

MEMO

to: Board of Supervisors

cc:

from: Tommy Ryan

date: May 10, 2018

re: equestrian use on Township-owned properties

In follow-up to discussion at the March 28 Business Meeting, I have prepared the attached information regarding the suitability of Township trails for equestrian use, for discussion at the May 16 Work Session Meeting. Some notes:

- The assessment includes the Zacharias Creek Trail, from Hollow Road to the trail terminus at Evansburg State Park, the Moran Trail, and the trails at Heyser Park, Mt. Kirk Park and Nike Park. The trails at Heebner Park are not included in this assessment, as last year the Board determined equestrian use of these trails is not permitted.
- If the Township allows multi-use trails that accommodate equestrians, I recommend the Township establish a minimum 20-foot wide trail corridor, for safety reasons. This corridor allows an 8-foot to 10-foot wide trail for pedestrians, a 4-foot wide trail for equestrians, a 4-foot buffer between the two trails, and a narrow shoulder. Twenty feet is the minimum width of similar trail corridors in Evansburg State Park, and this width is agreeable to both the Township Engineer and to Peter Simone, a park expert who has planned and designed dozens of parks and trails throughout Pennsylvania, including the master plan for Heebner Park.
- Existing trail specifications were collected by the Public Works Department. Clearing and culvert estimates were provided by the Township Engineer. The estimates assume moderate and heavy clearing will be contracted, with minimal clearing to be provided by the Public Works Department. Estimates include signage, and survey work if required.
- At this time none of the trail segments assessed meets the 20-foot wide corridor standard. The trails at Heyser Park and Nike Park can be improved to this standard in short time, with all labor provided by the Public Works Department. The Moran Trail, and the trail at Mt. Kirk Park, are next closest to meeting this standard, as each requires clearing only.

(over)

The balance of trails – the five trail segments along the Zacharias Creek – require a bit more consideration, as these involve some design, culvert crossings, and/or potential improvements to roads and bridges.

- The Members may wish to discuss multi-use trails and cyclists. I recently discussed this issue with the Evansburg State Park Manager, and the policy at ESP is to never allow equestrians and cyclists to share the same multi-use trail corridor. The Park Manager says several park guests have sustained serious injury when horses are startled by a passing cyclist. ESP offers trails on which cyclists only are permitted. The Board may wish to prohibit bicycle use on any equestrian-approved trail.
- Lastly, I again recommend the Township Code be amended to denote equestrian-approved trails. This makes the policy clear, and adds needed teeth to Township enforcement efforts, when enforcement is warranted.

ZACHARIAS CREEK TRAIL SEGMENT 1

existing conditions

location: trail terminus to Green Hill Road
material: asphalt
length: 1,475 feet
width: 8 feet
shoulder: 5 feet (*approximate, varies*)

improvements and concerns to widen

About 50% of this segment may be widened to 20 feet with minimal clearing or other work; moderate and heavy clearing is required at the balance to achieve a 20-foot wide corridor. There are no bridges and two culverts at this segment. Survey may be required to locate property line at the west end of the corridor so to confirm available area for widening. Estimated cost: \$31,500.

ZACHARIAS CREEK TRAIL SEGMENT 2

existing conditions

location: Green Hill Road to Hollow Road Bridge
material: asphalt
length: 2,470 feet
width: 8 feet
shoulder: 6 feet (*approximate, varies*)

improvements and concerns to widen

About 60% of this segment may be widened to 20 feet with minimal clearing or other work; moderate and heavy clearing is required at the balance to achieve a 20-foot wide corridor. There are one bridge and three culverts at this segment. An equestrian path may be required to “cut across” the pedestrian trail as the trail approaches Hollow Road. Land acquisition may be required at the east end of the corridor. Estimated cost: \$70,500.

