

Groton Trails Committee



Meeting Minutes for January 20, 2004– Draft

Location: Downstairs in Legion Hall

Members in attendance: Paul Funch, Ed McNierney , Steve Legge, Vic Burton, Wendy Good, and Bruce Easom. Bruce Clements joined the meeting later.

Members absent: Don Torgersen, Brad Paul

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Guests: Al Friedrich, Helene Cahen, Tom and Jen Delaney were present.

Legion Hall

Legge corrected the draft minutes of the December meeting, changing "has prepared" to "has offered to prepare" in the fourth paragraph from the end. Easom moved to accept the minutes with that correction. McNierney seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Tom Delaney reported on a January 1 incident involving two mountain bikers riding down his driveway; after Mr. Delaney had an initial conversation with the bikers, one of Mr. Delaney's dogs followed the bikers, who were not very friendly and rather arrogant about their "rights" to use the path (the driveway is Mr. Delaney's private property, with no easement or public rights of access). The dog returned with an injury. Mr. Delaney reviewed the location of his property on a map for the committee; access across his property is used by a variety of trail users. He has been very generous in permitting use of his property to trail users, but he needs to be sure that his dogs and his property are safe and secure. Mr. Delaney is looking to the Trails Committee for assistance in educating the trail users about how to properly obtain permission from him. Funch suggested that signs could be prepared by the Trails Committee explaining that the trail user was now entering on to private property and explaining how the user should behave. For Mr. Delaney's property there would need to be three such signs, at his driveway at Chicopee Row, at the northern entrance from Hawtree Way, and at the southern entrance from Conservation Commission. Legge suggested that a brief piece be placed in the local newspapers simply highlighting the need for trail users to respect private property. Easom moved that money be allocated to design and produce at least three signs indicating where trails are entering on to private property, and to install those signs at the three entrances to Mr. Delaney's property. Burton seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

There was no report on further Jenkins Road / Fairgrounds Road research.

Clements joined the meeting.

Easom reported on his design review of the Cunningham Easement bridge, intending to design it to support two horses passing each other in the center. There was general discussion of the design, and Easom will re-run his calculations with 6x10 beams rather than the 6x8 beams he used; Burton recommended that pressure-treated Southern yellow pine be used as the beam material. The final bridge may only be suitable for one horse at a time.

Burton also reported that the Notice of Intent paperwork is nearly complete on the Cunningham Easement bridge; Jean Kitchen has signed off on the application, and Burton is waiting for Barry Cunningham to return from vacation.

Burton reported that the Crosswinds site walk with the Conservation Commission was canceled due to the extremely cold weather. It has been rescheduled to this Saturday, January 24. Burton will contact Barbara Ganem for the exact time, but it will probably be around 8:50 or 9:00. Please contact Burton for details on the time; the walk will begin between #5 and #15 Squannacook Drive.

Doug Roeck from the Partridgeberry Woods Homeowners Association contacted Funch about working with us; he is planning on attending next month's (February's) meeting and discussing how the Association and the Trails Committee can work together.

Funch distributed the Trails Committee's 2003 Annual Report, written by Legge with assistance from Funch.

Marion Stoddart told Funch that there was \$271.25 remaining from the Hurd Celebration Fund. Funch met with Town Accountant Valerie Jenkins, and she reported that she can easily set up a gift fund for the Trails Committee. Such a fund would require a majority of Trail Committee members to approve any disbursements from it. Funch also investigated alternative options, but found the municipal gift fund to be the most attractive alternative. There was general discussion of the various alternatives for managing current and future Trails Committee funds. McNierney offered to investigate ways of inexpensively creating a 501(c)3 entity to support the Trails Committee.

Funch circulated the list of upcoming 2004 approved projects: the Johnston trails, the Sorhaug Woods - Groton Cemetery trail, the Sawtell (Lunn) trails, the Northwoods Trail, and the Crosswinds trails.

Legge reported that he has completed one of the Johnston trails, running from Maple Avenue to the railroad right-of-way along the western edge of the property. It has been cleared of brush but needs to be marked with trail markers.

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 PM.

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