



TOWN OF GROTON

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Groton Trails Committee

** Monthly Meeting Minutes **

20 December 2011

Attendees:

Chairman	Paul Funch	X
Vice Chair	Joachim Preiss	X
Members:	Ed Bretschneider	X
	Wendy Good	No
	Stephen Legge	X
	John Lynch	X
Recorder	David Minott	X
	Alan Taylor	No
	John Wiesner	X

Visitors:

X none

Chairman Funch called the meeting to order at 7:40 p.m.

1. Ed Bretschneider moved to accept the minutes of the November meeting, as amended; John Lynch seconded; minutes were approved unanimously.
2. Paul Funch recapped the ceremony held December 7, 2011 at the Town Hall at which he and members of the Trails Committee publicly recognized Chris Marsh for the extensive trail mapping effort Chris completed for the Trails Committee as an Eagle Scout project. During the ceremony, Chris Marsh was also thanked for donating two GPS units and surplus fund-raising proceeds of \$470 to the Groton Trails Committee. Paul Funch noted that the Groton Landmark provided detailed coverage of the ceremony and Chris's accomplishments in the issue of December 16, 2011.
3. Follow-ups from previous meetings.
 - A) On December 18, 2011, Joachim Preiss led a guided hike on the Surrenden Farms Trail network. Some 29 people participated, indicating strong public interest, despite the early winter season. Joachim suggested that late-fall and winter hikes be started at 1PM, rather than the traditional 2PM start, due to failing light by 4PM.
 - B) Paul Funch reported on recent trails maintenance projects to clear oak falls left by the October snowstorm. Maintenance was completed on the north portion of the Town Forest trail network. The trails of the Throne were cleared ahead of the recent guided hike. The trails of the Farmers & Mechanics area, as well as the Partridgeberry areas have been cleared. Joachim Preiss noted that the Scarlett Hill trail has also been cleared.

Groton Trails Committee Meeting Minutes

C) Paul Funch reported having sent a revised MOA to the Town Forest Committee requesting their comments. Comments have not been received as yet.

D) Paul Funch reported that no comments have yet been received from either the Groton Conservation Trust or the DCR-Willard Brook, in response to the original, draft MOAs sent those organizations previously.

E) Paul Funch updated the Committee on efforts to revise the Trails Committee Charter. Mark Haddad advised having Town Counsel review all MOAs, but did not see the need for formal involvement of the Board of Selectmen in the establishment of MOAs. Trails Committee members suggested subject matter for potential inclusion in the Charter, for example, public outreach, prescribed trails-use guidelines, and whether other Town boards (e.g., Conservation Commission) should have a prescribed slot on the Trails Committee by charter. Paul asked all Committee members to review the Charter language and be prepared to discuss suggested changes at the January 2012 Committee meeting.

4. Paul Funch led a discussion of new maintenance projects:

A) Paul Funch is scheduling a clean-up of the trail near Longley Road over the holidays.

B) Paul Funch reported that the trail in the Shattuck Street area has significant wet areas. He noted that the Town of Bedford uses board walks in such wet areas that are constructed of pressure-treated planking, nailed to 6" by 6" cross-ties made plastic.

C) Joachim Preiss reported that beaver-related flooding of portions of the trail at Williams Barn requires re-routing of that trail segment. Joachim indicated he would speak with the Conservation Commission regarding a possible re-routing of the trail.

D) John Lynch and John Wiesner volunteered to assist Paul Funch in planning for the Groton Town Forest Trail Race in 2012.

E) Paul Funch requested Committee members to think about additional trail projects for the Committee to undertake in 2012.

5. John Lynch led a discussion regarding placement of the new, Google-Maps-based trail maps on the Committee's website. There was extensive discussion of the detailed content and format for the layered-map product to be put online. Paul Funch suggested going on other towns' websites to see how they present their trail maps. Paul also asked if any Committee member could amend or add content to the mapped information. John replied that the software is presently too complex for most people to work with, and in addition, having "too many chefs" could end up corrupting the product. The consensus of the Committee was to go ahead with putting the mapping up on the website and also to make Facebook the Committee's blog. Steve Legge said he would author a press release announcing the availability of the map products on the website.

Groton Trails Committee Meeting Minutes

6. Paul Funch noted that it is Town policy that Town-owned equipment not be given to personal use, and that this would apply to the GPS units recently donated to the Committee by Chris Marsh. Paul stated that the Trails Committee Chair should maintain a simple, current listing of each significant item of Town property in the Committee's possession, and which Committee member currently has custody.

7. Paul Funch noted that with regard to the "Volunteers List Serve" and the "Activities List Serve," he will ask each if they have objection to the Trails Committee's combining the two List Serves into one, entitled, "Friends of Trails." He will also ask each List Serve if they have objection to receiving limited notifications of Trails Committee activities.

8. Steve Legge indicated he is starting to assemble the inputs needed for him to prepare the Trails Committee's section of the Annual Town Report. He requested summary inputs from the members of the Committee regarding items such as trail projects, including the major clean-ups necessitated by the heavy October snowfall; guided hikes; the Chris Marsh trails mapping project; the Town Forest Trail Race and volunteer help from Lawrence Academy students; John Wiesner's joining the Committee; and Bruce Easom's retirement from the Committee.

7. Committee members volunteered as follows to serve as the Recorder of meeting minutes at the meetings remaining in this fiscal year:

January 2012	-	John Lynch
February	-	John Wiesner
March	-	Joachim Preiss
April	-	Ed Bretschneider
May	-	Dave Minott
June	-	Al Taylor

On a motion made by Ed Bretschneider and seconded by Paul Funch, it was voted unanimously to adjourn at 9:25 p.m.