ZACHARIAS CREEK TRAIL SEGMENT 3

existing conditions

location: Hollow Road Bridge
material: n/a
length: 530 feet
width: 4 feet
shoulder: 0 feet

improvements and concerns to widen

All trail users share the road at this location. No portion of this segment may be widened to 20 feet absent the widening of Hollow Road and bridge. There are one bridge and no culverts along this segment. Estimated cost: road/bridge improvements (*additional study required*)

ZACHARIAS CREEK TRAIL SEGMENT 4

existing conditions

location: Hollow Road Bridge to Fawn Road
material: limestone, asphalt
length: 535 feet
width: 9 feet limestone, 4 feet asphalt
shoulder: 5 feet (*off-road only, approximate, varies*)

improvements and concerns to widen

About 90% of this segment may be widened to 20 feet with minimal clearing or other work; moderate clearing is required at the balance to achieve a 20-foot wide corridor, absent portions of the corridor at the northern and southern ends that do not possess the area required to allow this width without widening of the bridge or road. There are one bridge and no culverts at this segment. An equestrian path may be required to “cut across” the pedestrian trail as the trail approaches Zacharias Road. Estimated cost: \$4,000 plus bridge/road improvements (*additional study required*)

ZACHARIAS CREEK TRAIL SEGMENT 5

existing conditions

location: Fawn Road to Hollow Road
material: limestone
length: 1,585 feet
width: 9 feet
shoulder: 1 foot (*approximate, varies*)

improvements and concerns to widen

About 20% of this segment may be widened to 20 feet with minimal clearing or other work; moderate and heavy clearing is required at the balance to achieve a 20-foot wide corridor. There are one bridge and no culverts at this segment. An equestrian path may be required to "cut across" the pedestrian trail between Fawn Road and the Pioneer House. Estimated cost: \$12,800 plus bridge improvements (*additional study required*)

MORAN TRAIL

existing conditions

location: Kriebel Mill Road to North Grange Road
material: wood chip
length: 2,725 feet
width: 11 feet
shoulder: 1 foot (*approximate, varies*)

improvements and concerns to widen

About 25% of this trail may be widened to 20 feet with minimal clearing or other work; moderate and heavy clearing is required at the balance to achieve a 20-foot wide corridor. There are no bridges and one culverts at this trail. Estimated cost: \$28,100.

HEYSER TRAIL

existing conditions

location: Griffith Road
material: wood chip
length: 805 feet
width: 6 feet
shoulder: 1 foot (*approximate, varies*)

improvements and concerns to widen

All of this trail may be widened to 20 feet with minimal clearing or other work, or in the alternate a separate path may be created with minimal clearing or other work. There are no bridges and no culverts at this trail. Estimated cost: \$4,800.

NIKE PARK

existing conditions

location: North Trooper Road
material: turf, asphalt
length: 1,950 feet
width: 17 feet (*approximate, varies*)
shoulder: n/a

improvements and concerns to widen

All of this trail may be widened to 20 feet with minimal clearing or other work. There are no bridges and no culverts at this trail. Estimated cost: \$8,900.

