

Minutes of the Norwich Trails Committee for June 7, 2017

Present: Doug Brown, George Clark, Gered Dunne, Jim Faughnan, Bob Fiskén, Peter Griggs, Doug Hardy, David Hubbard, Sean Ogle, Gerry Plummer, Liz Russell, Brie Swenson

Recent trail work by the committee included three reroutes within the southern part of the Blue Ribbon Trail.

Work continues on a new trail which is eventually to connect Main Street with the Dresden playing fields. Private land owners have been very helpful in facilitating this new trail. Remaining challenges in preparing this new trail include arranging for an anticipated bridge about 40 feet long across Blood Brook.

As reported by Doug Brown, considerable trail work has been done recently on the Brookmead trails under the direction of the Upper Valley Land Trust (UVLT); included have been blazing of trails, installation of additional signage, and construction of a ten foot long bridge. Still needed are three turnpikes to provide dry passage in wet areas. The Norwich Trails Committee plans, in coordination with the UVLT, to build those turnpikes.. Needed materials are already present at Brookmead but need to be transported over substantial distances to the work sites.

A new sign is planned on the Connector Trail where it leaves Brookmead to connect with the Blue Ribbon Trail.

Members of the Trails Committee have recently worked on removing obstructing downed trees in the Milton Frye Nature Area. A program for trail use by children is to be presented there on the morning of June 10, to be followed by a session in which volunteers can help in pulling invasive plants in the nature area.

An ANTS running program to be held at Huntley Meadow on August 19 will provide an opportunity to recruit additional volunteers to help maintain the Norwich trail network.

The Trails Committee is to hold a work session on the morning of June 25 to reconstruct a broken bridge on the Ballard Trail. Participants are to meet at 8:00 AM in the parking lot at the site of the former town pool and then shuttle to the work site. The Land Management Committee (LMC) will cover the cost of materials which are to be obtained in advance. Volunteers for the work session should bring work gloves, drinking water, and insect repellent.

A suggestion to improve the Ballard Trail through minor reroutes would need approval by the LMC. It was questioned whether such improvements would enhance the trail experience. An additional suggestion was to prepare a collection of photographs showing conditions in sections for which reroutes might be proposed.

New data indicate some hundreds of users of the Gile Mountain Trail during the month of May with peak use on weekends. The actual numbers are unknown because of sampling issues. However, a relative comparison with equivalent data to be obtained for June during a time of college graduation and alumni gathering could be informative. The parking lot was reported now to be very wet so that vehicles have become stuck, and the lot presently cannot be used at full capacity.

A grant application has been submitted for funds to support trail construction in the area of Dutton Hill Road on a town-owned conserved parcel formerly owned by the late Bill Ballard and on which he had envisioned a trail.

Respectfully submitted,
George Clark