capture and consider public comment.
E. Halverson was a bit confused by the brainstorming session and did not understand the categories. HST commented that the process is different for everyone and reiterated that the categories are in draft form and will be discussed later.
N. Georgelos felt that it was valuable and wants to spend time on Vision + Goals while allowing the statements to naturally evolve as the group gets deeper into the process.
J. Lee agrees with N. Georgelos
B. Raymond-Yakoubian felt that the 8/31 Report Workshop worked well but has concerns about receiving public input on maps and other visual aids in the future.

HST shared a brief recap of the Report Workshop and asked if there was any further discussion about the workshop before moving onto Vision and Goals?
P. Crews felt that everyone stayed very focused and it was more productive than usual in-person meetings. He would like to have additional work sessions rather than meetings.
HST & K. Kelley have discussed this option and agree that it could work well for the group.

J. Szelag asked for a 5 minute recap of the Report Workshop to better participate in the discussion.
K. Kelley responded that the packet is on GBOS for review.

Debra Croghan joined the meeting.

S. Rowton asked if the recording of the 8/31 workshop could be shared
K. Kelley responded that the file could be shared on YouTube or another cloud service.

New Business

Discussion

HST moved into Vision & Goals discussion. She shared an overview of the process used to guide the conversation during the Report Workshop and draft asked for first reactions to the draft.

B. Raymond-Yakoubian liked the distillation, with some slight but meaningful tweaks outlined below: *Girdwood has an interconnected, diverse, beautiful system of trails and natural spaces that well-serves the community and respect all users.*

There are experiences for everyone, from areas with no or primitive trails to developed trails, and future generations will be able to enjoy what we enjoy today.

The system is well-planned, balanced, and resilient, and represents the various community values.

HST asked for additional comments and reiterated that a draft of this statement should be taken to the community for input.

N. Georgelos feels the draft statement is a great starting point and like likes B. Raymond-Yakoubian comments but doesn't want to set these statements in stone right now.

E. Halverson would like an addition about wildlife and habitat to acknowledge other species

J. Raymond-Yakoubian likes the proposed revisions. She wasn't sure about the conservation/values part and felt that the proposed language captured that.

R. Tenny believes that wildlife would be considered under a 'well-planned, sustainable trail' and is unsure if the statement would benefit from being more specific.

J. Raymond-Yakoubian suggested to consider adding something like '... and the ecosystem will maintain its character'

C. Brodin likes B. Raymond-Yakoubian edits and overall is very pleased with the vision statement.

D. Essex likes the edits and suggested the removal of 'all trail users' because she feels that 'community' encompasses trail users and wildlife.

J. Lee feels that economic opportunity and conservation is not a long list of values and it should be included in the statement.

The group continued to discuss and workshop the draft vision statement

N. Georgelos prefers the statement to be vague like it is right now. The group should consider that there will be different people sitting at the table 10-15 years from now with different values.

J. Szlag was not a part of the 8/31 Report Workshop but as a community member who is active and has a child, she feels there is a tone missing. She would like to see mentions of access, exercise, health, and encouraging recreation. All users should be represented, and the current statement seems to be missing perspectives.

B. Raymond-Yakoubian would like to start a document that tracks Girdwood's values that are coming up right now. He feels goals and strategies will naturally follow that list. The foundation for implementing solutions seems to be meeting everyone's values.

R. Tenny suggested we might use a phrase other than values, like community needs.

J. Lee feels that 'values' can capture the intent without a discussion of want vs. need. Is exercising outdoors a want or a need? Using a vague phrase like 'community values' and not spelling out what the group's intentions are could be unclear.

HST offered to pull out the common values from stakeholder interviews. She reminded the group of the opportunity to hear from the community during the October public meeting. The vision statement draft can be shared with the community for additional feedback.

B. Raymond-Yakoubian suggested an appendix with definitions, terms of reference, expanded lists (e.g. what are the values identified), etc.

J. Lee likes B. Raymond-Yakoubian's suggestion to spell out details in an appendix, so the Vision Statement does not get too bogged down in details.

HST asked R. Tenny if he would like to stay with the vision or move onto goals.

R. Tenny stated that we was hung up on community values. While he knows a lot about the community, all user groups have different values. The vision statement is going to guide the whole process.

N. Georgelos agrees that the vision statement is very important but doesn't think this group needs to develop a perfect vision statement for the whole community at this juncture.

