



# TOWN OF GROTON

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Groton Trails Committee

## **\*\* Monthly Meeting Minutes \*\*** **August 4, 2020**

<b>Attendees:</b> (Present: X)			<b>Visitors:</b>
Chair	Paul Funch	X	Bruce Easom
Vice Chair	Bob Ordemann	X	
Secretary	Jason Remillard		
<b>Members</b>	Olin Lathrop	X	
	Jim Peregoy	X	
	Kevin Barrett	X	
	Stephen Legge	X	
	Wanfang Murray	X	
	Laura DeGroot		

### **Call to Order**

Chair Funch called the meeting to order at 8:00 PM over Zoom.

### **Approval of Minutes**

**VOTE:** Approval of May 19, 2020, minutes (8:05)

Bob moved to approve the meeting minutes. Jim seconded. Steve requested to add details on Complete Street Projects. Motion passed unanimously, with Olin abstaining.

### **Officer Elections for FY21**

**VOTE:** Kevin moved to keep the current officers (Paul – Chair, Bob – Vice Chair, Jason – Secretary). Steve seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

### **Committee Size**

**VOTE:** Bob moved to reduce the committee size from 11 to 9. The committee discussed the challenges of getting new members as people prefer to join to do the project work but not the committee work. As new members bring diversity and fresh ideas, the committee decided to leave the committee size as is for the time being and to post the positions on the listserver to recruit new members. A new motion to postpone the motion indefinitely was made by Olin, seconded by Steve, and approved unanimously.

### **Trail Projects**

The Trail Committee would like to thank Dave Happ and Jack Petropoulos for their expertise, equipment, and help clearing microburst storm damages in the Gamlin Crystal Spring parcels. Other storm damage clean-up was required at Integrity Way (Hemlock Grove) and Wharton Plantation. Trees remain to be cleared at Baddacook (Shattuck Homestead).

Paul will investigate with the Groton Conservation Trust whether the Red Line Path needs more clean-up.

Lisa McDougall, equestrian resident at Scarlett Hill Farm, removed the old stairway on the trail from Shattuck St. to Gibbet Hill to make horse access safer. This was done as part of the community service requirement for her national equestrian certification. She and Meredith Scarlett also added attractive signage to this trail and the Scarlett Hill trails to guide the public use of the easements.

Bruce Easom reported it would take two days to transfer material and construct the bridge near the fire tower on Gibbet Hill. It will require owner Steve Webber's permission to use his farm road to deliver the materials. Amanda Lewis, DCR's Administrator for the Recreational Trails Program, requires giving a week's notice to warn visitors of the access restriction during construction. Paul suggested using a yellow tape to block access during the construction.

Bruce Easom reported that Squannacook Greenways just obtained a \$120K grant to start construction of the Squannacook River Rail Trail in November-December time frame. This will be for the first 1.2 miles of the trail starting at Depot St. in Townsend. There are three construction phases: Rail removal, bed grading, and stone dust installation.

Paul and GCT board members assessed the Skinner Forest trails to propose a new trail and to close some rogue trails. The Interactive Map will need an update accordingly.

Paul proposed a reroute of the initial segment of the trail from the Whispering Brook Rd. cul-de-sac to Blood Rd. on the Mason Back 100 parcel. The pre-existing route went over the residential driveway abutting the Conservation Parcel and for that reason was closed several years ago. Paul will organize a walkthrough for any committee member who can view the trail before the next committee meeting.

Erik Tobies is waiting for the Boy Scout leadership to allow him to organize a group of scouts to finish up the Sorhaug-Trimper trail.

Paul prepared two RDAs for trails in Sorhaug and these were given a negative determination by the Conservation Commission on July 14. The first was for a Chestnut Hill loop-trail (and a second loop trail that was withdrawn from consideration for the time being) and the second was to use a geotextile grid to stabilize a muddy section of the trail connecting Williams Barn with the Brown Trail on the Walker parcel.

**VOTE:** Olin moved to approve up to \$3,000 to buy and deliver the geotextile and gravel material for the trail work. Kevin seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

The Stoddart easement trail (GCT) is completed but some additional signage needed in the field remains to be installed.

Paul has mowed Groton Hills, MS XC, Hurd, Johnston, Scarlet Hill, B&PRR ROW, Sorhaug, Longley II, and Still Meadow.

### **Donation to Trails Committee Gift Fund**

Paul reported a \$200 donation to the Gift Fund was made by Alex Woodle and Lynda Moore. The Committee was very appreciative of their support. Paul will send a letter of thanks to them on behalf of the Trails Committee.

### **Closed Trail Signs**

Steve created a design for a ‘trail closed’ sign to mark un-maintained trails. Steve will incorporate comments and revise the design.

### **Adjournment**

**VOTE:** Kevin moved to adjourn the meeting, Jim seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously at 10:00 PM.