

Minutes of the Norwich Trails Committee for September 4, 2019

Present: George Clark, Jim Faughnan, Bob Fiske, Steve Flanders, Peter Griggs, Doug Hardy, John McCormick, Elena Mihaly, Gerry Plummer, Cathie Redpath, Brian Riordan, Liz Russell

During a work session on August 18, six members of the committee successfully reconstructed the uppermost bridge on the Ballard Trail.

In a work session to be held on Sunday September 22, participants are to move materials and build a new bridge to replace the severely deteriorated "crescent" bridge on the lower Ballard Trail. Meet at 8 AM in the parking area for Ballard Park and bring work gloves and drinking water.

A work session is provisionally planned for Sunday October 6 at the Cossingham Road Farm Trails for trail maintenance to include, in part, clipping, mowing, culvert repair, and dismantling a deteriorated picnic table.

A large tree of roughly four feet in diameter has fallen across the Bradley Hill Trail. Doug Hardy has cut an opening through the trunk for hikers and skiers, but additional work will be needed to facilitate passage by bikes.

Two committee members visited Parcel 5 after stinging insects there recently attacked a visitor but were unable to find those insects or their source.

The Upper Valley Trails Alliance (UVTA) has funds for their staff to work on Norwich trails either this fall or next spring and has invited the committee to suggest where such work would be helpful.

If any committee members not yet trained in use of grip hoists wish to gain experience, the UVTA will offer such training later this fall.

The UVTA has just announced a new website which includes a detailed section covering 13 Upper Valley hikes which are relatively near Hanover and which provide fine views. Visit <https://www.uvtrails.org/trail-services/resource-library/> to see this fine compilation of hikes with views as prepared by Steve Flanders.

Copies of an attractive new brochure/map highlighting the Appalachian Trail for visitors to Norwich and Hanover were on display. Betsy Maislen has distributed copies to numerous Norwich locations where visitors can obtain them.

The Selectboard has been informed about communications between Steve Flanders and Dartmouth Outdoor Programs resulting in a downward shift in the Dartmouth ranking of the Gile Mountain Trail relative to other recommended trails in the vicinity of Hanover.

Somewhat expanded parking on town lands has been proposed for trailheads at Gile Mountain and Burton Woods. Inclusion of funding in the next budget for the town would be an important step in that direction.

The committee unanimously agreed that Nicholas Fabrikant, who has an extensive background in bridge design, should be invited to assist in preparing a budget estimate for a replacement of a collapsed bridge on Brown School House Road across Charles Brown Brook. This estimate would then be used in preparing an application for a grant to provide partial funding for construction of the bridge itself. Funding must also be obtained from other sources, likely to include private fund-raising.

Gerry Plummer reported that the Conservation Commission has registered an internet domain name for use by the Trails Committee.

A vehicle counter has now been removed from the entrance to Parcel 5 after a sampling of use of that area during the summer.

Respectfully submitted,
George Clark