



TOWN OF GROTON

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Groton Trails Committee

** Monthly Meeting Minutes ** 28 September 2010 Town Hall

Attendees:

Chairman Joachim Preiss
Vice Chair Paul Funch
Stephen Legge
Bruce Easom
Wendy Good
Ed Bretschneider
Alan Taylor
David Minott
John Lynch

Visitors:

NDO Dave Burnham
Selectman Anna Eliot

1. The meeting was called to order with a quorum of committee members at 7:35 p.m.
2. **Minutes of 20 July 2010.** Good moved to approve the minutes as written, seconded by Minott. Unanimously passed.
3. **Wharton Plantation.** Dave Burnham asked the Trails Committee about the process that should be followed for proposing and developing a trail from Rocky Hill Rd., across the NEFF property, to the Gamlin Crystal Springs GCT property. It was explained that permission from NEFF was the first thing to be required. Next, the route needed to be flagged and GPSed in order to confirm that it remained on NEFF land and avoided some particular areas owned by the GCT that are being protected. Preiss had indicated his willingness to assist Dave with the GPS work and Funch also indicated his willingness to help with contacting NEFF since NEFF had recently expressed interest in developing more of their properties for recreational purposes.
4. **Jenkins Rd. Right of Way.** Funch and Good gave the Committee a summary of the 20 September Selectmen's meeting where Easom presented a synopsis of the legal facts that have been researched over the past 10 years as well as his GPS analysis that countered the Friedrich's claim that the portion Jenkins Rd. running by their property had been washed away by the Nashua River. The Selectmen in attendance (Stuart Schulman, Josh Degen, Anna Eliot, and Peter Cunningham) were split on whether to proceed towards requesting a Summary Judgment based on the legal facts obtained by the Town's legal counsel. They decided to wait until the full board was in attendance before taking a vote and they also asked Town Manager Mark Haddad to look into the possibility of getting a survey of the area using modern techniques that might avoid having to pass over the Friedrich's property.
Anna Eliot gave the Committee a quick update on actions taken since the 21 September meeting and also notified the Committee of upcoming votes that may be taken by the Selectmen. She encouraged the Trails Committee to attend the Selectmen's meeting on the 12th of October (Tuesday, due to Columbus Day on Monday) and to contact the other Selectmen to encourage them to do what they can to investigate and uphold the Town of Groton's property rights along Jenkins Rd.
5. **Northwoods Subdivision.** The Committee discussed encroachment on the trail that goes from top of the hill to Longley Rd. Good will write a letter to Barbara Ganem requesting that she send a letter to the abutters of the trail asking them to remove the tree limbs, etc., that are completely blocking the trail.

Funch also noted that the easement that goes up the hill from Northwoods Rd. to the dirt road/path on the hill in the subdivision was apparently moved from its location identified on the subdivision plan. Easom will be working with the owner of the property over which the easement passes to determine the proper location of the easement and thence the trailhead posts that will be placed in the Town's right-of-way.

6. **Gamlin Crystal Springs Trail.** Minott updated the Committee on the slow progress being made on getting a new trail approved by the GCT that the donator, Robert Gamlin, and David have laid out and flagged. David is trying to coordinate a site walk with key GCT members to determine how the trail should best be routed near the Crystal Springs and along the nearby marshlands. Several Trails Committee members reviewed the flagged trail and provided comments to David.
The washout of the bridge on Bridge St. was discussed. This bridge provides the only access (aside from going all the way down Hoyts Wharf Rd. to Cow Pond Brook Rd. and then down to Bridge St.) from Old Dunstable Rd. to the existing Gamlin Crystal Springs esker trail as well as the many trails in the Cow Pond Brook area that connect with the Haystack Observatory trails in Westford. In its present orientation and condition, it is a public safety issue for pedestrians and it makes passage by bike or horse (or cross country skis, etc.) impossible. The Committee unanimously voted to authorize Funch to write a letter to the Director of Public Works, Tom Delaney to note that a public safety issue exists, to note its role in the trails networks in that area, and to request that the bridge be restored for pedestrian use.
7. **Grotonfest.** All members of the Committee were very pleased with the number of people that came by the booth. Many people signed up to receive trail project notices and they expressed a high level of enjoyment of the existing trails in Town and high levels of support for the work of the Committee.
The Committee discussed the fact that there is still no link to the Trails Committee's website from the Town of Groton's website because of a complete lack of IT support by the Town. Lynch volunteered to try once more to get a link added to the Town website.
8. **Groton Town Forest Trail Races.** Funch reported that registrations are running ahead of last year (which was down from previous years). Also, a good number of volunteers have already expressed their willingness to help out. Funch has been marking the race courses this year with rectangular plastic markers instead of having to spray paint the trees. They are more visible and require less maintenance. They allow runners to practice on the courses and they also offer new paths (3.4 miles and 9.5 miles long) for hikers, bikers, skiers, et al., to follow in addition to the 6.2 mile loop that has been marked for many years.
9. **Motion to adjourn** was made by Minott, seconded by Bretschneider, and approved unanimously. Meeting was adjourned at 9:05 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Paul Funch.