

Minutes

Norwich Trails Committee and volunteers monthly meeting

7 pm, June 7, 2023

Norwich Historical Society

Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89255864325>

Attendees:

Norwich Trails Committee (NTC) members present: David Hubbard and Craig Layne (facilitator)

Absent: Cody Williams.

Volunteers and members of the public: George Clark (Zoom), Bob Fiskens, Jim Faughnan, Stephen Flanders (scribe), Elisabeth Hammer, Byron Haynes, Nick Krembs (Zoom), John McCormick, Gerry Plummer and Jill Rubin

AGENDA

1. **Approval of agenda:** Facilitator Layne opened the meeting shortly after 7 pm. Introductions were made. No additional items were proposed for the agenda.
2. Comments from those present:
 - Faughnan reported that the stringers on the third bog bridge upstream from the Brown Schoolhouse Bridge were in need of replacement. It was agreed that they should be pressure treated lumber. The decking can be removed and restored after replacement of the stringers. A call for volunteers will go out for an upcoming Sunday in June—probably the 26th.
 - Rubin asked about the problem of overflow parking at the Gile Mountain trailhead, observing that recent overflow visitors to the area have been parking on private property. A discussion of the seasonal nature of visits to the trailhead ensued.
 - Haynes reported on the establishment of a mountain bike flow trail on private land that connects with the Blue Ribbon Connector. An additional trail is proposed that would create a loop, open to the public.
 - Hubbard reported on the initial interest of a private group to establish a disc golf course in the town forest. Two locations are under discussion.

Town interactions

3. Updates from the Conservation Commission—Layne reported that:
 - The budget season will commence in August. Line-item requests for trails expenses will have to be specific and justified.
 - Chief, Department of Public Works, has approved the concept of a chain or gate at the top of the Powers Road. Discussion on implementation ensued.
 - He has sought clarification interpreting the parking ordinance, pertaining to three turnaround areas, adjacent to trailheads.
 - He will continue to seek the adjustment of weight limits on the Bragg-Hill side of Burton Woods Road as a selectboard agenda item. The adjustment would allow RVs and snowmachines, but would disallow road vehicles. Preventing the passage of road vehicles would permit the construction of durable drainage structures in the right of way.

Infrastructure

4. Update from the UVTA—Not covered, absent a representative.
5. Reports on recent trail blockages and actions taken or planned:
 - Faughnan reported that a large number of blowdowns had been reported and were either cleared or about to be cleared. Fisken reported the need for some brush cutting on the Hazen Trail.
6. Trail projects for 2023
 - Heyl Trail—Flanders reported that [May 21 work on the Heyl Trail](#) comprised two relocations, one near Bragg Hill Road to avoid a chronically overgrown area and the other near the summit of the trail, as it turns to Elm Street, to avoid a chronically wet area.
 - Blue Ribbon Trail—Cody Williams is reportedly making progress placing freshly painted blazes on this trail.
 - Woody Adams Conservation Forest—A work date of July 16 was set for two projects: 1) emplacement of stepping stones to cross a stream, part way up the Woody Adams Trail and 2) reinforcing the treadway between the first rise on the Gile Mountain Trail and the retaining wall with crushed stone, drawn from the cache in the powerline right of way.
7. Update on kiosks and trails signage—Faughnan reported that:
 - Burton Woods at Bragg Hill Road—Awaits trail improvement before installation.
 - Heyl Trail at Elm Street and Bragg Hill Road—Are nearly available for installation.
 - Powers Trail—Awaits the installation of the barrier.

Financial

8. Plan for funding in Trails line item in Conservation Commission budget
 - Draft designs for Woody Adams Trail and Gile Trail kiosks—Those present expressed support for the layouts presented.

Other

9. Webpage update:
 - Profiles of volunteers—Flanders thanked those, who had provided material and reported that each had approved the edited rendition. He will use already published images for each person described. He awaits a few more profiles.
 - Updated mapping technology—Plummer reported no action on this topic.
 - Successorship in maintenance—Plummer and Williams anticipate being more active in this role.
10. Scribe successorship: No-one has stepped forward to date.
11. **Adjourn:** Layne adjourned the meeting at 8:20.