

August 26, 2014 Trails Committee Meeting Minutes

Present: Milt Wright, Gary Keilty, Ann Keilty, Lydia Adelson, Romaine Turyn, Henry Laidlaw, Rob Peale, Jeanne Harris, Robert Harris, Nancy Buker, Chris Sammons

Excused: Karen Peterson

Meeting called to order at 6:30 PM by Milt Wright, Chair.

Karen had an excused absence so Chris Sammons volunteered to take the minutes.

Motion to approve minutes of the May 27, 2014 Trails Committee meeting was made by Gary Keilty and seconded by Chris Sammons. Discussion followed when Nancy questioned the wording of "planting buffer trees by Kris Olson's property". Gary Keilty said it was Kris Olsen who requested the trees to deafen the sound from the new ballpark. It was agreed that the wording should be that the trees were planted near the new ballpark. The motion was passed with the noted change unanimously.

Motion to approve minutes of the June 24, 2014 Trails Committee meeting was made by Nancy Buker and seconded by Jeanne Harris. No errors or omissions and the motion passed unanimously.

Motion to approve minutes of the July 22, 2014 Trails Committee meeting was made by Ann Keilty and seconded by Bob Harris. We now know the mysterious weed whacker at Factory Square was Bob Harris. No errors or omissions and the motion passed ten in favor, one abstention (Buker).

Update of Fairgrounds Complex Issues:

- Pine tree blown down on Upper Fairground Trail – Gary showed pictures of the tree falling lengthwise on the trail. Milt and Bob showed up with chain saws. Jeanne, Lydia, Romaine and Chris showed to up help with the tree removal and raking.
- Extension of Cemetery Trail – Gary used his tractor to pile the base gravel for the trail. Lydia, Romaine, Jeanne and Chris raked. Chris and Lydia came back at different times to rake and weed whack. Gary saw a man walking the trail who had come from the cemetery, which is what we had intended the trail to be used for.
- Poison ivy eradication at Church Road parking area – Milt reported that the Conservation Commission didn't remember and he would try to attend next year to remind Dave Bagley. Rob mentioned it would be a professional application.
- French Drain at Ballfield – Gary reported that Lenny Reay installed a French drain at the ballfield that causes extra run off water at the triangle corner on McDougald Trail.
- Ballfield Committee's commitment for sharing costs of drainage across trail behind the future backstop - Gary went to see Mark Birtwell to see how he was and discuss projects. Ballfield Committee meeting agreed to share costs (\$372) for culvert and use Mark for repair.
- Storm erosion at Trail Juncture – Gary reported that it does flood but it is worse than anything we have ever had before. Gary said McDougald Trail was 30%-40% done until we ran out of blue stone.
- Meeting of Ballfield Committee, Recreation Board, Conservation Commission, Trails Committee Representatives and General Public – Gary reported that apparently through funds from Grace Keene a metal gate with keys which would be held by the fire department at the access way- not a road- looks like a road but not a road. The access way would create a T for emergency vehicles to go down. Milt said an access way was for safety and maintenance vehicles. Bob says it would be at the end of the parking lot next to the kiosk. Romaine asked if they didn't want the public to use it. They want it used but don't want cars doing wheelies. Lydia asked who was going to bush hog the field next to the ballfield. Gary said it would be nice to cut some strips through the field for kids to run in. Again not our problem. Ann says the Conservation Commission answered they were in charge of everything but had no answers to when things would get done. Greg Leimbach said they are going to mow the banks for parents to sit on and the access way would be in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act. Romaine asked if they are going to name the ballfield. Gary said no name yet. It was discussed that a sidewalk on Church Road should be considered because of all the children making their way to the ballfield.
- Construction of RSU #38 Trail Timeline – Gary said construction was to start next week and they are going by the original guidelines.

