

Hanover Conservation Commission Trails Committee Minutes, March 11, 2014

Present: Ron Bailey, Tom Linell, Doug McIlroy, Bill Mlacak, John Taylor, Peter Shumway

Short items

Taylor report. Taylor said downed timber has been removed from Balch Hill Trails.

He is helping Hanover High plan a walking tour of some near-town trails, perhaps Tanzi and its wildflowers, for Earth Day.

Signs. McIlroy finally found a supplier of heavy plastic sign material who would answer his inquiries. Unfortunately, brown, which the committee has chosen, is a nonstandard color, for which a minimum order would be 10,000 pounds! Mlacak concluded, and the committee concurred, that we should fall back on metal signs.

Hypertherm. McIlroy said Perry Seale, plant engineer at Hypertherm, is interested in trail connectivity to their property. The town has an unopened trail easement there along Mink Brook. There's trailhead parking at both the north and south end of their land, and an internal trail network. He plans to attend the April Trails Committee meeting.

Taylor said Hypertherm supports its employees in public-service activities, which have included working on Highway 38, Great Hollow Trail and the Goodwin bike trail. Besides Highway 38 and Great Hollow Trail, potential connections include the Farr recreation area across Mink Brook from Hypertherm, Bottomless Pit, the UVLT's new acquisition in Lebanon, a small Hanover conservation parcel on the Lebanon border, and the Mount Support Trail downstream on land that Altaria has talked of conserving.

General trail conditions. Linell said there is a widow-maker on the Ridge Trail in Pitte's property.

It is not obvious where to park at the Highway 38 trailhead, though there's a public lot across the street accessible via the Shed 2 entrance. We need to coordinate with DPW and Parks and Recreation to get that marked.

Trail jobs

A potential source of assistance to complete the protection of Moose Mountain Ridge, and securing linkage from Pasture Road to Route 4, is the Quabbin to Cardigan Partnership. Taylor said they solicit grant proposals at fairly frequent intervals. This opportunity should be pointed out to the Commission's Open Space Committee. The Trails Alliance may be a useful intermediary.

The trail-jobs spreadsheet was discussed and further priorities were assigned, and some potential volunteers were identified. McIlroy will contact Youth in Action, with blazing as a potential activity. Taylor suggested Highway 38 improvement by the Upper Valley

trail corps this summer. this summer.

Other business

Mapping by cellphone. Mlacak described the Strava GPS app, which records and uploads bicycle trips. From that Strava derives "heat maps" that show how heavily routes are used. Taylor said some trails are appearing on Google maps, with no indication of what uses are allowed, apparently without regard to owners' wishes about publicity.

Moose Mountain. Shumway said the court has scheduled a mediation session concerned with sorting out ownership issues for the Dana Preserve.

Linell feared a slackening of PR about the beauties of the Moose Mountain ridge. He was not aware of any organized walks scheduled this year. McIlroy said a wildflower tour might be appropriate in May. He will check with the Hanover Conservancy and the Commission's Biodiversity Committee.

Taylor said the Baums, who have managed their land and trails from afar are moving to Kendal.

Cardigan to Quabbin Partnership. Linell said that Rachel Ruppel of the Regional Planning Commission has done mapping work for the Partnership. A public presentation of this work may occur this summer.