



Implementing Strategic Plans

Board of Directors Meeting
2/25/2014

Presented by
Edward Goodell



Purpose

- This presentation is not about how to prepare a useful strategic plan but rather about how the Trail Conference implements our current strategic plan
- The premise is that, the better the Board understands the implementation process, with all of its opportunities, constraints and nuances, the better it can develop a plan that is feasible to implement



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What is the Trail Conference?

- Incorporated according to New York State **NYS Not-for-Profit Corporation Law** as a charitable membership organization
- Registered charitable nonprofit in New Jersey
- Recognized as a 501(c)3 charitable nonprofit by the IRS



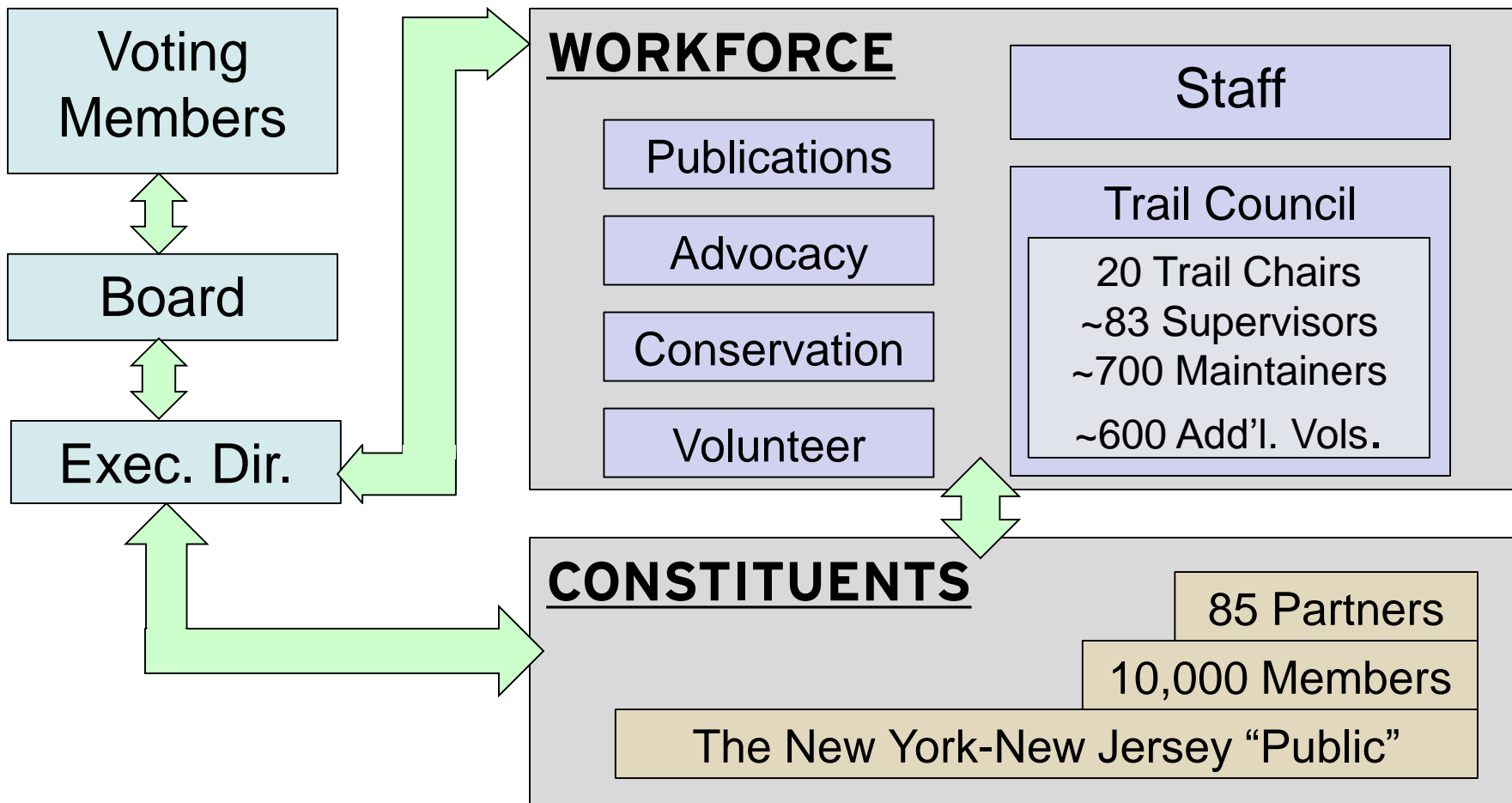
How is the Trail Conference Governed?

Our Bylaws stipulate the following roles and responsibilities:

- **The Voting Members (Delegates)**
 - Responsible for election of Board members, delegates at large and member orgs; as well as the Bylaws (which currently include the Mission Statement)
- **The Board**
 - Responsible for everything else, *"The affairs of the Trail Conference shall be managed by the Board which shall have the power to develop policies furthering the mission of the Trail Conference."*
- **The Executive Director**
 - *"shall be appointed by the Board and subject to the authority of the Board."*



Simple Org Chart & Communications Flow





History & Impact of Strategic Planning at the Trail Conference

- **1999** - Extremely detailed, extensive list of objectives and tasks. Valuable overview for incoming Ex. Dir.
- **2003** - Facilitated session produced 3 priorities - *Land Acquisition, Digital Cartography & Bear Mtn. Project*- that were the focus of successful 2004/05 campaign.
- **2009** - Multi-phase strategic planning
 1. Situation Analysis (April 2009)
 2. Strategic Decision-making (2010)
 3. Organizational Plan (Begun in 2009, amended 2013, incomplete)
 4. Marketing & Fundraising Plans (Incomplete)



Phase 1: 2009 Strategic Plan

1. Situation Analysis

- See April 2009 *Organizational Development Report* by Conservation Impact

2. Strategic Decision-making

- Strategic framework and 5 goals were developed by the Strategy Committee in 2010 based on the 2009 report

Goals

1. Trails
2. Communications
3. Volunteers
4. Fundraising
5. Operations



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Phase 1: Strategic Framework

Adopted by Board of Directors (6-22-2010)

Purpose - The purpose of the New York-New Jersey Trail Conference is to create, maintain and protect sustainable, high-quality public trails in the greater New York metropolitan area.

