

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Town Council

FROM: Greenways Commission
Christine Berndt, Chair

SUBJECT: Chapel Hill Parks and Trails Assessment Recommendations

DATE: September 23, 2009

The Commission voted unanimously (6-0) to forward the following recommendations to the Council related to the *Chapel Hill Parks and Trails Assessment*:

The Commission believes that the recent assessment shows that the Town's park and trail system has suffered from a lack of both routine maintenance and needed renovation for many years. The problems are greatest in the Town's park system, which has several parks that are more than 30 years old. The Town's trail system is in better condition because it has been in existence for less time.

However, problems, some of which are severe, are beginning to appear in the greenway system as well. For example the Battle Branch Trail, which is the Town's oldest trail, has wood bridges and boardwalks that exceed 20 years in age, are in poor condition, and must be replaced as soon as possible. The available anticipated funding stream for repair and renovations of trails and greenways will require that this work be accomplished in several phases over many years. If we use all of our renovation funding for the Battle Branch Trail we will have no funds to make needed repairs on other trails and greenways.

The Commission believes that the Council's goal of building a sustainable community should include the development of a financial plan to address the current, extensive backlog of renovations needed to bring the Town's trails and parks back to a reasonable standard of repair.

In order to prevent the current situation from reoccurring in the future we believe that any such financial plan must deal with the ongoing need to make repairs, renovations, and provide routine maintenance.

The Commission recommends that each new capital project have sufficient maintenance and renovation funds programmed into the Town budget during the development process.

Present: Christine Berndt (Chair), Mary Blake (Vice Chair), Roger Badrock, Lindsey Hoffer, Joseph Lowman, and David Tuttle. A quorum was present.