Construction of Trail in Park behind the Library – Gary said the first day (Saturday) Ann, Chris and Lydia discovered hosta in the weeds. And it was decided to clean to the stone wall. Milt, Hank and Gary were there with weed whackers. Milt got stung multiple times by the wasps, took a benadryl but had to go home. Gary said John Cushing was working by the Library and offered to pull some stumps and rocks from the trail. Bob volunteered to load up the limbs that were piled at the end of the trail. The next Friday Gary saw a pile of blue stone behind the library. Saturday Gary and Ann worked with Gary's tractor to spread the blue stone. Hank and Chris came in the afternoon to rake out the stone. Sunday Hank raked with Ann while Gary spread the blue stone. Gary says to go down during the week and spend 15-30 minutes raking the trail because it is getting a lot of foot traffic and bike traffic. Ann says the blue stone is supposed to be the same that we have been getting-emulsion mix but it looks different. Cornerstone Café put up Nancy's sign and a map of trail inside. There is a stone seat and a log seat behind the new Maple Tree Community School along with a swing. Bob said it looked really nice. Milt asked for name suggestions for the Library trail. Policy is to name anything that is public. Ann thought we should call it the Library Park Pathway instead of Trail. Bob suggested Library Trail. Nancy suggested Community Library Pathway. Romaine said it should be the Community Pathway so it is not just for the Library. Milt asked for a motion to name the trail and Nancy made a motion to name it the Community Pathway and Bob seconded it. For discussion Rob said we should give them more than one choice. Milt said we are just giving the Select Board our choice because we put the trail in but they may name it something else. Community Pathway passed unanimously. Hank and Chris volunteered to be stewards for the Community Pathway. Lydia also volunteered to help. Stewards maintain the trail like Milt and Gary do for the Fairgrounds.

Echo 1 Trail Update – Rob said he placed pink flagging but more flagging is needed. Not ready for a second site visit yet.

Morrill Road moratorium by Select Board and Legal Opinion from MMA – Milt reported that at the August 11th Select Board meeting a moratorium was passed on the proposed trail on the Morrill Road public easement without any input from the Trails Committee. The Select Board received a letter from Rick Barton stating legal basis and state statutes. Milt says they had a repeat of the August 11th Select Board meeting at the August 28th Select Board meeting concerning the Morrill Road moratorium. He played the video from the meeting starting at 36:16 when they discussed the Morrill Road easement. They expressed safety concerns about it being next to a 50 MPH zone and crossing Rt 17. The Town Manager said we have a legal right to develop the easement but Tom Dunham said they should have a hearing before anything is done and establish Trails Committee policy for future trails. Nancy said the Select Board went into executive session for abatement and personnel issues. Milt says they raised issues we need to address: 1. Opinion from Legal Counsel about the public easement for the discontinued portion of the road, 2. MMA's Rebecca Seel, Legal Counsel, says the issue is political and not legal, 3. Rick Barton's letter is incorrect because we have the legal right to develop the public easement. The Select Board leaned heavily on the safety of the trail. Gary said we could put in a pedestrian cross walk. Bob said they could move the 35 MPH sign up to Sturtevant Hill Road. Romaine said they moved the sign closer to Manchester in the past. Ann says Val Pomerleau and Lorraine Wager have never walked Morrill Road and we should invite the Select Board for a tour. Romaine says there is family support for the trail. Dan Harriman did a survey so we should determine where the public easement really is located. Nancy said we have to clear up these issues maybe by having a public meeting. Milt reminded us of our mission statement and read it for the committee.

Legal Opinion from Town Counsel regarding trails on private property – Milt told us that Lee Bragg said the Trails Committee only has the authority that the town meeting has delegated to it, either directly or indirectly through the Select Board. Milt read a proposed Article: to see if the Town will authorize the Select Board to approve trail easements and /or trail agreements with private property owners negotiated by the Trails Committee for trails/pathways on private property with the owners of the private property based on criteria established by the Select Board. Gary made a motion that any agreement should be in a regular town meeting. It was seconded by Rob. Discussion followed with Gary stressing that if we go before a special town meeting we will not have the supporters that we would have at a regular town meeting. Nancy said why not move forward, why do we need this? Lee Bragg says process isn't legal. Nancy and Romaine didn't agree that we should give more power to the Select Board. Nancy said there is a faction in town that would not approve our budget. Nancy asked who would sign an easement or an agreement. Milt said Town Manager and himself. The Lucas easement was signed by the Town Manager and himself. Nancy asked if we send minutes to the Select Board. Milt said Robin is sent the agenda. The motion was read again and the wording changed to proposed article instead of agreement. Motion passed 9 in favor and 2 opposed.

Other Business – Gary read a funny version of the commandments, which pretty much said to keep trying even though everyone is trying to stop you. Milt wants a letter of commendation from the Town Manager acknowledging Lydia for donating a reconditioned blade weed whacker that she paid \$100 for. Milt added a \$5 strap. Gary says Ray Renner goes by the fairgrounds and says he has only seen 5 vehicles. Greg Durgin made the comment that people are walking or biking to the trail. Gary says good job to everyone and we have the right to enjoy ourselves, not be abused. Always keep it fun.

Meeting adjourned at 8:39 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Sammons