** Monthly Meeting Minutes **
16 April 2013

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendees</th>
<th>Visitors</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chair: Paul Funch</td>
<td>X</td>
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<td>Vice Chair: Joachim Preiss</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Members: Ed Bretschneider</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wendy Good</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Olin Lathrop</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stephen Legge</td>
<td>X</td>
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<tr>
<td>David Minott</td>
<td>X (Recorder)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scott Stathis</td>
<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>John Wiesner</td>
<td>X</td>
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Call to Order
- At 7:35 P.M., Chairman Funch called the meeting to order with a quorum of Committee members present.

Approval of Minutes
- Lathrop moved to accept the minutes of the 19 March 2013 meeting, as amended. Motion was seconded by Bretschneider and approved by unanimous vote, with Bretschneider and Preiss abstaining.

Guided Hikes
- Lathrop reported 7 people participated in the guided hike held in April on Throne Hill.
- Lathrop indicated he is planning a guided hike in May at Snake Hills/Forest Bells and in June at the Gamlin Crystal Springs.
- Minott indicated he plans a guided hike during the summer at the Gamlin Esker trail.

Montachusett Regional Trail Coalition (MRTC)
- Funch reported attending the recent meeting of the MRTC. He described plans by the MBTA to extend the commuter rail to a new “Wachusett Station” to be built in Westminster. He then reported on plans for a site walk with the project’s designers later in April to evaluate potential trail links that would enable hikers and bikers to use the rail station as a departure point for accessing Mt. Wachusett and other points of interest.

NEFF Volunteer Liability Form
- Members present at the meeting signed the yearly release of liability form that will be sent to NEFF.
Posting of QR Signs on NEFF Property and at Town Forest

• Funch reported that both NEFF and the Town Forest Committee pushed back on this idea. The Town Forest Committee is presently opposed to the concept of such posting and NEFF had technological concerns (one cannot find one’s location on the interactive map by accessing the QR code). So, posting QR signs on those properties is on hold for now.

Unauthorized Trail in GTF

• Funch reported that Stathis has reached out to the Town Forest Committee, assuring them that the GTC had no foreknowledge of, or involvement with, cutting the unauthorized trail, and has also reminded NDO not to cut any trails without the permission of the land owner.

Gibbet Hill/Scarlet Hill - Feedback for Dave Pitkin on the CR Stewardship Plan he is Preparing

• Funch noted that GTC feedback on the CR Stewardship Plan is an action item that Dave Pitkin had requested at the March meeting. The issues are (1) responsibility for mowing and CR compliance monitoring at Gibbet Hill and (2) mowing responsibility at Scarlett Hill. He indicated that the CR is silent on who has responsibility for mowing the park area at the top of Gibbet Hill (Public Open Space #4) and he asked the GTC to offer a recommendation on who should carry that responsibility. The CR states that the long-term maintenance responsibility for the trails is the Town’s and Dave asked the GTC to offer a recommendation on this as well.
• Easom reported that the Conservation Committee recently voted budget to mow the Gibbet Hill open area two times.
• Funch said he believes the Gibbet Hill owner should be primarily responsible for mowing the open area on Gibbet Hill, as the CR gives the owner use of that area four times per year for his business and two times for family functions.
• Funch said that the open area should be mowed twice per year at least and that should be the extent of the Town’s responsibility. The recommendation of the GTC from the ensuing discussion was that the Conservation Commission should pay an amount to the owner that would cover the expenses for mowing the open area twice per year.
• Funch asked if mowing of the trails on Gibbet Hill should be the responsibility of the GTC. Easom indicated that the formal responsibility rests with the Conservation Commission, as they have the contractual obligation under the CR. The GTC recommended that they be asked by the Conservation Commission to mow the trails but with the understanding that the GTC could decline if no members were available to do the mowing.
• Funch asked the Committee for opinions on whether the GCT should have the formal responsibility for CR compliance monitoring. Discussion among Committee members indicated a clear consensus that it is not appropriate for the GTC to be responsible for the CR monitoring.
• Regarding Scarlet Hill, Easom indicated that the same CR Stewardship Plan document covers both Gibbet Hill and Scarlet Hill.
• Preiss said that the top of Scarlet Hill needs to be cleared of invasives, then kept mowed. He further noted that it would be very desirable for the land owner to mow the hill top and also under the copse of trees located near the top. The GTC was unanimous in making this recommendation.
• It was decided that Preiss will serve as liaison for conveying the GTC’s recommendations regarding maintenance of Gibbet and Scarlet Hills under the CR Stewardship Plan.

Committee Priorities and Plans for 2013
• Funch presented a well-thought-out and comprehensive listing of 18 projects and activities as candidate priorities for 2013.
• Legge added a 19th project to the listing to design and implement a “Walk Around Groton” network of linked trails that would circumnavigate the Town. Awards could be issued for completion by hikers/bikers and it would give the GTC good publicity.
• Funch led a discussion to determine relative priorities among the 19 projects and to assign responsibilities for who would lead and participate on each project. The priorities and responsibility assignments are indicated on the attached listing.

Adjournment
• Minott moved to adjourn the meeting. Motion was seconded by Bretschneider and was approved by unanimous vote.
• Meeting was adjourned at 9:45 pm.
Highest Priority

1. Lead development of “Trail Vision for Groton” to support Montachusett Regional Trail Coalition’s “Regional Trail Vision.” Lead inclusive public process culminating in Town/Fall Town Meeting approval. Paul
2. Plan, coordinate, and implement trail system on Cox-Walker parcel and connect to Williams/Sorhaug parcel. Paul, Olin
3. Plan, coordinate, and implement new trails on Williams/Sorhaug parcel. Joachim, Olin, Paul
4. Plan, obtain approval, fundraise, and coordinate accessible trail from Nod Rd. to Nashua River in Rich Tree Farm State Forest (DCR). Paul, Steve
5. Plan and participate in Fitch Bridge opening ceremony. John
6. Plan, coordinate, and implement Middle School XC trail (GDRSD). Paul, John, Steve, Olin
7. Research, survey, design, and purchase signs. Steve, Jon S., Wendy
8. Plan, coordinate, and implement new trail network in harvested area of Wharton Plantation (NEFF) Paul
9. Plan, coordinate, and implement new trail from Sabine Woods to Marion Stoddart’s property. John, Paul
10. Work with Groton Housing Authority to protect a trail corridor through the new development on Nashua Rd. in order to connect through the Sampas parcel to Longley Rd. (near Longley II trails). Paul, Wendy
11. Mark Longley I (Paquawket Path) easement. Set up Public Hearing with Selectmen to inform abutters, etc. Bruce, Wendy

Moderate Priority

13. Upgrade parcel database with additional data, complete trail inventory. Dave
14. Plan, coordinate, and implement new trail on Wiewel parcel and connect to Blackman parcel (GCT). Olin

Lowest Priority

15. Develop large paper map with Jason Remillard
16. Obtain permissions from property owners to map/use/mark private trails
17. Plan, coordinate, and implement entrance to Groton Woods from Paugus Trail
18. Plan, coordinate, and implement refurbishing of trail network west of Lake Morayne and east of Farmers Row (Groton School)
19. Develop link from Nashua River Rail Trail through Keyes Woods to Groton School trail network (NEFF, Groton School)