

Hanover Conservation Commission Trails Committee

Minutes – April 5, 2016 – Approved 5/10/16

Present: Ron Bailey, Hugh Mellert, Tom Linell, John Taylor, Bill Mlačak, Rory Gawler, John Sherman
The meeting opened at 4:05 pm at the Howe Library.

1. March 8 Minutes

In section 2, paragraph 2, change "become part" to "becomes part". Minutes were approved with this correction.

2. Trail 38 Follow up

Bill had sent an email to Hawk Metheny for follow up materials, but had not heard back yet. Rory suggested contacting Katie Mann, the administrative assistant. There is no sign where trail 38A meets the AT. It should indicate the junction. Bill will add this to the list.

3. UVTA Trail Report

River Trail: Current conditions are wet, and the embankment needs ties. UVTA will do this by mid-May from Maple Street down to sewer corridor.

Regular trail monitoring will start this month.

John reported on the meeting that he had with Bill the day before. In particular, they discussed the trail monitoring process. Bill suggested that the committee help with trail monitoring by walking a trail and reporting back next month.

- Hugh: Pipers Lane, Lower Slade, Old Spencer, Wardrobe (trail #43)
- John Sherman: Pine Point, South Esker (trails #3 and #4)
- Ron: South end of Ridge Trail to Canaan town line
- Tom: Indian Ridge, Ridge Trail
- Rory: old Fred Harris trail #25
- Doug: Corey Road
- Bill: Grasse Road Extension (Highway 34)

4. Trescott Lands Report

The Recreation Committee had its first meeting last week. John Sherman is chair. Bruce Lingelbach is on the committee, representing the neighbors and the community. Others: Vicki Smith, Tom Jack, Dan Nelson (Dartmouth), John Taylor, Hugh Mellert.

The discussion covered next steps, and if the property should be used as is. No specific decisions were made. Improvements are needed for signage and trail linkage.

John O'Brien reported that the grates are repaired on Knapp Road. Public works paid \$250 for one of the grates.

The draft plan has been shared with the Rec. committee. Some edits are in progress. John will share a draft with the Trails Committee.

The next meeting is April 14 at 8 am at the Community Center. It is not required to be public. Bill suggested that they post meeting notice and provide minutes anyhow. The structure is that the committee will oversee and interact with other interested groups. They may start on a master plan or set up a planning process.

Forest management is still occurring. In 3 to 5 years, there will likely be less. There will be thinning and dealing with invasive plants. Recreational use will likely increase.

Signs are still missing in some areas. Some trails have been moved. Some "No Trespassing" signs need to be moved.

For any feedback, send email to John.

Hugh referred to Jim Block's web page. There are some great photos called Prospect Hill. Bill will get the link and relay it.

Hugh has some bluebird kits, and can put up some in the Trescott Lands. A suggested location was near the four corners. He should check with Peter Kulbacki.

A possible trails day project is the building of a bridge.

Tom asked if there is a list of approved hunting stands. The area was opened up for hunting for the past 3 seasons. He will report on any that are permanent.

The Hanover Conservancy has 3 trips planned for the Trescott area:

- birding on May 7
- Mother's day wildflower walk on May 8
- Geocaching on May 22.

The Trescott Company has approved guided trips with different groups, such as mountain bikers to indicate where they can and can't go. This can also be done for equestrian groups.

Doug will contact folks at CRREL that have been cutting trails. They need to contact the Trescott committee with any trails plans first.

Tom reported a fairly new reddish orange blazing from the AT to the Adams cellar hole. Dead trees had been left in place.

5. Other Trail Reports

Harris Trail: Rory indicated that a volunteer had been cleaning the trail, but the work might have been done on a private land section. Bill can follow up with the land owner. Rory will provide the contact information.

Mink Brook: There has been some garbage and clippings at the entrance to the trail at Brook Road.

Old Lyme Road: There is a pull off with a steep drop off. Hugh will organize the neighbors to clean up the area. Can this pull-out be blocked off to prevent this? It is currently plowed in the winter.

Quabbin to Cardigan grant: Paul, Doug, John, Adair had an initial meeting. Paul Gagnon has shared all his information via Dropbox. Adair shared some mapping of natural use, as a way valuing land. It is necessary to reach out to land-owners with a goal of conserving trail. They are working on the approach. They need to land-owners informed. Right now, they are collecting existing information, looking at trail locations and ownership. Any reroutes will come after that. Bill will forward Tom's reroute suggestions.

Paul has seen cut tree limbs along the trails. We should do no maintenance at this time, until communication has been set up with land owners. Paul has talked to Faulkner's. Who should do outreach? Bill wants whoever can get maximum likelihood of success of conservation.

Tom has found piles of hundreds of hemlock branches over the last month on Faulkner's property in Hanover. This work is unknown, and was not authorized by the Committee.

6. Trail Closures

Bill pointed out that Norwich and Lebanon have closed some trails. Nobody know of any trails in Hanover that need to be closed. There is a process, and it has been done in past. Wolfeboro Road may be the only one that should be closed. No closures at this time.

John has done a blanket message in Trailfinder.

7. Trail Signs

There is a need for more signs at trailheads and trail junctions. Bill brought a plastic sign to the meeting. The cost is about \$25 for sign and the post, so very cost effective. They are mounted by hand, and can be easily installed with post hole digger. The metal signs made at the state prison cost \$30 for the sign only. The high school can to wooden routed signs, but they can typically only do the trail name (and not the smaller "distance to" items). There are also heavier plastic routed signs that John has made.

Some expressed a preference for wooden signs, but the distance information should be kept on the signs. We should wait a full year for the plastic signs – they were only installed in the fall, so have not gone through a hiking season yet. The post does not become brittle in winter. They are supposed to be flexible so if a car collides with them, they should bounce right back. There was a general preference to putting the signs on posts rather than trees. There is no tree damage, and the sign can be positioned as needed.

Doug would prefer a brown back instead of a white one. John prefers white lettering rather than yellow. Overall another 50 to 100 signs are needed.

The decision was made to get the minimum necessary of the same type for this season. Investigate routed plastic and wooden routed options and report back.

Meeting was adjourned at 5:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Bill Mlačak, Chair