Vision - Our vision is that easily accessible trails enable more people of all ages and ethnicities to experience natural areas and live healthier, more satisfying lives.

Niche - The Trail Conference serves those people who enjoy trails by effectively bringing volunteers and land managers together for the creation and stewardship of a superior trail system.

Guiding Principles - In serving the public, the Trail Conference board, staff, and volunteers:

- Recognize that volunteers are integral to the organization
- Welcome anyone who advances the mission
- Seek to have a positive impact on the environment
- Operate with fiscal prudence and responsibility
- Are honest and courteous in all relationships
- Are ethical and operate within the law



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Phase 1: Strategic Goals

Adopted by Board of Directors (6-22-2010)

Trails: Increase trail quality and quantity through the development and implementation of a trail management system.

Volunteers: Recruit, train, deploy, manage and retain an increasing number and diversity of volunteers.

Outreach: Increase the awareness, support and effectiveness of the Trail Conference's operations, services and products.

Fundraising: Grow and diversify revenues to achieve the Trail Conference's goals.

Operations: Develop an organization with clearly defined roles and responsibilities and have appropriate facilities, personnel, and technology in place to operate effectively and efficiently.



Goals and Programs

Trail Goal

- **Trail Management** - Improve public access to high quality trail experiences **through application of the Trail Mgmt. Guide and cooperative relationships with trail partners.**
- **Advocacy** - Engage an informed constituency to advocate for open space, park & trail policies/funding to improve access to open space and quality trail experiences.
- **Conservation** - Protect the access and experience of particular trails through vigilant monitoring, local land use advocacy and land protection.

Outreach

- **Members Services & Education** - Educate a broad constituency on the value of open space, trails and the Trail Conference mission.
- **Publications** - Provide authoritative information about open space access, responsible trail recreation and stewardship.

Volunteer

- **Volunteer Support** - Optimize the efforts of assigned volunteers with targeted training, project management and technical/logistical/administrative support.

Development

- **Development** - Seek and secure adequate funds to sustain programmatic and administrative objectives.
- **Organizational Advancement** - Improve personal skills and contribute to organizational development.

Operations

- **Operations/Admin** - Improve the capacity and overall efficiency of Trail Conference operations.
- **Headquarters Construction** - Create a new headquarters at the Darlington Schoolhouse



Trail Goal

- Trail Goal:** Increase trail quality and quantity through the development and implementation of a trail management system.
- **Trail Management** - Improve public access to high quality trail experiences through application of the Trail Mgmt. Guide and cooperative relationships with trail partners
 - **Advocacy** - Engage an informed constituency to advocate for open space, park & trail policies/funding to improve access to open space and quality trail experiences.
 - **Conservation** - Protect the access and experience of particular trails through vigilant monitoring, local land use advocacy and land protection.



Trail Program Deliverables

Trail Management - Improve public access to high quality trail experiences through application of the Trail Mgmt. Guide and cooperative relationships with trail partners.

1. 2,000 miles of trails maintained according to Trail Management Guide
2. Increase trail mileage by 75 miles to 2,075
3. 6 Trail Council meetings
4. 250 work trips, 1400 crew, 35K linear ft. of trail work, 15 bridges/shelters/kiosks (re)built.
5. Bear Mountain Trails Project
 - Build 500 linear feet of AT on upper East Face
 - Trails For People Exhibit -design, fabricate and install Gateway components
6. Conservation Corps
 - Record/collect 15,000 service hours
 - Train 330 volunteers
7. Lower Hudson-PRISM/Invasive Monitoring/Mgmt.
 - Facilitate LH-PRISM steering committee strategy & action plans
 - Survey 50 additional miles of trails and clear an additional 50 acres



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Advocacy Program Deliverables

Advocacy - Engage an informed constituency to advocate for open space, park & trail policies/funding to improve access to open space and quality trail experiences.

1. Develop active Advocacy Committee
2. Secure funding for NJ-Green Acres and NY-EPF
3. Municipal endorsement of Gunks Greenway concept
4. Support the efforts of the Protect the Palisades Coalition



Conservation Program Deliverables

Conservation - Protect the access and experience of particular trails through vigilant monitoring, local land use advocacy and land protection.

1. Protect long distance trails routes & access
2. Identify NJ parcels, terms, matching funds
3. DEC acquisition of Lafarge parcels



Volunteer Program Deliverables

Volunteer Support - Optimize the efforts of assigned volunteers with targeted training, project management and technical, logistical and administrative support.

1. 60 workshops w/ 600 attendees
2. 10 volunteer leadership positions filled
3. 20 reports to partner agencies
4. 70,000 hours of volunteering, 8% vacancy avg.
5. Special recognition for 50 volunteers



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How We Implement Our "Strategic Plan"

Annual Plan & Budget - Organized by programs (with specific deliverables, income and expenses) related to each strategic goal , it addresses opportunities and challenges on an annual basis.

R.A.C.I. Chart - Defines objectives and roles of individual staff and committees for each program and strategic goal

Individual Action Plans - Outlines key tasks required to achieve allocated objectives

Monthly Reports - Individual reports on action plan progress

Quarterly Reports - Organizational report on planned deliverables and finances



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Conclusion