



TOWN OF GROTON

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Groton Trails Committee

**** Monthly Meeting Minutes **** **15 May 2012**

Attendees:

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

Visitors:

X none

Chairman Funch called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

1. Joachim Preiss moved to accept the minutes of the March 2012 meeting, as amended; John Lynch seconded; minutes were approved unanimously, with Wendy Good abstaining.
2. Wendy Good moved to accept the MOA between the GTC and the New England Forestry Foundation; Al Taylor seconded; motion approved unanimously.
3. Wendy Good moved to accept the MOA between the GTC and the Town Forest Committee (TFC), with amendments as recommended by the TFC; Joachim Preiss seconded; motion approved unanimously.
4. Wendy Good moved to have the GTC issue a plaque to Bruce Easom as an Outstanding Volunteer Award, and a plaque to Ed McNierney as an Outstanding Volunteer Award for a Charter Member; John Lynch seconded; motion approved unanimously, with Joachim Preiss abstaining.
5. Chairman Funch reported there has been little progress towards consummating an MOA with Groton Conservation Trust (GCT). GCT sent the proposed MOA to its Stewards' Committee for consideration. Paul Funch to discuss objectives of the MOA with Ed McNierney of the GCT.
6. Chairman Funch recognized Steve Legge's efforts in preparing an excellent summary of the past year's accomplishments of the GTC for inclusion in the Annual Town Report. Steve Legge recommended paring the length of the Committee's summary next year.

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7. Chairman Funch reported that, after United Way's soliciting support from the GTC at the March meeting for United Way's "Dash for a Difference" initiative, there was no subsequent follow-up by the United Way representative.
8. Chairman Funch reported that he does not plan to organize the 2012 Town Forest Trail Race and discussed the possibility of re-organizing such that the Race sponsor would be a non-profit entity with no tie to the GTC. Steve Legge suggested that the Squannacook River Runners might be asked about their potential interest in taking over. John Wiesner suggested the possibility of a Town marathon as a change of pace.
9. Committee members reported as follows on a number of trails projects:
 - A) Regarding the Lawrence Academy Service Day, Al Taylor reported on the Johnston property project, Paul Funch on the McLain's Woods fence project, and Steve Legge on the Groton Road Race project.
 - B) Regarding the Rich Tree Forest, Paul Funch reported that DCR-Willard Brook's Bruce Colburn appreciated the trail maintenance and trash removal work by GTC.
 - C) Regarding the McLain's Woods fence project, Paul Funch reported having completed the fence project there.
10. Regarding the Farmers & Mechanics tree harvesting, there was no update report presented.
11. Joachim Preiss and Wendy Good reported having participated in the planning effort for the Open Space and Recreation Plan.
12. Chairman Funch reported that Pete Carson of the River Festival asked if GTC would consider having a table at the Festival on June 24. Following discussion among GTC members, it was decided instead to offer Pete Carson a Guided Hike event through Harry Rich Tree Forest, conditioned on a time slot during the Festival being identified for the hike that does not conflict with scheduled, popular Festival activities.
13. Chairman Funch reported on plans for Town Forest trails restoration, noting that the recent tree harvesting has left some trail sections blocked with slash. He further reported that a concept plan was discussed with the Town Forest Committee during April and a site walk was conducted that month. Chairman Funch then noted that the Town Forest Committee intends to identify which trail sections the GTC can restore and which are to be left as-is. He also noted that a short bridge would be needed in one trail section for a potential new trail on some highlands overlooking Dead River. Chairman Funch stated that an action plan is to be discussed on May 17 with the Town Forest Committee and invited GTC members to attend.
14. Chairman Funch reported on general disclaimer language recommended by Town Counsel as relates to the GPS information being supplied by GTC to the public on trail locations and other information on the trails and parcels. He also conveyed Town Counsel's recommendations regarding GTC's describing privately-owned trails on its website. Following discussion, Wendy Good made the motion to add Town Counsel's general disclaimer wording to the website; Joachim Preiss seconded the motion; and the motion was passed unanimously. There was

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discussion regarding the identification and mapping of privately owned trails on the website; however, the only point of general consensus emerging was that the GTC needs to identify a process for determining where Town trails go onto private property and can be re-routed.

15. Chairman Funch reported on a complaint that the Gratuity Brook Bridge is slippery and dangerous for equestrians. During discussion, mildew was identified as the likely culprit; however, the normal chemical treatment for mildew would not be feasible, as its use would contaminate the brook. Sanding was seen as only a short-lived solution; more feasible options discussed included adding a surface topping material or chain-saw scoring of the surface. Chairman Funch planned further dialogue with the complainant.
16. Chairman Funch discussed the design of a lay-down bridge that may be suitable for trail locations needing bridges such as the Whispering Brook, Wiewel, and Gibbet Hill trails. The bridge design uses corrugated plastic piping as cross ties; hence, allowing water to flow freely beneath. The plastic cross ties would not degrade with time as does untreated wood.

On a motion made by Dave Minott and seconded by Joachim Preiss, it was voted unanimously to adjourn at 10:20 p.m.