

CONCORD CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Trails Subcommittee Meeting
June 13, 2018

Attending: Hilary Thomson, Fran Philippe, Rob Talmadge, Rik Van Riel, Rob Knight, Tim Pifer, Ron Klamarczyk, Gail Page

Guests: Jim Owers and Jeff Lewis (Conservation Comm.), Leandra Nault (summer intern), Leslie Talmadge, Matt Bowser (NEMBA), Leslie Ludtke

1. Minutes approved with one correction at # 5.
2. Summer Intern Leandra Nault was introduced. She will be working with Ron Klemarczyk, City Forester.
3. Guest Matt Bowser, Vice president of the Central NH Chapter of the New England Mountain Bike Association (NEMBA) spoke about his organization, a recreational biking trails advocacy organization with 27 chapters across New England. Their mission is to promote the best mountain biking, steward the trail systems they use, and preserve open space. They currently manage 4 trail systems located in Hill, Franklin, Laconia and Contoocook. Their trails are on Federal State, local and private lands. Members of the Concord community invited them to help develop biking trails in the new Broken Ground conservation area. They have met with the Conservation Commission, walked the likely trail area with the city forester and flagged one trail for development in the near future. This evening they presented a GIS map showing the proposed 1 mile trail near the eastern boundary of the parcel. The map shows the approximate location of the trail. It starts just past the Orange trail on the water tower access road and intersects with the Nowell hiking trail at its northern end. Ron K feels this separate starting point from the Orange trail would reduce confusion. A second map shows an additional trail to be developed further into the future that skirts some ledges somewhat further west of the first trail and which connects at two points with that trail. The biking trail would be used by hikers as well as bikers. Rogue biking trails have been of concern to the City's Conservation Commission due to potential liability, degradation of the forest, and trespassing on bordering private property. Matt Bowser stated that such trails are less likely to appear when their organization is managing the property. They follow "best practices" for trail maintenance and stewardship. The official city trail approval process is well under way with many steps already accomplished. One concern is the parking capacity of the two lots serving Broken Ground. It is not possible to expand the one on Portsmouth St as it borders Unitil property. The Curtisville Rd. lot could easily be made larger. However, per Matt, the smaller size of this property compared to others they manage would attract fewer bikers and thus, be unlikely to require more parking. In conclusion, the committee voted initial approval of the first bike trail and to continue following the balance of the trail approval process. Jim Owers will serve as project manager.
4. Further with regard to rogue trails, Ron Klemarczyk has spoken to the trespassing bikers and hikers at Penacook Lake and installed more "no trespassing" signs. These signs don't seem to have much meaning for the people he's encountered on their illegal trails. New illegal trails have appeared at Winant, Swope, and Broken Ground. We have not yet erected signs re no trail building at the private property bordering Winant as previously discussed. Fran will write an article about the problem for the Concord Monitor, Rob T will speak to Tim Farmer at S&W bike shop and the NEMBA will put out an email notice to their members in hopes of

discouraging this activity.

Rob K notes that traditionally many NH landowners do not object to people using their land for recreation. Discussions with the owner of land next to Winant Park are on-going, per Jim Owers.

5. Community hikes:
 - a. On May 12th Rob Knight lead 16 participants on a hike at NH Audubon property. Wildflowers were the hit of the hike.
 - b. On June 9th Tim Pifer had 15 hikers from AARP on the Carter Hill portions of the West End Farm Trail and the Swope Connector for 3.5 miles. This same day Rob Knight and Gail Page took 8 AARP members along the Sewells Falls trail. Gail noted that there is one bench along the Sewalls Falls trail overlooking the river and wishes there was another, further along the trail
 - c. On July 28th Fran will lead another community hike, location TBA.

So far this year the subcommittee has clocked 88 volunteer hours. Fran suggests this be provided to the Concord Monitor as good publicity for the city.

6. Signs: Broken Ground needs two more new signs installed. Ron volunteered the summer intern to install the two new signs. Ron K suggests that the ones that were removed by vandals and tossed into the swamp NOT be reinstalled until the tendency for vandalism settles down. The intersection where the signs were removed is the same as where earlier, temporary signs disappeared. Signs for the Swope/Winant connector trail are almost complete. Rob still needs to install the sign for a glacial erratic off the trail. Ron K and the intern will tackle the signage for the vista trail intersections at Oak Hill to reduce hiker confusion. Signs for the Russell Martin system are on order.
7. Ron Klemarczyk reported removal of several downed trees at Winant, Broken Ground and Riley. He has removed some growth around the Winant Oak to give it space. This will continue, but gradually over the coming years. He has installed a plank walk over a wet area on the BG Orange trail near the power lines. He brushed the Riley Lot. He cut back multi-flora rose and buckthorn at Jim Hill River Walk. Police are routing the homeless camp at Healey Park. With the assistance of the St. Paul's School Lacrosse team, he built a bypass trail around a perennial wet area. There have been two small brush fires since last month, one off District 5 Rd., and one at Rolf Park. Minimal damage occurred at Dist. 5, some scorched trees at Rolf Park will likely die. Ron has received a wetlands permit to place fill on the WEFT north of exit 3. Hilary Thomson assisted Audubon in spreading wood chips on their trails to make them easier to follow.

At our next meeting in July, Bob Holdsworth of "Leave No Trace" will present a short program.

Meeting adjourned at 6:40 PM.

Next meeting is July 11 at 5:15 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Gail Page