**\*\* Monthly Meeting Minutes \*\***

 **April 19, 2022**

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| **Attendees: (**Present: X) | **Visitors:** |
| Chair | Paul Funch | X | Wendy Good |
| Vice Chair | Wanfang Murray | X |   |
| Clerk | Laura DeGroot |  X |  |
| **Members** | Adam Burnett | X |  |
|  | Jim Peregoy | X |  |
|  | Harris McWade | X | (late arrival) |
|  | Stephen Legge  |  X |  |
|  | Derek Cianci |  |  |
|  | Heidi Charlebois | X |   |
|  | Sheila Devereaux |   |  |
|  | Darlene Deschambeault |  |  |

**Call to Order**

Chair Funch called the meeting to order via Zoom at 7:03 pm.

**Approval of February 15 and March 15 Meeting Minutes**

**VOTE:**  Peregoy moved to accept the February minutes; Murray seconded. Unanimously

approved.

**VOTE:** Peregoy moved to accept the March minutes; Murray seconded. Five members

approved; Legge and DeGroot were absent so abstained.

**Reports**

Website and Interactive Map: A large display map of the town’s trails (size 36” x 52”) was printed by the Groton Public Library for use at various festivals at Peregoy’s request. Cost to laminate and mount on foamboard is $182.45. Funch agreed to look into cost of plexiglass and Peregoy will look into other printing options. Decision on final format and size postponed until May meeting to give members a chance to review the map on the Google shared drive.

Trail Project Reports:

*Nashua Riverwalk:* Town Meeting scheduled to vote on the CPA funding on April 30. Funch displayed a diagram of the project, which requires a Notice of Intent because the walkway is within 200 feet of the riverbank. The 6-space parking area was redesigned per DCR’s recommendation; now only 2 small trees would be removed.

*Harrison Ripley Forest:*  Goal is to reroute the trail crossing private property owned by Ben Black. Funch recommended adding this project to the trail project list for 2022. Conservation Commission approval via RDA submission will be required. All Trails Committee members were encouraged to view flagged trail.

*Lyman Parcel:* Lyman heirs want to sell property (95 acres) to Cons Comm, which could provide a needed access trail to the Throne area from West Groton.

*Baddacook CA:* Wetland area around the pond was recently transferred from NEFF to the Cons Comm. GTC could help with proposed bog bridge and loop trail (RDA required).

*Chainsaw Safety Course Update*: Dick O’Brien (head of Leominster Trail Stewards) is applying for grant to cover chainsaw safety class. Funch provided a letter of support on behalf of the Trails Committee.

*Freedom’s Way “Hidden Treasures”:* May events scheduled: a) May 21 – (Funch) Wharton Plantation hike (10 am – 12); b) May 14- (Murray) Bird walk (8:30 am - 10:30) c) May 28 – (Devereaux) Story walk (10:30am – 12:30)

*Prescott Community Center:* May 26 – (McWade) Geologic/vernal pool walk (time and location to be determined). Murray to post all the above walks on the Facebook group page.

**Discussions**

Groton Greenway River Festival: The festival is scheduled for June 12th. Volunteer schedule: Funch/Peregoy/Deschambeault 9:30 am-12; Murray/McWade 12-2 pm; Funch/Good 2 pm-4. Burnett can help tear down booth and load trailer.

Subcommitee Volunteers

*Groton Conservation Forum:* GTC will host the February 2023 event. Lecture fund deadline is May 1st if we want to apply for funding. Legge suggested NRWA lectures may be a good source for speakers. Funch, Murray, and Charlebois will research possible speakers. Groton Garden Club is another option for speaker ideas. Burnett suggested climate change talk about migrating species.

*Social Media Management:* Lisa Irelan is still managing this; need others to do weekly posting. Possibly Murray and Cianci.

*Mapping/Website Management:* Peregoy needs help with refreshing the website’s content and seeing whether the site’s navigation is clear.

*Trail Riders subcommittee:* Deschambeault’s interested in helping handicapped individuals on trails.

*Town Forest’s 100th Anniversary:* Murray spoke with the Historical Society, which will have an exhibit for the event. Murray and Devereaux to head up this subcommittee.

*Destination Groton:* Legge will be on subcommittee and will reach out to the committee to see what they need.

*Sign subcommittee:* Need a subcommittee to design, order and plan for installing trail signs.

Ranking of Potential 2022 Projects: Discussed establishing subcommittees for planning and coordinating with groups and volunteering for the following.

*Large projects:*

1. Accessible connections to NRRT at Rte 119 – Burnett to do research for next meeting
2. Gamlin Crystal Spring bog bridges: remove trailhead posts
3. Wharton Plantation bridge upgrade
4. Replace Keyes Woods bridge – Funch
5. Site preparation for Nashua Riverwalk – Burnett, Funch, and Legge
6. Create loop trail around Whispering Brook, including bog bridges – postpone?
7. Clear trails and create directional signs and install at General Field
8. Bog bridges on Corwin easement
9. Walker parcel – bridge over stream from beaver pond

(10)General maintenance of parcels: need to go through spreadsheet of parcels and assess maintenance needs

 (11)Others?

*Small projects:*

1. Replace rotten trailhead posts and add new ones (multiple parcels)
2. Clean up on Indian Hill (Nate Nutting mill site) – Fallen trees
3. Install Priest Trail and Groton Hills distance signs
4. Install dog signs at Groton Woods trailheads
5. Others?

*Individual projects:*

1. Stewardship assessment
2. Verification of and additions to map information
3. Add/replace trail markers

*Potential (planning stage):*

1. Behind Chamberlain’s Mill trail development
2. Robison Conservation Area – trail and marsh overlook
3. Groton School trails around pond – needs approval from Groton School
4. Patricia Hallett CA loop trail –
5. Trail on Conservation Commission parcel parallel to Martins Pond Rd
6. Rich State Forest – bridges
7. Shattuck Easement - bridge over drainage ditch near Fitch’s Bridge

Information Sources for Trails Committee

*GoogleDocs:* Funch reorganized the documents on the shared drive.

*Parcel listing/stewardship signup:* To be reviewed by all committee members and updated.

*Social Media photos:* Photos can be added to the drive for future events and publications.

*Map issues:* Issues/map changes could be emailed to Peregoy or suggestions put on shared drive.

*Orientation information:* This was added to the shared drive for new members – looking for suggested updates.

**Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 8:53 pm.