

Notes

Trails Volunteers Discussion Notes

7 pm, April 3, 2024

Norwich Historical Society

Attendees

Nick Krembs, Kit Burgin, George Clark, Jim Faughnan, Bob Fiskens, Peter Griggs, Elisabeth Hammer, John McCormick, Sean Ogle, Gerry Plummer, Aiden Powell, Aaron Sheldon, Cody Williams

The meeting began at 7:04p.

Comments from those present

Aaron introduced himself and looks forward to getting involved in trails in Norwich.

Updates from the Conservation Commission

Cody relayed the following notes from Craig, who was unable to attend:

The town manager was informed in March of Jim and Bob's plan regarding the Gile fire tower tread replacements this trail work season.

The town manager was also informed in February that we are doing the Bradley Hill work. Chris from DPW was informed that the drainage work has ramifications on Ladeau, he will plan to stop by to give his thoughts, perhaps on the day spent clearing trees before excavation work.

Still no response on a proposal to codify access to the Ballard Trail. Perhaps we should draft an agreement, get approval from the Griggs', then ask the TM to run it by town legal council.

Further discussion was had regarding a draft agreement to formalize access to the Ballard Trail. Nick proposed working with the UVTA, who have experience drafting similar documents; Sean suggested working with Russ from the UVTA. Peter Griggs will initiate communication with the UVTA.

Updates from the UVTA

Sean recently visited Bradley Hill to plan the upcoming work and meet with the landowner to hear their concerns. Money has been reserved from the Norwich Conservation Commission budget trails line item for the work. Will require one day of

work clearing downed trees and blockages to make the excavation date smoother. Sean will suggest a date for late April when he and several volunteers will be available to complete the work. Excavation will be planned for sometime in May, once trails have had a chance to dry.

Reports on recent trail blockages and actions taken or planned

Elisabeth reported several trees down along the AT and Tucker Trails, Doug has taken care of these as well as a few on upper Ballard Trail. Bob and Jim cleared several trees in Parcel 5 and Milt Frye.

Trail projects for 2024

Ballard Trail relocation

Significant benching will need to be done. Several small bridges and some stone steps in wet sections may need to be built. Need to wait for further thawing to better assess.

Gile Mountain hemlock bridge

Aiden visited the site recently to plan his work on the 16'x3' bridge. He has enough volunteer help to complete the project and is looking at sometime in the next two months, once the trail is thawed and dry enough to work, likely May. Has been in communication with Jim who will guide the work, ensure the bridge is to standard specs, and will provide tools and material transportation.

Kids Bridge access ramps

Work will be upcoming.

Gile Mountain fire tower treads

Gerry has a grant prepared to submit to the Norwich Women's Club which, if awarded, would cover the full cost of the materials. Cody will coordinate with town finance and management about the current process for submitting grant applications.

There was some discussion around using the remaining balance of the UVTA Gile funds or Norwich Conservation line item funds for the materials if the grant is not awarded.

Jim has been sourcing white oak from several New England sawmills and estimated an 8 to 10 week lead time. Work will ideally be done sometime between late May though July.

Website updates

Jim is planning to print a series of small seasonal postings to add to the current hunting season and winter trail use ones found at our kiosks. Some lively discussion followed about wording on the signs. Sean suggested that the UVTA may have existing examples they could share.

Website updates

Gerry shared that there have been some editorial changes to the home page, including the addition of some mud season wording. He welcomes feedback.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:53p.