

Groton Trails Committee



Meeting Minutes for August 17, 2004– Draft

Location: Downstairs in Legion Hall

Members in attendance: Paul Funch, Ed McNierney, Vic Burton, Steve Legge, Wendy Good, and Bruce Easom.

Members absent: Brad Paul, and Joachim Preiss

Visitors: Mike Andersen, Gray Tuttle, Bob Lotz

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Burton moved to approve the June and July minutes as written. Easom seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Funch reported that Mike Andersen and Bob Lotz were attending as interested parties - the Board of Selectmen will be voting on Mr. Andersen's appointment at their next meeting. Mr. Lotz is interested in participating and assisting in Trails Committee activities.

McNierney gave a brief summary of the Jenkins Road situation for the benefit of the new attendees.

Funch reported on his reply to the Planning Board concerning the trail corridors at the Deerhaven subdivision, a copy of which was circulated to the committee for review. Good moved that we support Funch's letter opposing the abandonment of the corridor; Easom seconded the motion. Easom also reported that the Conservation Commission does not support the abandonment of the trail corridor. The motion carried unanimously.

Funch reported on the trail condition off Integrity Way, as requested by the Planning Board and the Conservation Commission, to ensure that the trails were laid out and marked by the developer as required. Alan Taylor of West Groton volunteered to inspect the area, and reported that the trails and trailheads are clear, but there's no indication of where the trail leaves the property.

Barbara Ganem, the Conservation Administrator, is interesting in learning about parcels less than 10 acres for acquisition priority, complementing the list prepared a few years ago that was limited to 10+-acre parcels.

Legge will assist Easom in recovering the monumentation at the Wallace Road trail easement entrance.

Legge reported on his efforts to get a pedestrian way or path along Long Hill Road. He spoke to Tom Delaney, who reported that a sidewalk along the northerly side of the road,

from Farmers Row to Riverbend Drive, is in his long-term plan. West of this location, the entrance to the Groton Place is the old route of Long Hill Road, currently used as a parking area. With one road crossing a bicycle-path route could be put in from Farmers Row to the bridge over the Nashua River. McNierney moved that we endorse this project and contribute to its completion. Easom seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Recent project reports:

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1. Groton Woods trailhead posts were installed.
2. The Tuity Brook trail and bridge are complete.
3. The Groton Woods trail needs followup on the posts at the cul-de-sac and encroachment on the abutter's lawn.
4. The Northwoods Pond trail is nearly done and will be finished up this weekend.

Funch reported on his meeting with the Nashoba Conservation Trust concerning trail connections from Pepperell to Groton. The Nashoba Conservation Trust now owns the old railroad bed along Shirley Street just north of the town line, and they're interested in working on finding a route to Fitch's Bridge at some point in the future. He reviewed the various efforts the Nashoba Conservation Trust is pursuing in Pepperell.

Easom reported that the Community Preservation Act advisory committee is meeting tomorrow night at 7:00 at the NRW's River Resource Center.

Good reported that the Reedy Meadow Estates development has been given a 60-day extension as they have just discovered some NHESP issues concerning turtle habitat; the Conservation Commission is requiring them to reflag wetlands since the markers from two years ago have been somewhat lost. Gray Tuttle reported on his efforts to persuade the developer to provide connecting trail corridors in the property, running up to Route 113 in Pepperell.

Funch reported that a table has been reserved for Grotonfest; setup must be complete by 9:00 AM. Signup and work shift assistance are needed.

Good showed several trail marker color samples; we can get bulk purchasing prices for multiple background colors as long as the printing ink color remains the same. We will acquire 1500 white, 800 yellow, and 200 of a third background color - light blue, if possible. There was a brief discussion about trail signage; McNierney will bring samples to the next meeting. Burton recommended we take on the Throne as a mapping/signage project. Good, McNierney, and Burton will work with Dann Chamberlin (the third member of the Groton Conservation Trust's trail review committee) to develop a proposal for review at our next meeting.

Legge pointed out that some Crosswinds residents report getting lost by taking the new trails that lead into the Bertozzi area. Legge will check on the markers leading back to the road.

McNierney reported on Dylan Parker-Roach's Eagle Scout project proposal. Dylan is developing an interactive, multimedia project based on conservation properties in town. Interested parties should contact McNierney for more information.

Easom met with Evan Owen to review the Paquawket Path easement out to the Rail Trail. There is some confusion about the exact location of the easement, and the Conservation Commission will probably engage a surveyor to resolve that confusion. Town Counsel is of the opinion that the easement can be used by pedestrians to travel between Paquawket Path and the Rail Trail, and that bicycle and equestrian traffic is likely to also be permitted, along with appropriate signage.

McNierney reported that the Groton Conservation Trust now owns the house lot on the south side of Martins Pond Road, on the "Angus Hills" property. The GCT will probably develop some small parking facility here for access to trails.

Burton moved to adjourn the meeting. Easom seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 9:50 PM.

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