

## Minutes of the Norwich Trails Committee for September 5, 2018

Present: Doug Brown, George Clark, Jim Faughnan, Bob Fiskens, Doug Hardy, Byron Haynes, Nick Krembs, John McCormick, Gerry Plummer, Brian Riordan, Jordan Rowell, Liz Russell, Brie Swenson

In a work session on August 6, substantial progress was made in clearing the route along a northern part of the Betty Booth Trail. More recently, the large stepping stones for the Blood Brook crossing have been delivered and are now ready to be moved into the brook.

On August 19, a work session group along a middle part of the Blue Ribbon Trail cut back brush, made two reroutes, and placed new blazes.

Efforts to restore a long term crossing over Charles Brown Brook at Brown School House Road are moving forward. Initially, unstable materials on both sides of the brook at the site of the former bridge are to be removed so that the site will be prepared for eventual installation of a pedestrian and bike bridge. The hope is to install a ADA accessible bridge of sufficient width to accommodate wheeled vehicles of small size for possible emergency situations.

A question was raised as to whether, as an alternative to a bridge, it might be possible to install two culverts, with a very large one below and an overflow culvert above. Additional information would be needed to determine the feasibility of this suggestion for this location.

Brian Riordan demonstrated the impressive computerized OuterSpatial trail mapping system which has much greater versatility than older systems such as Trail Finder. The numerous advantages of OuterSpatial do come with an expense for users, both for initial startup and essential annual updates.

After brief discussion, it was concluded that a joint meeting of the Norwich Conservation Committee (NCC) and the Trails Committee would be beneficial. The first Wednesday of the month, which is the regular meeting day for the Trails Committee, was proposed as the prospective date for a joint meeting, if the NCC approves. Look for an email notice about time and location in advance of such a meeting.

The next work session of the Trails Committee is to be on Sunday September 16 with participants to meet at 8:00 AM at the Parcel 5 parking lot with possible carpooling from there. One major goal will be replacing a decayed 20 by 4 foot bridge on the lower Ballard Trail. Participants should bring work gloves and drinking water.

Another work session of the committee is to be held on Sunday October 7 for rebuilding a bridge on the Cossingham Road Farm Trails. Look for more details in a later email.

A proposal to reroute the Ballard Trail uphill to the south to avoid ongoing problems in its present location will need to be discussed with landowners, with the Land Management Council to be the first consulted.

Following a request from the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) and Green Mountain Club (GMC), several members of Norwich Trails Committee (NTC) met with the ATC and GMC representatives to continue discussions about authorized and unauthorized trails in the AT Corridor. ATC and GMC have requested that the NTC prepare a detailed proposal by February 2019 as to what small number of routes available for the long term should be authorized crossings of the Corridor. This proposal is to give specific consideration to the most favorable locations for bike crossings.

Doug Brown reported that an unknown person or persons without authorization recently removed an important long gate post and then filled in the deep hole at the Brookmead Conservation Area where a livestock route crosses a multi-use trail open to the public. Both the law and trail etiquette require that permissions be obtained before undertaking any trail work.

Respectfully submitted,  
George Clark