

BOARD OF ALDERMEN

ITEM NO. D(2)

AGENDA ITEM ABSTRACT

MEETING DATE: June 20, 2006

SUBJECT: Presentation of Adams Tract Management Plan

DEPARTMENT: MANAGER'S OFFICE	PUBLIC HEARING: NO
ATTACHMENTS: A. Resolution Approving the Adams Tract Management Plan B. Adams Tract Management Plan C. Adams Tract Management Plan Work Group agenda, memoranda, minutes and participants' comments on minutes	FOR INFORMATION CONTACT: George Seiz – 918-7427 Anita Jones-McNair – 918-7381 Drew Cummings - 918-7314

PURPOSE

The purpose for this item is for the Board of Alderman to review and comment on the proposed management plan for the Adams Tract, and either approve the management plan or provide direction for further discussion and review.

INFORMATION

Town staff began preparing a management plan in late summer of 2005. A "Plan of Action" and "Outcome Line" were utilized as the basis for developing the plan. The action plan included the following:

1. Formation of Management Plan Work Group.
2. Purpose Statement.
3. Review of Recreation & Parks Master Plan Implications.
4. Clean Water Management Trust Fund (CWMTF) easement and Orange County easement implications.
5. Review of Wilson Park Urban Forestry Plan (NC Division of Forest Resources).
6. Potential Grant Funding.
7. Review and comment on draft management plan.

Staff elected to utilize the existing Recreation and Parks Master Plan Work Group as the foundation for the new work group and included a representative from the Environmental Advisory Board, Orange County Staff, and a representative for off-road bicyclists. The Management Plan Work Group served a base of representation for stakeholders and assisted in the development of recommendations for the plan.

The management plan's main objective is to provide a blueprint to improve the overall aesthetic value, health, and safety of the property through preservation, restoration and trail improvement. Main action steps are to:

1. Define trail improvements and amenities
2. Establish a forest management plan

3. Protect Bolin Creek
4. Create forest stewardship opportunities
5. Provide costs and potential funding sources for the land management plan

The management plan document contains an introduction and four (4) main sections: Signs and Amenities, Trail Work, Riparian Corridor Improvements, and Forest Management. Each main section is divided into subsections as follows: Objectives, Implementation, and Costs. The proposed plan is a three (3) year management plan. Each section also contains a summary table showing planned work for a particular year and anticipated costs for each of the three years. Costs have been inflated for the second and third year of the plan. It should be noted that the management plan reflects the true or actual costs for the work shown (cost of the in-house labor, equipment, and materials that will be expended).

Several of the appendices included with the plan are particularly significant. Appendix V contains the Clean Water Management Trust Fund easement and Appendix VI contains the Orange County easement. Both documents are very important in terms of allowable and prohibited uses on the property. Appendix VII contains the narrative portion of the Wilson Park Urban Forestry Plan. This document provided a framework for trail improvements, streambed protection, and forest management.

Attachment C (to this abstract) includes Management Plan Work Group agenda's, meeting notes, and comments. The group met three times to share ideas and provide feedback. There was noteworthy discussion about incorporating additional bike trails (other than the one proposed along the OWASA easement) into the plan. Attachment C includes a memo from Town staff to the work group concerning this issue (memo dated September 27, 2005). Meeting notes from May 10, 2006 also contain comments about this subject.

There was considerable background work and research on many of the topics covered in this management plan (whether they are being recommended at this time or not). The end result of this work is the belief that the management plan presented will promote conservation and safety, and in general improve the Adams Tract as a long-term natural asset for the Town. Town staff also hopes that the future utilization of volunteers from various neighborhood and citizen groups will result in cost savings to the Town and also help to build community spirit.

FISCAL IMPACT

\$13,500 of additional funding for the first year of this management plan is included in the recently passed FY06-07 budget. As noted above, costs shown in the management plan reflect actual labor, equipment and material costs of the plan (including the cost of using existing labor and equipment in the Adams Tract) versus the budget cost, which is the new money that has been added to the budget for these purposes. Proposed costs in future years should be lower.

RECOMMENDATION

Town staff recommends that the Board of Alderman either accept the proposed Adams Tract Management Plan and adopt the attached resolution, or provide direction for further discussion and review.