

## **VMI Chessie Nature Trail Advisory Committee Meeting, February 10, 2015**

The Chessie Nature Trail Advisory Committee met at 4:00 p.m. on November 11, 2014, at the VMI Physical Plant, Hinty Hall conference room.

Attending committee members were MAJ Jennifer deHart, chair; Keith Holland; Sam Crickenberger; Chris Wise; Lisa Tracy, Jay Scudder, and Terry Harrington.

**GRANTS/PERMITS:** MAJ deHart provided an update that the RTP grant application is being reviewed later this month and anticipates hearing from DCR in March.

### **TRAIL UPDATES:**

- VMI Physical Plant removed gates at Mill Creek and McKethan Park and has received positive comments.
- On Wed 2/4 police responded to two individuals who had attempted to climb the cliffs below Riverbend subdivision and got stuck.
- Someone posted a hand-made sign about falling rocks. Rock fall is a known issue, and MAJ deHart has been exploring it tentatively with legal counsel and a VMI geologist. As a result, VMI plans the following activities:
  - o Install signs identifying the risk (committee members suggested “WATCH FOR FALLING ROCKS”)
  - o Dedicate one summer intern to conduct a hazard analysis of the trail
  - o Confirm that the statement “Stay on the trail” will be on future trailhead signs
- Keith Holland reported that goose hunters are allowed on his property and one trail user called 911 after hearing shots.

**VOLUNTEERS:** MAJ deHart reported that volunteers are covered under VMI’s insurance policy while volunteering for VMI. More discussion needs to occur on a process for volunteering for trail activities.

**GATES:** Committee members offered to look at the proposed gate ideas and suggest local contractors or crafters who could make a prototype.

**SOUTH RIVER:** Committee members desire to know the cost of a cable bridge, which might be a cheaper option than a bridge with piers. Concern that anything built with federal funding might require accessibility and therefore eliminate a cable bridge option. Sam offered to ask VDOT if there are any other bridge types that might work. Could be a future economic development project or large federal grant.

**BV END OF TRAIL:** Jay Scudder reported that the City of BV has cleared brush from the rail bed immediately adjacent to Stuartsburg Rd between the existing trail head and Rt 60 bridge. The City has plans to connect the trail under the bridge to the Bontex property. VDOT won’t extend the guardrail across the existing trail head (where there is only room for two parked cars) but eventually VMI could put a cable there to deter parking. People would park at the boat launch instead.

TRAIL MAINTENANCE PLAN: MAJ deHart had previously sent a draft maintenance plan to the Committee. The committee reviewed the draft electronically and MAJ deHart incorporated feedback and highlighted areas for further work.

The business portion of the meeting adjourned at 5:05pm.