

Minutes of the Norwich Trails Committee for November 1, 2017

Present: James Allen, Doug Brown, George Clark, Jim Faughnan, Bob Fiskin, Byron Haynes, Nick Krembs, Sean Ogle, Gerry Plummer, Cathie Redpath, Brie Swenson

As reported by Doug Brown, in work sessions at Brookmead on October 15 and 16, a trail turnpike about 25 feet long was constructed, and also materials were added to reenforce a sign post. A few seepage areas remain for work in the spring at Brookmead, but, overall, the Brookmead trails should not need more than basic maintenance thereafter.

A new roof has been installed on the Gile Mountain Trail kiosk.

Since the October 28-29 storm, numerous fallen limbs have been cleared from the upper Ballard Trail, and the Brownschoolhouse Road trail has also been cleared.

Cathie Redpath is to check the Cossingham Road Farm Trails and Burton Woods for blockages from the recent storm. One large tree is blocking a trail used by kindergarteners at the nature area; it would be good if this could be cut before November 6. The Blue Ribbon and Gile trails will receive checking during a work session on November 4. It is hoped that recruiting to be done by email will result in at least ten volunteers working on the 4th.

Participants in the Saturday November 4 work session are to meet at 8:00 AM in the Brookmead parking lot, and will go from there by carpool/caravan onto private property providing access to the work area on the Blue Ribbon Trail. It is anticipated the work can be completed by noon. Part of the work will involve constructing three water bars, so tools for digging will be helpful. Volunteers should bring work gloves, drinking water, as well as, if available, clippers, hand saws, and narrow rakes. If there are sufficient participants, a few will work on completion of the bike trail reconstruction on the upper part of Gile Mountain. All participants are asked to wear blaze orange because of hunters being afield that day.

The signage subcommittee held a recent meeting and discussed a number of issues concerning trails to be mapped. The subcommittee is requesting submission of suggestions for locations needing trail markers, direction signs, and maps to be placed along trails..

A revised, new orienteering map to be prepared with CAD software for the nature area has been proposed and funding requested.

Major work is soon to begin on constructing the trail from Main Street to Blood Brook. The committee is very grateful to donors who have provided funding for the installation of stepping stones across the brook.

A grant application is likely to be prepared for a funding source specifically supporting connector trails.

The Upper Valley Trails Alliance has completed work on a King Arthur Trail network, and a new map has been prepared for that area.

After discussion, the committee unanimously approved the following mission statement:

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Trails Committee is to provide public opportunities to enjoy the natural, outdoor landscape of Norwich. The committee advocates for a connected trail network, builds and maintains community trails, promotes responsible trail use and fosters volunteer stewardship to achieve this mission.

The Committee's work includes:

- Construct, maintain, monitor and improve public trails in Norwich.
- Guide trail users by providing maps and other trail information, including guidelines for responsible trail use.
- Interact with Norwich government and groups, trail organizations, neighboring towns.
- Communicate with landowners making trails available to the public.
- Raise funds as needed for specific projects.

By a strong consensus the Trails Committee wishes to retain its present affiliation as a subcommittee of the Conservation Commission rather than become an independent committee. Nick Krembs will draft a short note about this.

Respectfully submitted,
George Clark