



TOWN OF GROTON

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



Groton Trails Committee

** Monthly Meeting Minutes **
November 2006

11/21/06 19.30h

Attendees:

Chairman	Joachim Preiss
Vice chair	Paul Funch
Secretary	Ed McNierney
Public Relations	Stephen Legge
Members	Bruce Easom
	Wendy Good
	Chris Shaffer
	Ed Bretschneider
	Alan Taylor

Visitors:

Tom Callahan
Helene Cahen

Good moved to accept the minutes of the October 17, 2006 meeting as written. Preiss read the minutes aloud. Bretschneider seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Good observed that the trail marker post at the McLain's Woods Road entrance to the trail (old Mahoney Lane) is missing. This is not the cul-de-sac entrance, but the other entrance. Funch pointed out that the trail was not, in fact, on public land but on the Carters' house lot.

There are new "No Trespassing" signs that Good thought were on Conservation Commission land; the trail actually runs just on the private side of the lot line, and the sign may be on their land in any event. All seems to be in order, but it would be helpful if there were a directional sign to indicate that the trail turns right at that location. The trail addition made several years ago was designed to provide an alternative route to this situation.

Gail Greenlaw reported to Good that the bridges on NEFF property off Old Dunstable Road are not safe for horses. Peter Morrison's proposal to the Community Preservation Committee (on behalf of the Trails Committee) for new bridges on this property will provide for safer horse-compatible crossings. Funch will send Good a copy of Vic Burton's draft map of this property. Dann Emerson is the CPC liaison for this effort and is working with Mr. Morrison. Easom will contact Mr. Emerson to make sure the Trails Committee is informed

McNierney reported on the status of the Surrenden Farm trail plan. He will be summarizing the Trails Committee's field notes from our previous work and bringing a document to the December meeting. There is no formal obligation for the Trails Committee to deliver a trail plan, but the previously-agreed February target is still reasonable and a good deadline. There will be future work to be done to refine the plan as the management of the property evolves.

Funch distributed and reviewed the financial summary of the FY2006 Trail Race budget and related expenses, with accompanying descriptive and illustrative graphics.

Funch reported on new trail development on the Gamlin Crystal Spring property, by the Minott family with the assistance of Bob Gamlin. Funch will be reviewing the trail plan on site at 10 AM on Saturday. Funch will contact Suzanna Black, the GCT property steward, to make sure she's aware of the activity. There may need to be trail markers installed, and Funch will contact Ms. Black for permission.

Funch and Preiss reported on the recent trail network work on Gibbet Hill. Legge is working with Lawrence Academy for parking permission. Preiss will contact the Conservation Commission about clearing the trail just inside the stone gates and to the right so it runs closer to the road.

Meeting Agenda

Easom reviewed the Acorn Path trail plan, from The Desrosiers Family Trust. He has been working with Evan Owen to try to mark and locate the trail corridor; he has been doing more detailed GPS planning for the property and is planning a site visit this weekend to try to identify the location of the trail corridor corners. He's currently planning on Saturday at 9 AM - contact him if you're interested, as he would prefer not to have a large party.

McNierney reported that David Black of Groton School will be working with him on an alternate location for the trail Vic Burton proposed over Groton School property.

Funch reported that trail work on the High School bridge should be beginning soon.

We are out of trail posts, having installed 22 of them this year. We won't be trying to get more soon, as we don't need to store them until spring.

Funch talked to some of his coworkers on the Gibbet Hill trail work concerning ideas for improving the wet area crossing between the summits of Gibbet Hill. We need to meet with the Conservation Commission to find out what's really permissible in this area. A preliminary conversation with Barbara Ganem may help clarify what's permissible.

Preiss will follow up with her.

Good reported that Dann Chamberlin is installing trail posts along the easement off Castle Drive, possibly even today. She marked the loop trail with yellow trail markers.

Good discussed the Longley I easement with Barbara Ganem; Ms. Ganem does not seem to think there's any need to survey the area, as the location is well-understood. Easom felt the corridor needs to be walked on-site; the neighbor seems to have done a survey and located a few of the corner pins. Easom and Good will meet at 9 AM on Sunday to look at the area.

Easom pointed out that the Amanda's Way subdivision is making progress and it's probably time to start taking a look out there. Bretschneider has been out there and found some trail corridors clearly connecting to Skinner Forest, but others are more obscure.

Bretschneider reminded us that we will also need to mark the access to Skinner Forest going through the new Forest Drive development.

Preiss has field-tested the Conservation Commission's "brush whacker", and found it quite impressive. It's a larger-scale version of the sort of tool McNierney and Funch have used in the past, and is much more able to handle small-caliper hardwoods. The brush mower is on next year's budget plan.

Easom said the Conservation Commission is looking for a complete list of all reports of abutter encroachments on Conservation Commission property. Various outstanding issues were discussed.

Preiss said there is an open seat on the Conservation Commission. He investigated the situation and decided he did not have the time to serve. Ms. Ganem would welcome suggestions for candidates. Funch pointed out that the Williams Barn Committee has an open slot for a Trails Committee representative; interested candidates would be appreciated.

Easom moved to adjourn the meeting at 9:25 PM. There were no complaints.