



TOWN OF GROTON

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



Groton Trails Committee

** Monthly Meeting Minutes ** 19 February 2013

	Attendees		Visitors
Chairman:	Paul Funch	X	Bruce Easom, Conservation Commission
Vice Chairman:	Joachim Preiss	X	Jason Remillard, Groton
Members:	Ed Bretschneider	No	Kerri Strauss, GDRMS XC and Track, Head Coach (girls & boys)
	Wendy Good	No	
	Olin Lathrop	X	
Recorder:	Stephen Legge	X	
	David Minott	X	
	Scott Stathis	No	
	John Wiesner	X	

Call to Order

- At 7:36 PM, Chairman Funch called the meeting to order with a quorum of Committee members present.

Approval of Minutes

- Legge moved to accept the minutes of the January 2012 meeting. Seconded by Preiss. Passed unanimously, with Minott and Lathrop abstaining.
- Preiss moved to accept the minutes of the May 2012 meeting. Seconded by Minott. Passed unanimously, with Lathrop abstaining.
- Minott moved to accept the minutes of the January 2013 meeting. Seconded by Preiss. Passed unanimously.

Recorders volunteering for the Next Six Months

March - Lathrop
April - Minott
May - Wiesner

June - Good
July - Stathis
August - Bretschneider

Discussion of the Value of Paper Maps

Jason Remillard, Groton resident, has developed a very nice map of the whole town, including tracks for trails. He presented his product and offered to develop and possibly print any special maps we would like to have on hand. Discussion ensued concerning the value of such maps. Concerns expressed about the need to match paper map files with online interactive maps, and the extra work of managing and maintaining both. GTC members asked to consider the issues and come back to the March meeting with specific recommendations. Proposed by Legge to set up a subcommittee of 2 – 4 people at the next meeting to identify issues and concerns for all maps, pros and cons for paper maps, set standards for maintenance of maps over time, and

possibly implement such plans.

New Middle School Cross Country Course

- Kerri Strauss, coach of the boys and girls MS XC team, asked for help laying out and possibly building a new course on the GDRMS grounds and two adjacent private parcels. Purpose: to give the course more exposure to the woods and less to the developed fields surrounding the school buildings. The private parcels are owned by INSCO and Brad and Sally Smith, each party having given informal and limited permission to use portions of their property in this way.
- The committee offered Kerri our help planning the course and clearing the various sections, as needed. The committee may wish to pursue obtaining more formal understandings with private land owners to clarify extent of public access being permitted. Target date for completion is beginning of school in September 2013.

Trail Maintenance Activities

Funch reported on the clearing of Amanda's Way and Duck Pond trails on January 29th, by himself and Legge. The work consisted mostly of chain sawing several large trees, which had fallen across trails and lugging the chainsaw a very long distance!

Guided Hikes

- Funch reported the success of the Fitch's Bridge public hike on January 20th, just before the Town meeting vote to replace the bridge (Town voted "yes"). Lathrop did a fine job of preparing for and leading the hike – 23 people and 4 dogs attended.
- Minott and Lathrop laid out plans for four public hikes into June. All will begin at 1:00 PM, and are as follows:

- Sunday, March 3 rd	Millstone Hill	AMC will also be invited
- Sunday, April 14 th	Throne Hill	AMC invited
- Sunday, May 5 th	Snake Hill	AMC invited
- Sunday, June (TBD)	Flavell Crossing	AMC invited

Regional Trail Activities

- Funch reported that the Montachusett Regional Trails Coalition (MRTC) will be meeting with several groups of towns over the next several months to get input on each town's publishable trails and possible interconnections with adjacent towns. Groton's meeting will be with Ayer, Harvard and Shirley, at Ayer Town Hall on Wednesday, March 13th at 6:00 PM. Funch will go and invited others on GTC to join.
- The Massachusetts State Trails Conference will be held at Devens Commons on Saturday, May 4th, from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM; \$25 fee, lunch included.
- The Town of Acton is in the process of putting up an interactive map for their town, modeled exactly like ours, and using the same GMAP-4 software. They apparently do not yet have digital tracks (trails) on the site.

Preiss Met with Conservation Commission

- Preiss met with the Conservation Commission on Tuesday, January 22nd to request permission to place QR codes on our trail posts at trail entrances to their properties around

town. This was approved by the Commission.

- Preiss presented a plan for the Williams/Sorhaug properties to make minor modifications to the trail layout in several places where beaver activity and other causes have resulted in trail erosion and deterioration. He also proposed some two new trails including a new exit from the top of Chestnut Hill heading north and rejoining the Bruce Clements trail below, and a new link north from the same general area to the edge of Brooks Orchard. These ideas were also approved by the Commission. Next step will be a site walk in the spring, after the snow is gone.

Other Business

- Brief discussion of a future connection from the NRRT to Arlington Street, and then to the new Fitch's Bridge, as arguably our next highest priority "connection" project. Ideally, it would involve construction of a relatively short on/off ramp trail (~ 200 hundred feet) on the west side of the NRRT, SW of Rte. 119, over land presently owned by Honeywell (former Conductor Lab property), to avoid any exposure to Rte. 119 traffic.
- Discussion of the Conservation Commission's request for support from the GTC for its current effort to obtain \$150,000 in CPA funding to help replenish the Town's Conservation Fund. These funds are used primarily as a source of quick funding for acquisition of strategic land parcels that may come up for sale and if not acted upon sufficiently quickly are lost, basically forever. The Conservation Fund is presently severely depleted due to purchase of the Cox-Walker land acquisition and cash-flow timing considerations. GTC approved, unanimously, a letter of support to be written by Chairman Funch.

Adjournment

- Preiss moved to adjourn the meeting. Minott seconded. Approved unanimously.
- Meeting was adjourned at 9:48 PM.