

Concord Conservation Commission  
Trails Sub-Committee Meeting Minutes  
July 14, 2021 - DRAFT

Attending: Vice Chair, Scott Daniels; Secretary, Gail Page; Rob Talmadge; Fran Philippe; Judy Weatherbee; Greg Mannesto

City Planning Dept. representative, Beth Fenstermacher

Conservation Commission representative, Jeff Lewis

Forestry Intern, Cathy McComish

Absent: Chairperson Rob Knight, City Forester Ron Klemarczyk, David Ross and Alternates Rik Van Riel, Ben Stephenson, and Mike Lehman

Agenda:

1. Minutes for June 2021 were accepted as amended.

2. New trail Updates:

a. Locke Road – Trout Lily Trail --- The proposed trail has been approved by the NH Natural Heritage Commission, the NH Fish and Game Dept., and the Forest Society with the understanding that the Sub-Committee has completed its survey for rare and endangered species and found none. Next step is Ron Klemarczyk will flag the trail and remove large trees as needed. When this is complete, sub-committee volunteers will clear the brush from the trail. Project Manager Fran Phillippe raised the question of whether or not procedural step number 6 on the new trail procedures is an absolute, or flexible with respect to who specifically lays out the trail. Step number 6 states that “The City Forester and Project Manager layout the proposed trail based on the Trails Criteria checklist.” Discussion determined that it would be a case by case decision and the Project Manager and City Forester cooperate to determine trail layout.

b. Backwoods Trails at Winant Park --- Ron K. has obtained permission from the abutting landowner to bring lumber over abutters land to create a plank walk on the Cart Path trail. He and Cathy removed a leaning tree over this trail and cut brush in front of the State House view site. Beth will order signs for the Cart Path section.

c. Knowlton Woods --- The two new trails are complete. Bikers and hikers are using them and expressing approval. NEMBA created a hikers' bypass on the eastern Bowls Trail that avoids the switchback section built for bikers. Hikers may use both trail sections of Bowls Trail . There will be a sign at the top of Bowls Trail informing hikers on the switchback biking section to be aware that bikers travel fast down that trail section. Matt Bowser will erect signs on both east and west trails and blaze them. It is expected that NEMBA will steward these trails. Beth will update the Oak Hill Trails map to show these additions and describe them as “moderate” in difficulty. Question was raised if there be an opening ceremony? We will consult with Matt Bowser. *\*\*The Trails Committee wishes to thank Matt Bowser and NEMBA for their excellent work creating these trails for the public.\*\**

3. Trail Maintenance and Reporting:

a. Cathy reports that the bridge on the (Ross View/ Swope) Connector trail is completed. Blazes are removed from the now closed trail on Ross View Farm land and brush placed along it and at its entrance. Mr. Ross reports he has seen many fewer users. There is no sign of bikers being where they are not allowed and the new trail appears to be well used. Ron and Cathy have relocated signs.

b. Cathy has replaced some of the maps in kiosks and replaced the upside-down arrow sign at Diamond Hill Farm section of the WEFT.

c. Cathy reported that Ron plans to make the old skidder trail at Knowlton Woods into an emergency access road.

d. There are trees down on the railroad bed trail at Mast Yard, per Rob Talmadge. The trail is still passable so it is not urgent. Also, “no trespassing” signs are absent along the river. Unsure if this is intentional due to landowner.

4. Other Business:

5. A policy on dogs on the trails is still pending at the Conservation Commission and that this is the purview of the City Council.

a. Bears and bear scat have been seen on and near District 5 Rd.

b. In that same area, there are reports of shooting.

c. Trail Guide update – Beth awaits input from trail stewards. This will be on the September agenda. Meanwhile, Beth will send out the current descriptions to stewards for them to return with comments.

d. Jeff Lewis notes that our 80+ miles of trails are now likely closer to 90+ miles, with the new trails that have been added recently.

e. **Draft Trails Master Plan - Sub-committee members are reminded to read and comment on the draft Trails Master Plan** before it goes to a public hearing. From the public hearing it will go to the Planning Dept. and then to City Council for final approval. **Pay special attention to the recommendations section as these are vital to future planning and funding.** Jeff Lewis commented that the trails are maintained now by volunteers and the city employees have little to none of the institutional knowledge of the system. The possibility of fewer volunteers in the future would mean the city departments would need to pick up the tasks and should gain more familiarity with what we do and why.

6. Motion made and seconded to meet next in September, foregoing the August meeting. Next meeting will be on **September 8<sup>th</sup>, at 5:15** in the second floor conference room in City Hall.

7. Meeting adjourned at 6:27 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Gail R Page, recording secretary