

Concord Conservation Commission
Trails Sub-Committee Meeting Minutes
May 11, 2022

Present: Scott Daniels, Chair; Rob Knight; Fran Philippe; Greg Mannesto; David Ross (alt); Erin Waters (alt); Jeff Lewis, Conservation Commission Rep; Ron Klemarczyk, Consultant City Forester

City Planning Dept. staff: Beth Fenstermacher, Assistant City Planner; Mel Caron, Ranger

Absent: Gail Page; Rob Talmadge; Judy Weatherbee; Rik Van Riel (alt)

Visitors: Matt Bowser, NEMBA; Marty Janoschek; Rebecca Ross, Rossview Farm

Meeting was called to order at 5:20 PM by Scott Daniels, Chair

1. Minutes for April 13, 2022 will be reviewed and approved next month.
2. Mel Caron has resigned, effective 5/12/22. Mel was thanked for her work on behalf of the trails. Mel would be happy to volunteer for trail work or as a monitor.
3. Trail Maintenance and Reporting
 - a. Spring trail checks: Scott reported the trail checks are complete. Beth asked for a copy of the reports to keep on file.
 - b. Volunteer hours: Volunteers should record their volunteer hours in Google Docs. Beth will resend the link to Google Docs with the instructions.
 - c. City Forester report: New signs are up at Oak Hill, Jim Hill Riverwalk and several at Swope Park. Kiosk is repaired at West Locke Road. The Tower Trail at Oak Hill was reditched.
 - d. Marty Janoschek volunteered to be a trail steward. Scott said Batchelder Mill is a possibility.
4. Locke Road to Sewalls Falls connector: Scott reported that he, Mel, Ron, and Greg walked the potential route. The trail could go the length of a large field, continue in the woods on old canal berms along the river bank, and reach a handsome view of the old Sewalls Falls dam. Beyond that the route would be difficult because of the close proximity of the train tracks and highway to the river, the steep river bank, and many invasives. Plus the route would have to cross private property. Initially the trail might be an out-and-back or a loop trail. Fran pointed out that the Concord Trails Plan recommended the trail as a link, not a stand-alone loop. If the trail cannot connect to Sewalls Falls, do we need to add another stand-alone trail to our system, especially since it is not recommended in the Master Plan? Other issues were mentioned: trails in fields are hard to maintain and might impact the agricultural use of the field; any trail has an impact on wildlife. On the positive side, it would extend the trails along the Merrimack farther north, and it might be an initial step in making the connection to Sewalls Falls. Scott will review how the trail might rank on the trail criteria checklist.
5. 2022 Goals and Projects
 - a. Plant identification walk: Mel (as a volunteer) and Gail are working on an interpretive walk with plants identified with temporary labels.
 - b. Historical signs: Fran was unclear whether this was something we want to do. Rob is working on signs for the old winter recreation area at Russell Pond. He will prepare proposed signs and bring them to a future meeting.
 - c. Invasive Bittersweet at Curtisville parking lot: Fran feels cutting the bittersweet to save the

- trees would be a good work project. Beth asked Fran to send her pictures and the approximate dimensions of the problem area. Beth will follow up with the invasives expert within the State for recommendations.
- d. Procedure for Discontinuing a Trail: Jeff said the draft policy would again be taken up by the Conservation Commission at their next meeting.
 - e. Broken Ground to Oak Hill trail connection: Rob suggested this as a goal since it would be a major benefit for trail users, and might do for the east side of Concord what the West End Farm trail did for the west side. The existing snowmobile trail could provide a route, although permissions would be needed from private landowners. A large swamp blocks the route across City-owned land. Scott will arrange a walk of the possible route. Rob, Erin, Greg, Marty, and Matt Bowser expressed interest in walking the route.
6. Public hikes:
 - a. April 23 hike: Fran reported 31 hikers. Parking was problematic. Fran split the hikers into two groups. The large group made it hard to stop and talk about anything on the trail.
 - b. May 21 hike: Rob, at Contoocook River Park. Rob expressed concern about having too large a group and asked for volunteers to assist. The trail steward, Peter Ivas and his wife, were suggested as possibilities. Discussed possibly asking hikers to preregister in future hikes and capping the size of the hikes. Agreed to wait and see how many hikers come on the May 21 hike before making changes.
 - c. Future hikes: June 4 - Gail; July - Scott
 7. Inclusion of the Concord-Lake Sunapee trail in the trail guide: Beth has been asked if the section from Fisherville Road along Bog Road to Carter Hill Road could be included. David observed the trail has sections that are in poor condition for bicycles and questioned if we should be including trails maintained by others in our guide. On the other hand, the current trail is good for hiking and might provide a good trail connection to Carter Hill via the Water Department pipeline route. Including the trail in the guide will be kept under consideration.
 8. Mountain biker at Rossvie Farm: Ron reported that a Mountain biker rode on Rossvie Farm, which is closed to bicycles. Matt Bowser has publicized the trespass on the NEMBA Facebook page, and the post received many comments in support of staying off posted property. Rebecca Ross expressed appreciation for the support.
 9. Police patrols of the trails: Beth said that Concord police will be patrolling the trails on mountain bikes during the summer, but the patrolling will not be permanent.
 10. NEMBA work day: Matt Bowser and NEMBA are planning a work day June 5 at 9:00 for Rys Way, to address a wet area on the trail and some rerouting necessitated by a newly constructed rogue jump. Volunteers would be welcome.
 11. Leaf blowing trails: Discussed the damage done to the trails by individuals who leaf-blow them. This topic will be discussed at the next meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 6:46.

Respectfully submitted,
Rob Knight

Next meeting is June 8 at 5:15 in the City Council Chambers