

Minutes of the Norwich Trails Committee for March 13, 2018

Present: Doug Brown, George Clark, Jim Faughnan, Bob Fiskens, Peter Griggs, Nick Krembs, Elena Mihaly, Gerry Plummer, Brian Riordan, Liz Russell, Jonathan Smolin, Justin Strauss, Brie Swenson

Because of major snowstorms, this committee did not meet on the regularly scheduled dates of February 7 and March 7.

Elena Mihaly and Justin Strauss were introduced. No major changes are anticipated at the Cossingham Road Farm Trails under their new ownership. Deer hunting is to be allowed during the November hunting season. The Trails Committee plans to continue its role in maintaining the Cossingham Road Farm Trails.

Betty Booth Trail is the name for the entire new trail leading from the nature area to cross Blood Brook and then southward to Route 5. Rob Adams recently cleared a blockage on that trail.

Sarah Reeves had inquired about plans for future maintenance of the Heyl Trail. Jonathan Smolin volunteered to oversee maintenance of that trail with help to be provided by other members of the committee as needed. It is likely a work session on that trail will be held in April.

So far, only the Gile Mountain Trail has been closed for mud season. It is anticipated that all trails maintained by the committee will be closed for a time during the expected upcoming major spring thaw.

The committee is to assist the Child Care Center in establishing a short new trail between the Center and the Hazen Trail.

On the morning of February 7, several members of this committee along with representatives from St. Barnabas Church, the Marion Cross School, and the Upper Valley Trails Alliance walked around parts of the church property to discuss prospective trail work to include a reconstruction of the bridge connecting the church trails to the nature area.

Meetings of the signage subcommittee were held on January 30 and February 26. At the present meeting, Brian Riordan showed results from layered computer mapping for trails and related landmarks in Norwich. A large quantity of information about Norwich trails, both authorized and not, is already available online. It is planned to contact owners of parcels containing trails to determine their wishes with regard to inclusion of those trails in a planned new printed map to replace that currently being sold. As pointed out by Doug Brown, mapping needs to be done in full agreement with the landowners. The signage subcommittee and others interested in mapping are to meet again soon, perhaps for two hours and possibly on March 20, to take the next steps in

the mapping process. An email announcement is be sent providing the time and location for that meeting.

In accord with the Conservation Commission, the Trails Committee, by unanimous vote, adopted the following modification of its 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, minimizing impacts to flora and fauna and avoiding rare and sensitive species.
- 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.

Respectfully submitted,

George Clark