

**TOWN OF NAMAKAGON**  
**For - TOWN PUBLIC INPUT MEETING–Monday, January 6, 2025**  
**At - NAMAKAGON TOWN HALL – 7pm**  
**MINUTES**

Dave Hanks called the meeting to order at 7pm. Present were Dave Hanks, Jerome Malmquist, Linda Kraft, Larry Pribyl, Chairman Rasmussen, Supervisors Jack McGregor and Jim Krueger and Clerk Laura Bjork and 25 others.

Dave Hanks introduced the Plan Commission members (Dave Hanks, Jerome Malmquist, Larry Pribyl, Jim Krueger, Linda Kraft and (not in attendance) PC Rasmussen. He explained that the Plan Commission makes referrals to the Town Board on certain matters. One of the biggest considerations currently for the Plan Commission is Short Term Rentals. Dave Hanks mentioned that the Plan Commission is always looking for more volunteers. There are currently 6 members on the Plan Commission, and there can be a maximum of 7 members. Terms for the commission are three years. The Plan Commission supports the efforts of the Town of Namakagon Recreational Trail.

Jim Krueger introduced the Town Board members. He explained that the purpose of the recreation trail is to get people off the road for safety reasons. The main concern is County Highway M, however, there are additional roads of concern.

Jon Schubbe, Environmental Scientist and Planner, gave a presentation of the progress of the preliminary work on the development of the trail system.

## **PRESENTATION**

This project began in April of 2024 with site visits starting in August. This presentation is based on a concept plan for a crushed rock trail in the Town of Namakagon.

### **Stakeholders:**

- USFS: Chequamegon National Forest (primary landowner)
- WI DNR (jurisdiction over waters/wetlands)
- Bayfield County Highway Department (jurisdiction over Highway M and owned lands)
- NPS: St. Croix National Scenic Riverway (landowner)
- Lakewoods Golf Course and Resort (private landowner)
- Other Private Landowners

### **Project Goals include:**

- Enhance Safety
- Expand Recreational Opportunities
- Strengthen Connectivity

### **Concept Plan Goals:**

- Establish a Viable Alignment
  - Identifying a realistic concept alignment, with potential alternatives, to advance into the design stage

- Highlight challenges and opportunities to be addressed during the design phase
- Develop Permitting Strategy
  - Securing stakeholder buy-in while outlining keep permitting requirements for project advancement
  - Initial consultations have taken place with USFS, WDNR and NPS, with some discussions still ongoing

**Crushed Rock Trail Characteristics:**

- Designed for all users
- Surface material is compacted material
- Trail width typically is 6 to 8 feet for accessibility and shared use
- Drainage would prevent pooling, manage water flow and reduce erosion
- Easiest or easy difficulty level with gentle meanders and average grades and pitches

**Crushed Rock Trail Benefits:**

Durable Surface

- Environmentally Friendly
- Enhanced User Experience
- Accessibility
- Natural Aesthetic
- Weather Resilient

There may be crossings over wetlands (sensitive habitats) which would need boardwalk crossings as recommended by the DNR.

A concept map was presented locating possible routes for the trail. There are **Five Phases** being considered in the development of the trail system, broken down as follows:

- **Phase 1** – County Highway M from Dam Road to Namakagon Sunset Road, connecting Namakagon Town Hall, Lakewoods Resort and Rock Lake Trailhead to Dam Road and Parallels County Highway M
  - Opportunities
    - Provides direct access
    - Minimize wetland crossings by utilizing upland terrain
  - Key Challenges
    - Coordinating with private landowners
    - Narrow County Hwy M corridor near Twin Lakes
    - Fairyland SNA
- **Phase 2** – Dam Road to Crystal Lake Road, including crossing the Namakagon River via the existing bridge, linking Trail 1 with residential and commercial areas west of Lake Namakagon
  - Opportunities
    - Utilizes existing infrastructure for river crossing
    - Scenic recreation opportunities in upland and wetland habitats
  - Key Challenges
    - Evaluate bridge capacity and use compatibility
    - Wetland and road crossings and alignment with the snowmobile trail

- **Phase 3** – County Highway M from Dam Road to Frels Road connecting to the Town of Cable, linking Trails 1 and 2 to Frels Road and connects west to Mt. Telemark Village
  - Opportunities
    - Leverages existing snowmobile trail crossing for County Hwy M
    - Scenic views of adjacent wetland habitats
    - Potential link to the Town of Cable
  - Key Challenges
    - Avoids wetlands and saturated areas
    - Ensures alignment integrates with existing snowmobile trail
- **Phase 4** – Crystal Lake Road connecting to the Town of Grand View, connecting to scenic lakefront areas and recreational sites
  - Opportunities
    - Connect to the Town of Grand View
    - Potential for interpretive signage or enhancements
  - Key Challenges
    - Requires elevated boardwalks over wetlands near Dam Rd/Crystal Lake Road intersection
    - Significant costs and design considerations for long wetland crossings
- **Phase 5** – Namakagon Sunset Road, with recommendation to co-locate the Sunset Road segment with the road
  - Opportunities
    - Links eastern residences near Garden Lake and Lake Namakagon
  - Key Challenges
    - Private land crossing for the crushed rock segment
    - Constraints from co-locating on Sunset Road
    - Castle Creek crossing and potential wood turtle habitat

It was noted that a surveyor will be needed to locate private properties.

#### **Crushed Rock Trail Maintenance**

- Regular hand raking and grading
- Mechanical grading and materials replenishment
- Storm debris cleanup, windfall removal
- Boardwalk inspection and periodic basic structural maintenance

Jim Kruger stated that this process will take three to five years to initiate. This is a long process. The cost of the project will be approximately \$100,000 per mile, to be funded by grants and donations.

#### **PUBLIC INPUT**

- The trail is a crushed rock trail that is for all bikes as it's surface is hard and solid.
- Amande Westlund stated that the library would love to be involved by adding a story walk.

- Private landowners' liability becomes liability for the trail.
- Destination and mile markers should be considered.
- Parking areas to be able to connect to the trail. (Current areas would be the Town Hall, Rock Lake Trailhead, Sunset Road with town land, Namakagon Dam and Lakewoods)
- Bathroom location on the trail should be considered. It was noted that there is a bathroom at the Dam, Rock Lake and the Town Hall.
- Mapping is important with exploratories to be more user friendly.
- Consideration should be made for private easements for transfer of ownership and future effects of trail connectivity for the future.

There is a survey link posted on the website for anyone interested in having input.

The Public Meeting was adjourned at 8:23pm.

Respectfully Submitted by

Laura Bjork, Town of Namakagon Clerk