K. Kelley suggests 3 columns with vision, goals, and values that could be shared with the community for feedback.

B. Raymond-Yakoubian suggest 2 columns – 'values' and 'needs' as R. Tenny suggested

J. Raymond-Yakoubian notes that there has never been a facilitated conversation about values.

HST asks if the committee would like to develop the values or if the community should develop their values and the group responds to it>

P. Crews notes there are various values even within this small group. If a work session is needed to address values, it should be done. If the group cannot agree on their values, it will bog down the process at some point.

HST asked for feedback on the way the goals have come together. A conversation around values may allow the goal topics to naturally shift and better reflect the Girdwood community.

B. Raymond-Yakoubian sees the way the goals were expressed as cyclical - plan/review/evaluate, develop, maintain - then return to the beginning.

P. Crews says it feels like a business textbook.

J Szelga notes that she would like to see goals: encourage, enforce, and educate.

J. Raymond-Yakoubian shares a possible definition to begin a future discussion on values related to trails and natural spaces: VALUES are basic and fundamental beliefs or concepts that guide the way we live and act and how we make decisions. They are what is important to us as a community.

C. Brodin is not sure a goal of the plan itself is to 'develop'. The result is to have more trails develop, but the plan should be more of a framework.

N. Georgelos adds that it is not just development of trails themselves, but when there is new development (industrial, housing, etc.) there is an awareness of the trails that are planned.

HST notes that it's typical of a Land Use Plan to have existing and future trails maps to illustrate this for development purposes.

N. Georgelos feels this is the time to start designating those areas since Girdwood trails cross through many different zones.

R. Tenny suggested the group take some time to digest after all the work and discussion of the last 2 days.

HST does not feel that the goals completely reflect what the Girdwood community has shared and that the group needs to keep working on them.

P. Crews feels the values conversation is important to have before the group discusses what goes where.

J. Lee felt that the categories that came up during the visioning exercise were a good starting point for values – balance, future legacy, identity, heritage, sustainable, connected.

P. Crews & N. Georgelos feel that the group should dive into the nuts and bolts and the values will start to draw themselves out.

HST asks if we should start drawing lines on a map if we don't know what the values and goals are?

N. Georgelos feels that this group represents the community well enough to dive into the nuts and bolts and begin putting things on the map.

J. Raymond-Yakoubian disagrees and does not think someone else can speak for her values.

HST asks the group what they would put on a map if we started right now?

P. Crews would like trails on the North end of the valley.

R. Tenny would like Moose Meadows area to be groomed in the winter and left alone during the Summer as a Wetland Conservation Area.

S. Rowton asks if this plan is supposed to reflect the values of these 10 people or the community? The only way to draw out that information is to ask people what they want on the map. Their values come out through that.

K. Kelley feels it would be productive for this group to get their values out on paper and mark up a map then see if the community at large supports that. A second work session should be considered – part 1 is values, part 2 is working with a map to start putting things down and see where things go.

P. Crews agrees with K. Kelley – hopefully this group has been in enough meetings together that they can identify issues within the community. They would like to fill in the map to the best of their ability and then open it up for community feedback.

J. Lee reiterates that the statements developed during the “what does success look like” exercise is a great starting place for community values.

N. Georgelos agrees with K. Kelley that a work session is going to be the most productive next step. The group might consider scheduling out a few work sessions. It would be helpful to participate in-person with a map everyone could mark up.

HST asks K. Kelley about the possibility of an in-person workshop. K. Kelley will follow up on MOA's side and see if that is possible.

B. Raymond Yakoubian suggests that if in person is not viable, we could place a large map on a wall and allow one at a time or small groups to come in and mark up an overlay.

K. Kelley is open to many options and exploring blended formats as well.

The group asks about the possibility of an outdoor meeting – K. Kelley will review the most recent Executive Order to see if that is possible.

HST wants to clarify if this is a meeting for the subcommittee only or if the public is invited.

The group agrees that another workshop for the group to discuss values and draw on maps is needed before the public is involved.

N. Georgelos asked if a work session with the 10 appointed members only would be permitted.

K. Kelley said no, the public must be able to hear, interact, and be aware of what is being discussed.

The group concurs they would like to hold this meeting as soon as possible.
Thursday, September 17th was suggested as a potential date. A scheduling poll will be sent out for coordinating and scheduling.

D. Essex made a motion to adjourn

J. Lee seconded the motion

The meeting adjourned at 7:29pm