

Concord Conservation Commission
Trails Sub-Committee Meeting Minutes
September 14, 2022

Attending: Chairperson, Scott Daniels; Secretary, Gail Page; Rob Knight; Rob Talmadge; Rik Van Riel; Greg Mannesto

City staff: Beth Fenstermacher and Carl Matson

Consultant City Forester, Ron Klemarczyk

Conservation Commission representative, Jeff Lewis

Absent: Fran Philippe, vice-chair; Judy Weatherbee; and Alternates Erin Waters and David Ross

Guests: Chris Mertz of Concord Greenspace Coalition

Agenda:

1. Minutes for August 10, 2022 were approved.

2. Trail Maintenance and Reporting:

Scott presented the new trail criteria checklist for the proposed connector trail from Broken Ground to Oak Hill which he will bring to be discussed at the Conservation Commission meeting for their input. Scott has determined several of the criteria to be positive for this trail; he also listed some negative points. On the positive side, it would be in line with the Trail Master Plan that recommends creating more connections between existing trails and across town lines; there are interesting features along the way; and there is already a snowmobile trail on a portion of the trail. On the negative side: the trail would be difficult for police and fire department personnel to reach in case of emergency; its location and length make it harder to maintain; it crosses private land and permission would be needed from the landowners (Ekstrom and Hoag); there may be a high impact on wildlife in the area. Ron Klemarczyk has proposed an alternative route to avoid wetlands and private property.

Ron Klemarczyk added temporary signs on District 5 Road notifying users arriving from Hopkinton that bikes are prohibited on private property ahead; he used a scythe to cut brush at trailheads at Broken Ground and the Riley Lot; and cut brush at the vista in Swope Park. Ron rerouted the trail around an eroded area on the Jim Hill River Walk and is preparing to rebuild a 90' bridge in the same park in October. He removed downed trees at Winant Park, Swope/ Winant Connector trail, Swope Park, West Locke Rd., Bachelder Trails, Merrill Park and Weir Rd. Ron noted that the Knight Morono trail signs and posts have been removed for the woods trail. Greg will replace the post and sign for the trail that borders the river. As the trail is easy to follow, no new blazing is needed.

Ranger Carl has done brush cutting at Jim Hill Riverwalk, the Merrimack River Greenway Trail, Winant parking lot and the Marjory Swope parking lot. He also led a hike today for OLLI. He returned several shopping carts from the Greenway Trail to the rightful stores. He has met Robert Ehrlenwein on the trail where Mr. Ehrlenwein does his own volunteer trail maintenance. Good relations resulted from this encounter as well as with other hikers Carl has met.

3. Educational signs regarding historic aspects around our trail locations are still in the research stage.
4. An August 30th work day at Jim Hill RW was not well attended. Greg did spend time doing trail work at that location. Ron Klemarczyk has delayed the vista work at Oak Hill until spring, 2023.

3. Other Business:

a. Upcoming Hikes – Fran's August hike was well attended with approximately 20 hikers. One hiker turned back and failed to notify Fran so there was concern that someone was lost. **Hike leaders will always warn participants to tell the leader, not just a fellow hiker, if he/she has to leave the hike!** Gail will lead a hike at Broken Ground's Ry's Way on Sept. 24th. Committee members Scott, Rob Knight and Carl volunteered to “sweep”. Carl will lead a hike in October and Scott volunteered for a November hike.

- Beth is leading the Library's book club hike at Swope Park on Sept. 27th at 5:30 PM and another one in October at noon. The hikes will include discussions about a book: *Rooted* in September, October TBD. Registration is required and can be done through the library.
- There was discussed about doing a guided mountain bike excursion. Rob Talmadge volunteered to lead one at Mast Yard, but not until the Spring. Scott may plan to do one this Fall.
- Rob T. reminded members that hunting season has begun.
- The Conservation Commission has obtained some blaze orange vests for hikers to use and return to the trailhead. This will be a trial-run for this idea; the vests will be placed at Batchelder Mill trails and Oak Hill trails. Beth will monitor Batchelder and Scott with monitor the Oak Hill one.
- The city website has updates for hikers informing them of which trail locations do not allow hunting and those that do, as well as links to NHF&G website for hunting season dates.
- Chris Mertz introduced himself as a member of the Greenspace Coalition and offered to help get information out and help gather volunteers for future work days.

The meeting adjourned at 6:46 PM

The next meeting will be on October 12th, 5:15 PM

Respectfully submitted,
Gail Page, recording secretary