



# TOWN OF GROTON

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Groton Trails Committee

## Monthly Meeting Minutes

21 October 2014

Legion Hall

### Attendees:

|          |                 |              |
|----------|-----------------|--------------|
| Chairman | Paul Funch      | X            |
| Members: | David Burnham   | X            |
|          | Wendy Good      | X            |
|          | Olin Lathrop    | X            |
|          | Stephen Legge   | X (Recorder) |
|          | David Minott    | X            |
|          | Jim Molaskey    | X            |
|          | David Pitkin    | -            |
|          | Jason Remillard | X            |
|          | Scott Stathis   | -            |
|          | John Wiesner    | X            |

### Visitors:

### Call to Order

Chairman Funch called the meeting to order at 8:05 PM (an earlier meeting prevented our usual start at 7:30 PM).

### Approval of Minutes

Lathrop moved to accept the minutes, as amended, of September 16, 2014; Minott seconded; approved by unanimous vote, excepting Legge who abstained.

### Welcome to New Member

Newly appointed member Jason Remillard was welcomed and introduced to the committee. Jason has worked with us on mapping on several previous occasions.

### Reports/Old Business

#### Guided hikes:

Lathrop reported that 11 people had participated in the Williams Barn public hike, jointly held with the AMC, on Sunday, October 12<sup>th</sup>. A new trail recently opened on the Cox-Walker property was used. All went well.

Minott reported that 13 people participated in a public hike on Gibbett Hill and Scarlett Hill on Saturday October 18<sup>th</sup>. All went well.

Planned future hikes in November and December are as follows:

Nov. 9<sup>th</sup> - Gamlin Esker Trail (Minott to lead)

Dec. 7<sup>th</sup> - Gamlin Indian Rock Trail (Minott to lead)

Dec. 14<sup>th</sup> - Nashua River, East Bank, joint with AMC (Lathrop to lead)

**Scout Projects:** There have been no new developments recently on two proposed projects (Paugus Trail, Williams Barn area). There is some interest on the part of the Girl Scout Troop in Groton to do something.

**Mowing Status:** Funch reported work finished on the Johnston Property, Fitch's Estate and Longley II. More work is needed in Groton Woods and on the Duck Pond trails.

**Town Forest:** Generally, trails are in good shape, especially after the clean-up for the annual TF trail races on 10/19. There is one very big tree down across a trail in the area of the AT&T ROW. Molaskey offered to check it out.

**Cox-Walker Properties:** Funch reported on recent major progress clearing and fine-tuning new trails on and around the properties. A new trail (formerly a horse trail 20 years ago) has been cleared connecting Mahoney Lane with Brown Lane, off Watson Way.

**Wharton Plantation:** Lathrop commented on a section of trail requiring relocation due to water in the area near where a new foot bridge went in this year.

**Signage Design & Placement:** Lathrop reported on attempted efforts to nail down a sign maker with CNC capability. Not successful so far. He mentioned a preference for the sign materials and lettering colors used by the Groton Conservation Commission – they use a durable white plastic material with a layer of green on the top. Letters are engraved showing white on the green background. He suggested that all members start logging in specific locations in town needing signs and what the individual signs should say.

**Grotonfest 2014 Retrospective:** The booth was a tremendous success – lots of interest and activity. 61 people signed up to be on our online list servers and many offered feedback and assessments. As a side note, our volunteer/interest list is up to 200 now. It is thought that our implements and other physical attributes of the booth have contributed to making it an interesting place to stop for people.

**Nashua River Accessible Trail:** Funch reported that our grant request for funding to the Mass DCR was not successful. The formal request was detailed and robustly supported, but apparently got caught on a couple of technical issues. One was the Mass Historical Commission's general concern with the potential for archeological artifacts near river banks. We are not sure how we can deal with this problem.

**Outside Meetings of Interest:** Funch reported on a potential plenary meeting of Groton Conservation Trust, Conservation Commission, Trails, and several other Town organizations interested in management of conservation lands. Plans are presently to meet at the Country Club in February 2015. The Massachusetts Trail Conference will be held at the Sheraton in Leominster on Saturday, November 8<sup>th</sup>. Funch will be making presentations.

### **Discussions:**

**Groton Town Forest Trail Race:** The race held on Sunday, October 19<sup>th</sup> went well. There was higher turnout than in recent past years. A number of committee members assisted the race management (Squannacook River Runners).

**Open Meeting Law Training:** reminders to members to obtain proper training, required by the town.

**Thunderstorm Safety while Hiking:** there was a lively discussion of what guidelines to follow when conducting public hikes on behalf of the Trails Committee. No conclusions at this time.

**Trail Mapping Website:** Remillard talked to the committee about next generation interactive trail mapping software for our website. Capabilities were described and opportunities to embellish with supporting data on places of interest. He cited the benefits of the new system to be: 1) Significantly more flexibility than the current software, and 2) faster loading speeds.

### **Adjournment**

Lathrop moved to adjourn the meeting. Unanimous approval at 10:08 PM.