

Minutes of the Norwich Trails Committee for August 5, 2015

Present: George Clark, Jim Faughnan, Bob Fiskens, Doug Hardy, David Hubbard, Nick Krembs, Jeanie McIntyre, Liz Russell

Jeanie McIntyre of the Upper Valley Land Trust (UVLT) reviewed numerous features pertaining to trails on the newly conserved 352 acre Norwich Farms, a parcel which extends between Turnpike to Beaver Meadow Roads and which abuts Parcel 5. Funds are still being sought to support the acquisition of the Norwich Farms. UVLT ownership will enable a higher level of public use and enjoyment than has been possible on many conserved parcels. A small parking lot is to be constructed for trail users. Public use of trails is to be largely outside of parts of the parcel intensively used for agriculture. GPS coordinates are being obtained for existing trails, a number of which are already suitable as public trails. Ideas for forest management are being developed. In certain areas, maintenance of the forest canopy will help to prevent spread of invasive buckthorn. The parcel contains a number of vernal pools to be protected.

Public tours of parts of Norwich Farms trails are being offered by UVLT personnel from 3 to 4:30 on Wednesday August 12 and from 9 to 12 on Saturday August 22.

The Norwich Trails Committee plans to cooperate with the UVLT in maintaining the trails of Norwich Farms.

The committee thanked Jeanie McIntyre for her presentation on Norwich Farms.

At 5:30 PM on Wednesday August 19th, a working group with representation from the Trails Committee and the Land Management Council is to meet in the parking lot of Parcel 5 for a walk to inspect potential routes for trail links between Parcel 5 and Norwich Farms. An email reminder of this event is to be distributed on August 17.

David Hubbard asked that the Trails Committee establish an annual request to be included in future budgets of the Conservation Commission. This topic is to be included on the agenda of the September 2 meeting of the Trails Committee.

David Hubbard is to seek publicity on the recent work of a crew of the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps on the Ballard Trail, particularly their work on bridges.

Prospective replacement of benches on the Ballard Trail was discussed. Jim Faughnan has the plaque from the former benches which deteriorated with age, and that plaque is to be installed on the prospective new benches.

A gmail account is to be available for exchange of information about short term, acute, trail problems such as trail blockages by fallen trees. Doug Hardy is to be setting up this email arrangement with initially about a half dozen participants. Whether this email connection should be advertised on kiosks is to be considered in a future agenda of the committee.

The Upper Valley Trails Alliance (UVTA) has recently had a youth crew working on the Gile Mountain Trail. Additional UVTA work on the Gile Mountain Trail is to be conducted on Friday August 7. Members of the Trails Committee may wish to help. Details on timing were not available at this meeting.

Whether the high line is to be used at the September 13 work session on the Gile Mountain Trail has yet to be determined. It is possible that horses will again be used to move materials before that date.

The Trails Committee approved the Norwich Strategic Planning Input on the topic of Trails.

The committee briefly discussed a prospective request for creation of town trail in the Illsley Road area.

Respectfully submitted,

George Clark