

Minutes of the Norwich Trails Committee for August 5, 2020

Present: George Clark, Jim Faughnan, Steve Flanders, Peter Griggs, Nick Krembs, John McCormick, Elena Milhaly, Gerry Plummer, Cody Williams

This meeting did not have a quorum to constitute a meeting of the Trails Committee as a subcommittee of the Conservation Commission. Therefore the meeting was held as an informational discussion.

Doug Hardy, Bridge McDowell, and Jim Faughnan have recently cleared blockages on trails including the Ballard Trail, Blue Ribbon Trail, and Betty Booth Trail.

On July 12 the Trails Committee held a successful work session to renovate a bog bridge on the Upper Ballard Trail. For August 23, the committee and volunteers are planning a work session to lengthen that bog bridge and to replace additional parts of the old decking. Notices about the August 23 work session have previously been sent to members of the committee and volunteers and to the Norwich listserv. Participants on August 23 are to meet at 8 AM in the Parcel 5 parking lot and should bring masks and plan to maintain social distance. Personal work gloves, drinking water, and insect repellent will be helpful. Participants were asked to notify Jim Faughnan in advance to aid in planning for the August 23 work session.

A work session on September 20 is planned to improve water flow across the upper Ballard Trail. Details of how that is to be done are to be determined when the volunteers arrive at the site.

All necessary permits have now been obtained for building the replacement bridge on Brown Schoolhouse Road across Charles Brown Brook. Work on that new bridge is anticipated to begin next week and is anticipated to last for 4 to 5 weeks. Adverse weather could delay completion of the replacement bridge.

While the replacement bridge is being constructed, a new temporary crossing will be provided by committee volunteers downstream from the bridge site. During this period, trail users will find signage directing them to the temporary crossing. Bikers will have to carry their bikes over the brook at the new temporary crossing.

The committee and volunteers greatly appreciate a grant of \$2000 from the Norwich Women's Club for construction of the replacement bridge. An additional \$3400 for the bridge has so far been received from private donors. Meanwhile, additional grant applications in support of the bridge are under review by philanthropic organizations.

Jane LeMasurier has reported on a recently completed stewardship camp on mountain biking for grades 4 to 6. With approval from the Upper Valley Land Trust, a spur trail has been built to an overlook in Brookmead. With approval from the Conservation Commission and the Land Management Council, a single track connector bike trail has been built from Parcel 5 to Brookmead. Bikers are to be involved in the maintenance of these new routes.

Sean Ogle has reported that youth groups under the direction of the Upper Valley Trails Alliance have recently completed trail work on the Rosemary Rieser Trail and the Betty Booth Trail.

In a meeting on July 21, the Conservation Commission designated David Hubbard, Craig Layne, and Cody Williams as the members of the subcommittee on trails, i.e., the Norwich Trails Committee.

Gerry Plummer reported on work underway to enable records of the committee and volunteers to be more accessible electronically for use by the committee and its volunteers.

A Discover Norwich Trails hike for the public was held on the lower Ballard Trail on July 25. Another such hike on August 29 will be on the upper Ballard Trail including the Converse loop. Offering of these hikes and their associated publicity have led to spikes in use of the Norwich Trails website and in the downloading of maps from that website.

There was a brief discussion about the distinction between the Cossingham Trail and the Cossingham Road Farm Trails. It was agreed that these currently used names are satisfactory.

Respectfully submitted,
George Clark