

Minutes of the Norwich Trails Committee for January 4, 2017

Present: George Clark, Gered Dunne, Jim Faughnan, Bob Fisken, Peter Griggs, Doug Hardy, Byron Haynes, David Hubbard, Nick Krembs, Gerry Plummer, Brian Riordan, Liz Russell

No date has yet been set for a meeting of Trails Committee members with town officials to discuss the Gile Mountain Trail and associated matters. Such a meeting might be held either at the next regular meeting date for the committee (Feb. 1) or perhaps during the day on another weekday. It was suggested that such a meeting should have a clear agenda. It was also pointed out for such a meeting that the committee has no authority for enforcement of regulations or guidelines.

Nick Krembs is to contact Russ Hirschler of the Upper Valley Trails Alliance to ask about a potential loan of a trail counter for use on the Gile Mountain Trail. Bob Fisken has old data on the number of visitors using that trail.

Members of the committee have recently cut and cleared fallen trees along the Ballard Trail.

Only a few messages about trail blockages have so far been received at <Norwichtrails@gmail.com>. It was suggested that, to encourage trail users to report blockages, the committee email address be placed with maps at key intersections in addition to existing sites at kiosks.

Byron Haynes is to draft a letter for the committee thanking landowners who have made the Blue Ribbon Trail possible. In light of the success of the trail networking event held last summer, the committee is considering holding additional such events to show appreciation to landowners who have provided space for trails. Also, a general statement of appreciation to landowners is planned for the Norwich listserv.

For maintenance or construction of trails, it was pointed out that use of student crews, as has been done in the past, has become increasingly expensive, with an example of one such group now costing \$7500 or more per week. It was suggested that possible grant funds for trail work might in some cases be more effectively used by hiring experienced professionals who have specialized machinery.

Three members of the Conservation Commission have not yet begun writing a short science-based article on forest fragmentation. Considering possible fragmentation effects can be an important consideration in good planning for trails.

A possible new route for biking along Charles Brown Brook was discussed.

It was reported that John Taylor of the Upper Valley Trails Alliance is to be leaving the Upper Valley. The committee greatly appreciates his assistance in so many ways over many years.

Respectfully submitted,
George Clark
for the Norwich Trails Committee