



TOWN OF GROTON

173 Main Street
Groton, Massachusetts 01450-1237
(978) 448-1111
FAX: (978) 448-1115



Groton Trails Committee

**** Monthly Meeting Minutes ****
20 December 2005
Town Hall

Attendees:

Joachim Preiss
Paul Funch
Stephen Legge
Bruce Easom
Wendy Good
Ed McNierney
Vic Burton
Chris Shaffer
Ed Bretschneider

Visitors:

Helene Cahen

Meeting called to order at 7:36 PM.

Easom moved to accept the November meeting minutes, as corrected previously. Good seconded. Approved unanimously.

There was a short discussion of the meeting day (presently third Tuesday of the month). No changes agreed to at this time.

MBTA trail purchase update: it was reported by Easom that the Con Comm went into executive session at its last meeting to discuss the town's pending law suit against the seller (B&M).

Gibbett Hill trail update: discussion of where and how horses should get past the new steps installed at the Shattuck Street trail entrance. The concern is the potential for significant erosion at the entrance with horse traffic. Good commented that it is challenging, but not impossible to ride up the hill. She also commented that it is much easier to ride up a steep hill than down. No resolution on the entrance issue. Three posts remain to be planted on the trail. Easom suggested placing an additional post with markers across Shattuck Street from the Shattuck Street entrance to make the trail easier to spot by auto. It was agreed the ground was too firm now to do any more work before Spring. McNierney will talk to Steve Webber and Tom Delaney about installing a culvert in the wet driveway entrance on Route 40 at the trailhead.

Angus Hill trail update: Poison ivy needs to be dealt with in the Spring at the Martin's Pond trail entrance (across from Orchard Dr.). Preiss will talk to Tom Delaney about the possibility of gravel fill in the wet area at this entrance.

Project planning for 2006: General discussion about bridge building and state funding sources for said projects. Easom recommends making a few applications for grants this year, thereby creating the boilerplate to use on future applications to the state. Easom offered to get a start on this. Good will contact the Baystate Trail Riders group for information on how to deal with the State Trails Advisory Committee. She will also talk to Ed Torcoletti about possible bridge projects in the Harry Rich State Forest.

Other specific 2006 project proposals:

Preiss: bridge on the Williams Barn property trail, before the existing Boy Scout bridge.

Funch: Nate Nutting Trail reroute and bridge through wet area.

Funch: Acorn Path surveying and trail marking; to be done by Easom and Evan Owens.

Funch: split rail fence on Deerhaven subdivision trail.

Funch: Pacer Way posts to mark access to Rail Trail from Old Ayer Road.

Good: Paquawket Path easement to Rail Trail needs to be surveyed. Language interpretation by Town Counsel necessary. Good to follow up with Barbara Ganem.

Preiss: Williams Barn/Brooks Orchard Trail re-route to higher land for walkers; to avoid major drainage path from Chestnut Hills area

Williams Barn Winter Outing in February: GTC to sponsor a snowshoe race (~5K); Funch organizing.

Public relations activities:

The 2005 town annual report is due January 13th. Legge to draft and submit to BOS in January. Items of accomplishment for 2005 considered for inclusion are: Gibbett Hill, Angus Hill, Deerhaven, Wallace Rd, Longley 2 trail, High school XC trail completion, Orion Way trail, Town Forest Trail Race sponsorship and management, trail tools gift from NEMBA and Arthur Blackman, and Grotonfest PR activities.

Newspaper-worthy projects for near future write-ups: Tuity Bridge and trail, Orion Way, Gibbett Hill/Angus Hill preliminary write-up.

Goals for 2006: discussion postponed to next meeting

Other discussions:

GTC dedicated website: Discussion of the advantages over current hosting on Town website. Preiss to research options/disadvantages and report back.

Trail Kiosks: idea discussed for installation at various trailheads in Groton; basic design could be replicated; Preiss offered to sketch out a basic design. Also related, discussion of whether to install trail signs, primarily to communicate use restrictions, but possibly other helpful information.

Hunting on Town Conservation properties: discussion of a recent incident on Williams Barn property where a hunter was sighted and a pool of blood found. It is believed hunting is allowed unless specifically posted otherwise.

Conservation lands encroachments by abutters: Wiewel Land encroachment discussed (mowing); suggestion that GTC might take on more responsibility to identify encroachments (since we are out in the field quite a bit), and to report findings to Con Comm for due process.

Adjournment:

Easom moved to adjourn. Funch seconded. Meeting adjourned at 9:36 PM.