MT. KIRK PARK

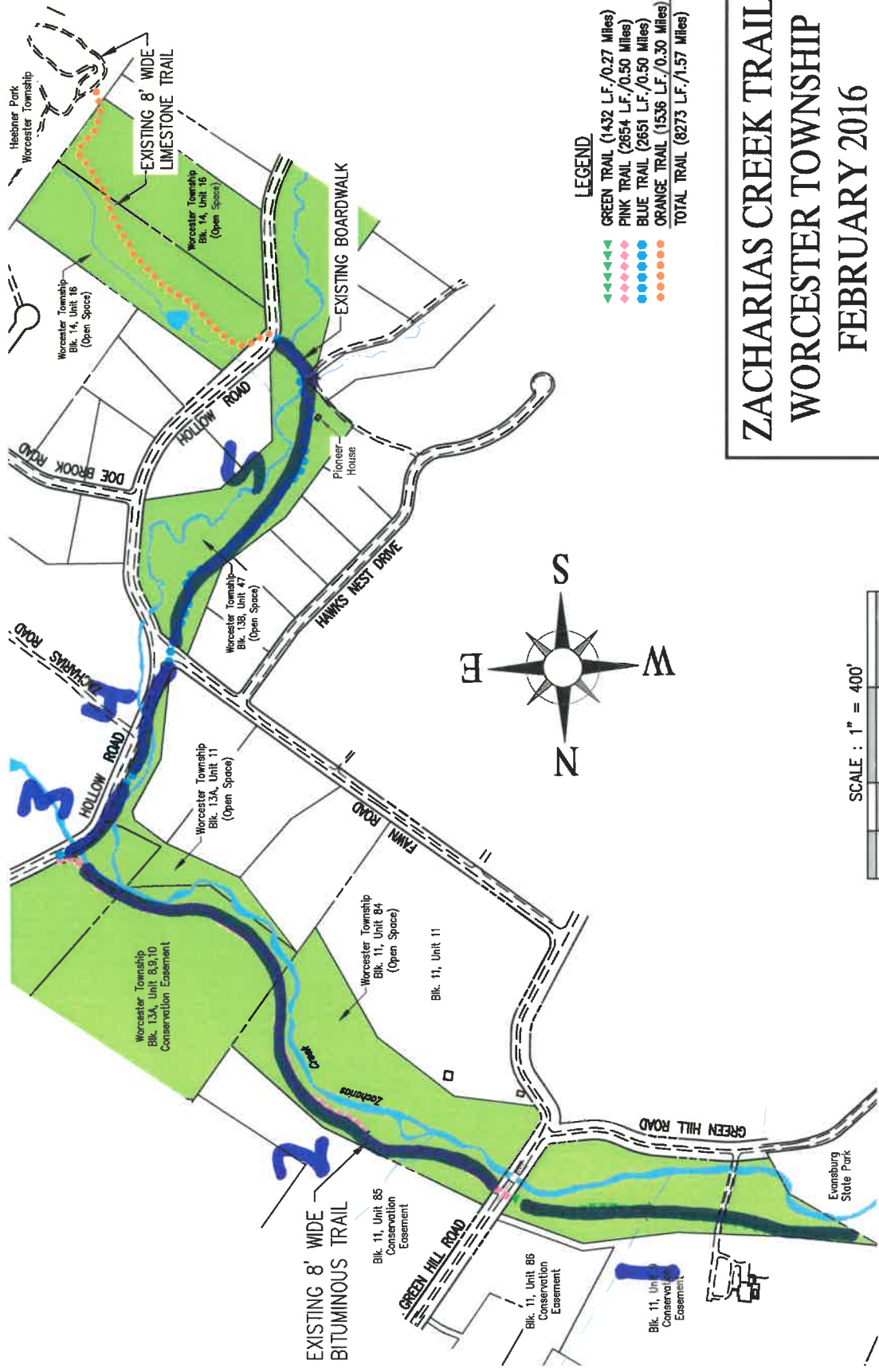
existing conditions

location: East Mt. Kirk Avenue
material: asphalt
length: 1,445 feet
width: 17 feet (*approximate, varies*)
shoulder: n/a

improvements and concerns to widen

About 40% of this trail may be widened to 20 feet with minimal clearing or other work; moderate and heavy clearing is required at the balance to achieve a 20-foot wide corridor. There are no bridges and no culverts at this trail. Estimated cost: \$11,800.

Segment map



LEGEND

- GREEN TRAIL (1432 L.F./0.27 Miles)
- PINK TRAIL (2654 L.F./0.50 Miles)
- BLUE TRAIL (2651 L.F./0.50 Miles)
- ORANGE TRAIL (1536 L.F./0.30 Miles)
- TOTAL TRAIL (8273 L.F./1.57 Miles)

ZACHARIAS CREEK TRAIL
 WORCESTER TOWNSHIP
 FEBRUARY 2016

