



# TOWN OF GROTON

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



Groton Trails Committee

## **\*\* Monthly Meeting Minutes \*\*** **20 August 2013**

	Attendees		Visitors
<b>Chairman:</b>	Paul Funch	X	Bruce Easom
<b>Vice Chairman:</b>	Joachim Preiss	X	Helene Cahen
<b>Members:</b>	Dave Burnham	X	
	Wendy Good	X	
<b>Recorder:</b>	Stephen Legge	X	
	Olin Lathrop		
	David Minott	X	
	Scott Stathis	X	
	John Wiesner	X	

### **Call to Order**

At 7:43 PM Chairman Funch called the meeting to order with the above Committee members plus visitors present.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Minott moved to accept the minutes of 18 June 2013; Good seconded; approved by unanimous vote.  
Good moved to accept the minutes of 16 July 2013; Minott seconded; approved by unanimous vote.

### **Reports**

- a) **Public Hikes:** Minott reported that 11 people showed up for the Gamlin Esker hike on July 28<sup>th</sup>. He led the hike – all went well. Susanna Black, land steward for the parcel, attended. Upcoming scheduled hikes are for the Bertozzi Conservation Area on Sunday 9/8, and Shepley Hill in mid-October, specific date not yet available.
- b) **Accessible Trails Workshop:** Originally scheduled in June, then cancelled, has been re-scheduled for September 24-25. Paul and Steve intend to attend.
- c) **High School & Middle School XC Trail Projects:** A work team cleaned up the HS course, with the exception of one very large hemlock tree which had fallen across the trail – it was too large for us to remove, so we built a short bypass around the fallen tree. Good progress has been made on the new MS course with most work completed. The new course will be just under 2 miles long, with more than half in the woods and in a large field behind presently used school property. There is a need to do more work on the field trail, to remove roots and rocks, level the path sufficiently for safety, and create a more maintainable surface.
- d) **Brush Mowing:** Joachim reported he has used the brush mower on the Hurd Land, Brook's Orchard, Scarlett Hill and the MS and HS cross country trails. There was some discussion of who is responsible for mowing trails at Surrenden Farm, and what presently may need to be done.
- e) **Chainsaw Safety and Training:** A state trails advisory group (MARTAB) is in the process of

setting up a 2-day course at three different locations in the state. It is expected that the Town of Groton will pay for Trails Committee members to take this training and get certified. Also, while not yet a town rule, it is expected that only Trails Committee members will use chainsaws and perhaps other power tools while conducting work projects on public properties. There was some discussion of purchasing 2 to 4 sets of protective gear for use by committee members on projects, each set costing about \$125.

- f) **Fitch's Bridge Dedication Ceremony:** Funch and Wiesner reported that the Fitch's Bridge dedication ceremony will take place on Sunday Sept. 15<sup>th</sup>, at 1:00 PM. There was some question as to how public the ceremony would be, with the Greenway committee leaning toward a more low-key event. Discussion ensued concerning whether or not to conduct a public walk and a trail bike ride in conjunction with the event. Most felt this should be done. Lathrop will plan a hike and Burnham will plan a bike ride.
- g) **Chamberlains Mill Trail:** Funch mentioned this new development off Rte. 40 has an existing trail in the portion of the development that will be donated to the Groton Water Dept. It will require marking and perhaps some suggestions for minor re-routing, prior to a public hearing on Saturday, Sept. 7<sup>th</sup>.
- h) **Groton Trails Vision Committee:** Funch reported the status of his effort to pull together a vision committee charge and ask several town boards and commissions to offer a volunteer for the committee work. He presented his proposal to the BOS on August 12<sup>th</sup>. The Selectmen voted to approve the plan, contingent on his returning with a list of volunteers for the committee. Funch met with the Parks Commission and obtained a volunteer from them. He next plans to go before the Board of Health, the Planning Board, the Conservation Commission, the Commission on Accessibility, the Council on Aging, the Historical Commission, the Sustainability Commission, and the Economic Development Committee to explain the purpose of the committee and to ask for additional volunteers.
- i) **Signage Issues:** It was suggested by those present to consider signs on the Nashua River Rail Trail, pointing to places of interest in Groton; also a new focus on interesting geologic features in town and the center of town. It was mentioned that town resident Gineane Haberlin (who has volunteered to be on the Trails Vision Committee) may be a person to help with some of these ideas.

## Discussions

- a) **New Trails Committee Members:** The BOS accidentally created two new positions on the committee ahead of our approval and appointed David Pitkin and James Molaskey to fill them. While the process didn't proceed as planned, we will appreciate the efforts of these particular gentlemen and expect much good help from them. It was voted unanimously to accept these two members.
- b) **More Signage Discussion:** Minott suggested we look at signs in Yosemite Park for ideas on what to say and how they should look. Should we make signs ourselves or have them made by a vendor? Should signs be big and fancy or very simple and directional in nature? Stathis suggested signing special loop trails and giving mileages so people can plan their hikes better. As for outside makers of signs, Nashoba Valley Tech was suggested, and Minott suggested a house on Townsend Road next to the Clover Market seemed to have a sign maker. People in town who may be good resources for information to incorporate on signs: Bob Pine (geologist), Ed McNierney (knows a lot of stuff), Mike Roberts (historian and archeologist), and David Black at Groton School (naturalist).
- c) **Schofield Property:** There was some discussion of the Westford Sportsman's Club's efforts to buy the adjoining Schofield property in Groton. The Trails committee has some concern about this; namely, that the Schofield property offers a rather nice opportunity to build connecting trails between

Groton's network and trails in Westford. It is felt that if the WSC were to obtain the property (it is apparently selling at a rather low price) they would have little interest in cooperating with us.

**Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn the meeting was approved unanimously at 10:06 PM.