

Hanover Conservation Commission Trails Committee Minutes, June 12, 2012

Present: Ron Bailey, Rory Gawler, Tom Linell, Peter Shumway, & John Taylor

Short items

Goodwin Tract. Taylor reported that several workdays this spring (Ledyard Charter School & King Arthur Flour volunteers led by UVTA in consultation with UVMBA, and continued workdays led by UVMBA) have resulted in the trail being extended to the back bowl/back side of the peak.

Greensboro Ridge. Taylor reported that he worked with a half dozen volunteers from Hanover Conservancy to further improve (benching and some rock removal) the new trail (Silent Brook Trail to Oli's Trail) to about the mid point of the trail on Trails Day. Volunteers were in great spirits as the heavy rain held off until near the end of the half day work session.

Tanzi Tract. Taylor reported the new Forest Loop reroute was difficult to see in some sections due to new fern growth from root balls remaining in treadway. Most root balls are now removed.

Moose Mountain Ridge Trail. Linell has done some work clearing western portion of Pasture Road and removing some blow-downs to south of the Pasture area on Ridge Trail.

Summer Work

Goodwin Tract. Taylor presented a proposed temporary sign (laminated paper) he's designed to be placed at the trailhead entrance to describe trail project, project partners, and provide contact information for scheduled work days. Work days are being led by UVMBA monthly to move forward with this project. Vicki Smith indicated by e-mail she was O.K. with sign pending Doug McIlroy's determination as did the committee. John will post sign pending Doug's sign approval.

Harris Trail. Committee members are fine with DOC's general proposal (as presented by Gawler) to work towards revitalizing the Harris Trail. Taylor, Linell, and Bailey suggested considering rerouting some sections that originally were logging roads and weren't suitable as part of sustainable trail design. Landowners along the route will be contacted. Linell mentioned that the Plummer Tract on the Harris Trail north of Iby Road is owned by the Town of Hanover with a long-term lease to a Hanover resident. There will be 19 crew members on this summer's DOC trail and cabin crew. Rehabilitation of the Clark Pond Loop may be considered by DOC in the future. However, that project would take a major-scale effort.

River Trail. There was General committee support to finish up work on raised treadway pending McIlroy's approval. Bailey supported completion as there's a lot of trail use there and puncheons were a bit too narrow so were avoided and always walked around. Taylor

shared experience of one elderly couple at site that commented on difficulty of keeping balance while traversing slippery puncheons. They were pleased to see more secure footing being put in place. Taylor reported that steps had been reset and staked just beyond the raised treadway. He will work with McIlroy and Vicki Smith to determine how to proceed with this project.

Other business

Robes/Town 'Dana property'. Committee reviewed subdivision map and discussed proposal to impact the beaver dam and Pasture Rd. Linell and Shumway shared their knowledge of the history of the property (Elmer & Ernest Dana, Town deed, Town Forest & Recreation zoning, trails alignment, and aesthetic values associated with the high pasture). The concerns expressed by Elisha Huggins on trails and the beaver pond habitat were also discussed. Although the committee members did not have access to all details resulting in the proposed subdivision and road changes, the committee is generally opposed to the subdivision of the property as it appears likely to result in major impact to very valuable public trail network. UVTA is planning to write a letter of concern, with Gawler (DOC) as co-signee re DOC interest in those trails and how they associate with the Baum Cabin & Harris Cabin experiences.

Respectfully submitted by John Taylor, June 28, 2012

Reformatted with minor editing by Doug McIlroy, June 29, 2012