

The approximately 148-metre long Pee Wee Hill trail has been a subject of discussion for many years, as there are numerous problems associated with its use.

The trail is deemed to be quite steep for the average user. It is slippery in winter due to snow cover, and in spring becomes slick with mud. These characteristics present both access and safety issues for users.

In fact, City administration considers the trail (in its present condition) to be unsustainable.

Concern has also been expressed that descending mountain bikers present a potential danger to ascending users due to the trail's steepness, a lack of adequate trail width to allow safe passage between users, poor sight lines, and at times slippery conditions, although signage asking bikers to walk their bikes down the short descent might have easily addressed this issue.

The trail serves as an access route for Fire Protection Services to deal with potential wild fires in the area above Pee Wee Hill, and improvements to the existing trail would probably be welcomed.

Many options have been suggested over the years to address the above concerns, and after a year and a half investigation ending in April of 2017, the City's findings were presented to the Whitehorse Trail and Greenways Committee (WTGC).

A) "The [Pee Wee hill] area was visited by City employees and the proposed [alternate] trail [adjacent to the Pee Wee Hill trail] was deemed not sustainable for the area."

B) "The new proposed avenue of widening and lessening the grade on the existing Peewee Hill Trail is what the City is currently proposing." (See <https://www.activetwa.org/pee-wee-hill-trail.html>.)

Action #15 of the 2020 Trail Plan gave hope that the City would honour its previous commitment with regard to Pee Wee Hill, as it suggested that "trail improvements" would be made to the Pee Wee Hill, Crocus Ridge and Heartbreak Hill trails.

Instead of acting on the commitments made in 2017 with regard to the Pee Wee Hill trail, the City did a complete about-face and in September built a "switchback trail" adjacent to the Pee Wee Hill trail. (See <https://www.activetwa.org/photos.html>.)

City administration has referred to this trail as a "sustainable grade walking trail" and one that was "built for pedestrians [and] has handrails for walkers and corners not suited to bikes."

Yet administration says the trail is built to International Mountain Bicycling Association standards, which would certainly suggest that it is intended primarily for cycling use. When asked by the City to help build the trail, Contagious Mountain Bike Club volunteers were given the impression that it was a “climbing” trail and was being built for bikers.

In order to justify this new build the City needs to both explain how the building of the new trail is going to address the concerns raised about the old Pee Wee Hill trail, and why the solutions proposed by City employees in 2017 will no longer work in 2021.

It would have been appreciated if the City had provided these explanations prior to the building of the new trail.

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