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[gctrust.org](http://gctrust.org)

December 15, 2023

Mr. Russell Burke, Chair  
Community Preservation Committee  
Town of Groton  
173 Main St.  
Groton, MA 01450  
**Via Email:** [communitypreservation@grotonma](mailto:communitypreservation@grotonma)

**Re: Letter of Support for the Groton Trails Committee's Application 2025-12: Tools and Equipment for Building and Enhancing Trails**

Dear Mr. Burke,

This letter is to express the enthusiastic support of the Groton Conservation Trust (GCT) for the Groton Trails Committee's application to the Community Preservation Committee for financial support to acquire tools and equipment to expand and maintain trails in Groton. GCT supports this request because it believes that access to the out-of-doors is beneficial to people and Groton's trail system provides this access for the citizens of Groton and for people from around the region. GCT also supports this application because the Trust benefits from the efforts of the Groton Trail Committee and the requested equipment would make those efforts much more effective. As noted in the application, Community Preservation Act funds have been used for similar purposes by other communities.

Several of GCT's trustees and members regularly participate in the Groton Trail Committee's maintenance and construction efforts. We appreciate the tremendous effort put in by the volunteers from Groton and surrounding communities. We also know that many of the tools used are individually owned and, therefore, often of limited availability. We also see that some useful projects (e.g., trailing grading and leveling in remote locations) are beyond the practical capability of the volunteers without tools like those requested. The equipment requested will allow for new and better maintained trails in town.

That being outside provides both physical and mental health benefits is widely recognized. It is acknowledged in Groton's Community Preservation Plan objectives to expand trail linkages, improve access to trails including to those with disabilities, and provide stewardship for open

spaces. This grant will facilitate new trails that would otherwise be extremely difficult to create as well as trails that are more easily passable and better minimize environmental impacts.

GCT benefits from the work of the Groton Trails Committee by its careful construction and maintenance of trails on its lands. Award of this grant will advance GCT's goals of public land access while preventing trail erosion and other environmental issues. Groton is fortunate to have a wealth of conserved land, nearly all of it allowing public access. We are also very fortunate to have the degree of cooperation and mutual aid between the several conservation organizations including other town organizations such as the Groton Conservation Commission. The Groton Trails Committee is a critical part of that network and this grant will help the broader group of organizations and the people of Groton.

In summary, GCT believes that the request for trail construction and maintenance equipment is an excellent candidate for a grant from the Community Preservation Committee. It will be of clear benefit to members of our community and will contribute to one of the major factors that makes Groton a destination and a wonderful place to live.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Please call me at 978.337.5935 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Gerath', with a stylized, flowing script.

Mark Gerath  
President, Groton Conservation Trust

cc: Paul Funch, Groton Trails Committee