

Minutes of the Norwich Trails Committee for March 1, 2017

Present: Todd Alexander, George Clark, Gered Dunne, Jim Faughnan, Bob Fiskens, Peter Griggs, Doug Hardy, David Hubbard, Nick Krembs, Steve Liu, John Pepper, Eric Picconi, Gerry Plummer, Liz Russell, Craig Sandborn, Bill Scavone, Brie Swenson, Richard Zuckerman

With the recent announcement of the mud season closure of the Gile Mountain Trail, last year's signs were placed along Turnpike Road. Six new signs of better quality should soon be received and installed. Announcement of the closure has appeared on Norwich and Upper Valley listserves, the Trail Finder website, and the town website. Information has been distributed in the Dartmouth College community through the Dartmouth Outing Club. Announcements have particularly emphasized the road issue.

It is anticipated that there will be mud season closure for all other trails, with an announcement to come possibly in mid March.

A committee to include Gered Dunne, Doug Hardy, Gerry Plummer, and Brie Swenson is to address issues concerning the digital presence of the Trails Committee including 1) access through Google searches, 2) Twitter, and 3) potential additions to the town website.

Needs to complete the work of the past few years on the Gile Mountain Trail were discussed. These include completion of a small set of steps and a flat stretch of about 50 feet. Revegetation along the trail in areas of recent work would be desirable. Piles of unused materials might either be left in present sites for future maintenance or moved by horses for use in other areas. It was suggested that grant applications be considered to enable funding additional work. Some of the work, such as improving the flat stretch, could likely be accomplished in a short time with a volunteer crew of a dozen or so. It seems feasible to recruit such a crew.

Nick Krembs and Jim Faughnan have recently cleaned up fallen trees on trails in the nature area.

It was noted that the McIndoe Trail has been closed for lumbering.

Discussions with several landowners or their representatives and exploration of potential trail routes on approved parcels have been continuing. Continuing discussions about formation of the new nonprofit trails group are progressing and are about to consider legal aspects. Gered Dunne, Gerry Plummer, and Brie Swenson are to be involved in organizational planning.

With a resumption of grooming, Parcel 5 could be made more attractive for a variety of winter activities including potentially cross country skiing, snowshoeing, and winter biking. However, for grooming to be instituted, long term planning is needed to provide for a budget and person to do the work.

It was noted that a major new trail has been constructed for installation of new poles along a few miles of Velco power line corridor; this new trail might eventually be used for recreation.

Respectfully submitted,
George Clark