

Minutes of the Norwich Trails Committee for January 2, 2019

Present: George Clark, Jim Faughnan, Bob Fiskin, Steve Flanders, Peter Griggs, Doug Hardy, Nick Krembs, Gerry Plummer, Cathie Redpath, Liz Russell, Peggy Schlein, Jonathan Smolin, Brie Swenson, John Wiggin

Management authorities for the Appalachian Trail Corridor have recently proposed that there be a field visit in the spring to those side-trails of uncertain status. A deadline for a proposal from the Trails Committee concerning side-trails has been postponed until some time after the field visit.

On the basis of numerous comments from Norwich residents including landowners with parcels abutting the AT Corridor, Doug Hardy prepared and distributed an email statement suggesting a relatively simple position for the committee with regard to side-trails. In particular, it suggests that the status quo be continued for foot travel routes. Bicycles and horses are not to be used on the Appalachian Trail and are to be restricted to a small number of side-trails within the Corridor. There should be no building of rogue trails. Members of the committee agreed by consensus with the principles presented in Doug Hardy's statement. Discussions about side-trails continue, and a representative of the Upper Valley Land Trust is soon to meet with representatives from the Appalachian Trail Conservancy.

A replacement for the collapsed town bridge across Charles Brown Brook at Brown School House Road continues as a top priority for the Trails Committee. Recent budget considerations make it seem unlikely that a replacement bridge will be funded by the town in the near future. An alternative funding source might be private donations, but at least some residents believe that town should provide support for reconstruction in a town right-of-way.

A joint meeting of the Trails Committee and the Conservation Commission is to be held at 7 PM on Wednesday January 23 at the Norwich Inn. A projector and screen are to be used in examining maps of Norwich in a discussion of present and possible future trail routes with respect to the location of plants and animals of importance for conservation. Brie Swenson is to contact Randy Richardson of the Upper Valley Trails Alliance to ask whether he could again moderate a joint meeting as he did so well at a previous joint meeting.

Cathie Redpath has volunteered to serve as acting scribe for the committee when George Clark might be unavailable due to other commitments. Email messages concerning agenda items or other business matters for the committee should until further notice be sent to both George Clark <goodlark876@gmail.com> and Cathie Redpath <cathieredpath@gmail.com>. Reports of trail blockages should continue to be sent to <norwichtrails@gmail.com>.

Respectfully submitted,
George Clark