



Groton Trails Committee

TOWN OF GROTON

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**** Monthly Meeting Minutes **** **March 16, 2021**

Attendees: (Present: X)			Visitors:
Chair	Paul Funch	X	
Vice Chair	Bob Ordemann	X	
Clerk	Laura DeGroot	X	
Members	Olin Lathrop	X	
	Jim Peregoy		
	Kevin Barrett	X	
	Stephen Legge		
	Wanfang Murray	X	
	Jason Remillard		
	Lisa Irelan	X	
	Derek Cianci	X	

Call to Order

Chair Funch called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

Approval of January 5 Minutes

VOTE: Lathrop moved to approve the January 5 minutes, and Cianci seconded; motion unanimously approved.

Approval of February 16 Minutes

VOTE: Lathrop moved to approve the February minutes as amended, and Barrett seconded; motion unanimously approved (Murray abstained).

Riverwalk Project – Community Foundation of North Central Massachusetts (CFNCM) grant application and Land Appraisal status

Funch reported that the grant application for \$3500 was submitted and expects to be notified by April 22 if approved. The \$3500 will be put toward the matching portion of the RTP grant and the remaining \$1,000 will be covered by 40+ hours of volunteer labor. Between clearing

the trail corridors for the design work and developing the words and pictures for the educational signage, the volunteer labor will be easy to meet. Funch will post the grant application on the Trail Committee's Google drive.

Nikolis Gualco, Conservation Administrator, received the executive summary of the land appraisal. Funch is hoping that the land transaction will be completed by April 15.

Signs – Brook Crossings and Dog Policy

Brook crossing signs (9) and dog rule signs have now been approved by all landowners except the Groton Conservation Trust for the dog rule signs. Lathrop reported that MassCorr is up to date on payments for signs. Forty dog rules signs and six Surrenden Farm directional signs have been ordered. Next project is installing the sign posts and signs; Cianci and others offered to help.

VOTE: Lathrop moved to approve ordering 9 brook crossing signs, expenditure not to exceed \$150; Barrett seconded; motion unanimously approved.

Website and Mapping

Remillard was absent; nothing to report on the web mapping.

Committee members discussed various trails to be mapped near the Groton School area. Funch noted that the trail following the property line on the 14-acre Surrenden Farm parcel (abutting Shirley Rd) has not been mapped. Lathrop reported he will be working on mapping trails in that area. Funch will be contracting Groton School about mapping their trails to add to Groton's online trails map.

Groton Conservation Forum – April 14

Funch reported on the Conservation Forum scheduled for April 14th featuring Sophie Ehrhardt, coordinator of the Wildlands Partnership at Northeast Wilderness Trust. Her topic is "Why Wilderness".

Northeast Wilderness's Spring Speaker Series – March 14

This weekly series runs March 14 – May 26 (mostly Wednesdays at 5:30 pm) and will be recorded and made available afterwards.

Gift Fund: Purchase of DR Leaf Blower

Funch reported that the blower is ordered and should be delivered by Friday, March 19.

Discussion

Several members recommended removing access to a steep section of the Dead River trail in the Town Forest (at D4); relocating it north.

Ordemann/Lathrop reported several trails needing tree cleanup, including Harry Rich SF (5 trees) and Batten Woods.

Lathrop asked for assistance removing No Trespassing signs on Conservation Commission land off Martins Pond Rd.

Funch reported that Legge submitted the annual report, which will be sent to committee members. Legge serves on the Complete Streets Committee and reported that Groton was denied funding from the state for their 2021 list of projects. Reason was that towns that had not been previously awarded funds were being prioritized this year.

Lathrop noted that MassWildlife may be purchasing more land on The Throne under the Forest Legacy Grant program. He also mentioned that Autumn Hills Orchard is up for sale. The current owner would like to preserve some of the land for agricultural use, but unfortunately it is not eligible for an Agricultural Preservation Restriction because of the soil type that exists there, nor eligible for the Legacy grant program. There could be a proposal presented this spring at Town Meeting.

Funch reviewed a proposed trail easement change in the Wallace Rd subdivision to allow for a lot split. He also discussed a possible trail relocation on Shattuck Farm in the area near Fitch's Bridge where the trail intersects with the farm's gravel road.

VOTE: Ordemann moved to adjourn, and DeGroot seconded; motion unanimously approved. The meeting was adjourned at 8:04 PM.