

Minutes of the Norwich Trails Committee for October 2, 2019

Present: George Clark, Jim Faughnan, Bob Fiskens, Steve Flanders, Doug Hardy, Nick Krembs, John McCormick, Elena Mihaly, Sean Ogle, Gerry Plummer, Cathie Redpath

In a committee work session on September 22 a new bridge was built to replace the deteriorated "crescent" bridge on the Ballard Trail.

On October 1, a crew from the Trails Committee built two relatively small bridges over wet areas on the Ballard Trail close to Ballard Park. These temporary bridges are eventually to be replaced with culverts.

A sign along Main Street pointing to the Betty Booth Trail now has yellow lettering rather than the former white color to indicate that the Betty Booth Trail is not part of the Appalachian Trail which is marked by white blazes.

The next work session of the committee is to be at the Cossingham Road Farm Trails on Sunday Oct. 6. Participants are to meet at 8 AM at the Cossingham Road parking area and should bring work gloves and drinking water. Among projects for that work session are mowing of the trails, lopping branches along both sides of the entire trail, some culvert work, and placing markers in the fields for winter use.

Another work session is to be on the Ballard Trail on Sunday Oct. 20, when participants are to meet at the Parcel 5 lot at 8 AM and should bring work gloves and drinking water. One of the objectives will be to replace a deteriorated log crossing over a wet area.

The Upper Valley Trails Alliance is to be doing rock work for crossings of wet sites on the upper Ballard Trail. Doug Hardy plans to send pictures with GPS information for two sites to Sean Ogle.

The Trails Committee very much appreciates the help given by Steve Phelps in his skillful use of a chainsaw to remove a downed tree of about four foot diameter from the Bradley Hill Trail.

Representatives of the Trails Committee are to meet with the Town Manager to discuss proposed limited enlargement of trailhead parking areas for Gile Mountain, Burton Woods, Happy Hill, and upper Elm Street (Appalachian and Heyl Trails).

A professional estimate for cost of a replacement bridge on Brown School House Road over Charles Brown Brook has been received and will be used in a grant proposal to be submitted by the end of October. If awarded, this grant would require a 20% match, and alternative ways of achieving that match were discussed.

It was noted that, with foliage colors changing, there has been relatively more use of the Gile Mountain Trail in recent days, and this can be expected to continue over the next several weeks.

Automated recording over nearly three months of traffic entering Parcel 5 lot has not been fully analyzed but indicates more use of that area on weekends than weekdays. Twenty vehicles per day commonly used that lot. It was noted that biking has contributed to greater use of Parcel 5 in recent years.

Gerry Plummer met with Cody Williams of the Conservation Commission to discuss plans for webpages for the Conservation Commission and Trails Committee. These discussions are continuing, and Gerry Plummer is to provide more details at an upcoming meeting of the Trails Committee.

Because the upper end of Happy Hill Road is a key location for trail access, it was proposed that a Trails Committee kiosk be established there.

A report on third quarter (July-September) activities of the committee has been prepared and is to be transmitted by Nick Krembs to the Town Manager and Selectboard.

Respectfully submitted,
George Clark