



TOWN OF GROTON

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Groton Trails Committee

**** Monthly Meeting Minutes **** **16 July 2013**

	Attendees		Visitors
Chair:	Paul Funch		Bruce Easom
Vice Chair:	Joachim Preiss	X	
Members:			
	Wendy Good	X	
	Olin Lathrop	X	
	Stephen Legge		
	David Minott	X	
	Scott Stathis	X (Recorder)	NOTE: Scott not sworn in yet due essentially to a Town Hall letter that was never received.
	John Wiesner	X	
	Dave Burnham	X	

Call to Order

- At 7:33 pm., Vice Chairman Joachim called the meeting to order with a quorum of Committee members present.

Approval of Minutes

- June minutes have yet to be submitted so could not yet be approved.

Reports

- \$3,420.02 balance in the GTC account

Elect officers

- Paul Funch was elected to continue as Chairman by unanimous vote.
- Joachim Preiss was elected to continue as Vice Chairman by unanimous vote.

Welcome new members

- Dave Burnham was welcomed as new member of Trails Committee.

Proposal for increasing number of committee members

- The pros and cons of adding two members to the committee for a total of eleven was discussed. It was mentioned that eleven may make it difficult to have a quorum; however, we don't want to discourage those who show interest in membership.
- It was decided we would invite both Jim Molaskey and David Pitkin to the next meeting to vet their interest in joining.

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- No motion was made to expand the committee at this point. Discussions in this regard will continue at the next meeting.

Project updates

- Still Meadow - removed tree blockage, widened trail, and mowed forest trail (field trail was done the previous month) (Funch)
- Northwoods – mowed entrances to trails (but trails themselves still need to be cleaned up and widened) (Funch)
- B&P ROW - cleared trail of debris (except for tree just south of Shattuck's house), widened trail (except for southern section with poison ivy), and installed posts at intersections with Johnston parcel trails. (Funch, Legge)
- Farmers & Mechanics and Cunningham Easement - trimmed back main trail, cleared all trails of debris, and widened trails with brush mower. (Funch)
- Gibbet Hill - widened and cleared trail from Gibbet Hill Grill to Shattuck St. (Funch, Legge)
- There are "No Trespassing" signs at the trailhead at the start of the trail on the west side of Fitch's Bridge. We will let the Conservation Commission or Chris Shattuck know so taking them down will be considered.
- Large tree down over trail along Nashua River before Farmers and Mechanics parcel. Scott Stathis will remove it.
- Cox Walker parcels have been GPSed for 2 possible trails. Conservation Commission will hold Conservation Restriction and is considering whether snowmobiling will be allowed on the parcel. The question is whether the CR should prohibit snowmobiling or not considering that the Management Plan will ultimately determine whether snowmobiling will be allowed in the short term.
- Olin moved that the Trails Committee will recommend that snowmobiling should be allowed in the CR subject to conditions in the Management Plan. However, the Management Plan should not allow snowmobiling at this time. The Trails Committee will write letters to the Conservation Committee and the Groton Conservation Trust stating the above recommendation from a trail user's perspective. John seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Fitch's Bridge update and opening ceremony

- September 15th will be the date of the opening ceremony. We discussed coordinating some guided hikes/runs, bike rides, and horse rides to coincide with the ceremony. Same could be done for a flotilla of canoes and kayaks. Whether these activities start before the ceremony and lead to the event, or start at the event and depart from there may depend on timing of start of the actual ceremony.

Power tool safety

- David moved and Olin seconded that the committee Chair will notify the Town Manager that committee members would dedicate their time to take a chainsaw certification course if the town will reimburse registration fee.
- Purchasing protective gear (integrated helmet/visor/ear protectors plus a pair of chaps) using GTC budget or trail races funds was discussed but committee members had a preference for buying their own.

Power tool purchase

- The purchase of a walk-behind mower and additional gas hedge trimmer was discussed and the committee leaned in favor of the purchase but deferred decision to the committee Chairman, with total cost not to exceed \$1,000.

Misc.

- It was decided that the committee would start offering guided mountain bike rides in the fall and XC treks in the winter.
- The mappingsupport website now has a "mylocation" feature on it that does seem to work. We need to discuss, in future meetings, how to leverage and promote this feature.
- Scott proposed the committee think about identifying compelling trail loops in our trail network, giving the attractive names (e.g., Groton Hills Peak Loop), marking them with signs and mileage markers (e.g., Groton Hills Peak Loop – 3.5 miles), and promoting these loops. This type of “marketing” may serve to get these hiking loops in the public consciousness and increase usage of our trails. This could be part of our signage program.

Adjournment

- Wendy moved to adjourn the meeting. Motion was seconded by Olin and was approved by unanimous vote. Meeting was adjourned at 10:10 pm.