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Vermont Association of Snow Travelers
c/o Bryant Watson, Executive Director
26 VAST Lane
Barre, VT 05641

Vermont Agency of Transportation
c/o Trini Brassard
1 National Life Drive
Montpelier, VT 05633-5001

REC'D DEC 08 2006

Re: Comment on the Proposed
Management Plan dated October 23,
2006 for the Lamoille Valley Rail
Trail (submitted electronically and
by US Mail)

Dear Bryant and Trini,

I am submitting the following comments regarding the Proposed Management Plan dated October 23, 2006 for the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail (LVRT) for the consideration of VAST and AOT. I am offering these comments not on behalf of any organization that I belong to, but simply as an individual who has used, and expects to continue to use, the LVRT for non-motorized recreational use.

In general I am happy to see this effort moving forward at long last and applaud the efforts of both organizations to bring the LVRT to fruition. By this letter, I would request copies, either electronically or in hard copy, of the following documents referred to in the Proposed Management Plan: (1) the Operational Plan and Policies adopted by the VAST Board for use of the (referred to on page 1), (2) a copy of the VAST By-Laws (referred to on page 4), (3) a copy of the 's articles of association and by-laws, and (4) the names and contact information of the current members of the .

Regarding the Proposed Management Plan (PMP) for the LVRT, I would offer the following comments:

1. The role of the Lamoille Valley Rail Trail Committee needs to be clarified and consistently described in the PMP. Section 3.1 of the PMP strongly implies that the has a number of important responsibilities. Yet elsewhere in the document it appears that the in fact has no authority to do anything other than to advise the

VAST Board of Directors in whom all decision making authority will reside. While I would personally like to see the LRVTC given real authority and decision-making responsibilities as suggested by Section 3.1, at a minimum the PMP should be clearer and more internally consistent on this point.

2. The make up of the LRVTC envisioned in the PMP should be revised in a number of ways that I believe are very important to the long-term viability of the LVRT:
 - a. First, the non-motorized users of the LVRT should be proportionally represented on the . The vast majority of lawful users of the LVRT on an annual basis will be non-motorized users. This should be reflected in the proportional representation of such recreational users in the composition of the LRVTC.
 - b. Second, the non-motorized users should select their own representatives on the LRVTC. I believe that a prompt transition to such a situation within the next year is essential especially if VAST is to retain a veto over the LRVTC's decisions. All decisions should be by majority vote. I understand and support VAST's legitimate interest in protecting the interests of snowmobile use on the LVRT. However as currently constituted the LRVTC cannot achieve its promise and potential as the mechanism by which the legitimate interests of all lawful recreational user groups are recognized and reconciled.
 - c. Third, having VASA represented on the LRVTC is inconsistent with commitments that have been made for years that the LVRT will be developed for non-motorized recreational use with exceptions only for snowmobile use in the winter and for ADA purposes. The PMP specifically says (page 10) that ATV's are not allowed. Thus having this user group formally on the LRVTC is both inappropriate and potentially provocative given the history of the AVT issue regarding the LVTR. I have no objection to an on-going dialog with VASA regarding enforcement issues but I would strongly encourage consideration of having VASA representation on the LRVTC, if any, being ex officio.
3. I would encourage the PMP to be explicit that all meetings of the LRVTC will comply with Vermont's Open Meeting law. In addition there should be a commitment in the PMP to provide notice of all such meetings at least electronically to all individuals and organizations that express an interest on an annual basis.
4. Finally I feel the PMP could be clarified by the following editorial changes:
 - a. Page 4, appointment of non-motorized users to LVRT is to be "annually" but no timeframe is mentioned. I'd suggest that a date certain be specified.

- I'd make the same comment regarding the first bullet point at the top of page 5.
- b. Page 6, 3.1 (G), Is a quorum a majority of 11, the full membership of LRVTC (i.e. 6) or a majority of that group's current membership due to vacancies on any given day thereby possibly changing the quorum.
 - c. Page 16, the 5-year plan should replace the year numbers with the actual year to make this part of the plan clearer. Is "year 1" 2006 or 2007, etc?
 - d. Page 17 15.0 (B)(3) "Control Automobile Access" should be changed to "Control Motorized Access" as this provision, with the exception for snowmobiles noted later, should apply to all motorized vehicles including trucks, motorcycles, etc.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the management of this important and valuable public resource.



William Bartlett