

Open Space Committee Minutes

April 11, 2017

Present: Rick Gardner, Deb Cary, Karen Rossow, Kelton Burbank

Excused: Phil Gransewicz, Kim Houde

Meeting began at 7:00 p.m.

1. Minutes from March were approved.
2. Trails mapping project update: Rick handed out updated trails brochure, asked for comment.
 - a. Town website has been updated with trail and Princeton Hike! Information. Members are asked to review this info and pass comments to Rick.
 - b. QR Code has been added to the trail brochure and will be placed on Kiosks to direct hikers to the town website information.
 - c. Rick will be adding a few more hiking sites (Like Hagar Park) to extend the interactive map and trail documentation for adjacent towns.
 - d. DCR is allowing Sterling to document (brochure and website) certain DCR-owned existing trails. We may want to do the same with areas like Poutwater Pond. Requires permission from DCR (see contact names in Peder Pederson's eMail).
 - e. Rick is planning to publicize the new features of the website around June (after a couple of trails have been completed). Will add a blurb to the Landmark, next door, and own eMail.
 - f. Guided hikes in the 'Princeton Hikes!' program have started. First hike drew 26 people in total, good mix of ages with a lot of townspeople that we did not know. Second hike is planned for April 23 (Sunday) at 10. Will do Krashes field to Bullock Rd and then PLT Peabody/Metcalf property (about 3.5 miles in total). It is helpful to have other members of the OSC to help with the hikes.
 - g. Have started a mailing list for the hikes, presently about 40 people on the list.
3. Trail Around Princeton (TAP) update: Not much activity this month. Action items still pending:
 - a. Complete arrangements with Wachusett Mtn (DCR): Kelton is working on this and we see this as a linchpin of the project. Once we get this agreement the other pieces should begin to fall in line.
 - b. Efforts with documentation and hikes will help to raise awareness and build support.
 - c. Landowner agreements with Jim Hillis and WMSR (Kelton).
 - d. Landowner discussion with Moshers (Justin Griffin).
 - e. Landowner link from PLT Peabody/Metcalf land to Johnny G Trail and Whitaker Lane.
 - f. TPS to RedFox: Idea of using the Poutwater Trail. Will need DCR approval if we are to do this.
 - g. For Brooks Station Road to Calamint Hill Road: Justin Griffin is approaching that landowner.
 - h. May be possible to connect from Four Corners to Mount Wachusett via Bickford Pond and Dave Krashes land. There are landowner issues and not certain how best to navigate through. Rick will do some more exploring.

4. Fieldstone Farm Update: We are ready to create the west site loop trail (from Calamint Hill). Rick is working with Brian Keevan to set up a work party now that the snow seems to finally be gone. Will schedule a time before the bugs come out! Not sure of status of the bridge work (Brian is driving that).
 - a. Funding grant is not resolved yet. Will be a couple more months.

5. Bickford Pond: Janet Morrison has set up a meeting with John Deline in Fitchburg for April 20th. Rich and Kelton plan to attend to clarify signage requirements. Project idea is to remove/replace the no trespassing signs around Bickford Pond. Fitchburg has agreed to remove 'No Trespassing' if we pay for the signs (Dave Krashes has volunteered to provide funding). Rick has inventoried the signs and sent to Janet for an estimate.
 - a. We approved a motion that Princeton Open Space committee will pay for the signs (about \$400).
 - b. Janet has asked to keep this separate from a request from North County Land Trust (Jassy Bratko) to allow publication of a map of the trails

6. Thoreau Trail Project: Rick has agreed to work with the 'Freedoms Way' folks on a project to set up a trail from Concord to Wachusett to commemorate Thoreau's 'Walk to Wachusett'. They plan to reenact the walk at end of June 2017. Not sure if this will be along the roads (original track) or along trails where possible (perhaps use trail systems in North Sterling or Fitchburg/Leominster).
 - a. Also Rick will set up a walk for their membership, perhaps Wachusett to Redemption Rock loop.

7. Meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Rick Gardner