

## Concord Conservation Commission Trails Subcommittee Meeting

September 13, 2023 5:15 P.M.

City Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room, 41 Green St.

### Present:

Members: Fran Philippe (Chair), Aaron Monier (Secretary), Gail Page, Mark Cheever, Rebecca Ross, Rik Van Riel (alt), Heather Shank (City Planner), Ron Klemarczyk (Consultant City Forester), Jeff Lewis (Conservation Committee),

Guests: Jim Owers, Matt Bowser (NEMBA), Mark Redman, Dan Williams, Wick Holmes

### Minutes:

- Approve Minutes from August. Motion passed unanimously.
  
- Jeff Lewis updated Committee on Richard's Community Forest. The Concord Conservation Commission has a planned site walk.
  - Ron inquired if Eversource was still on schedule for Fall. Jeff was unsure of the status.
  
- Broken Ground Proposed Trail:
  - Jim Oehler from NH Fish and Game will present a report to the Conservation Commission and the Trails Subcommittee about how trails effect wildlife on all city trails, including this one, at 6:30 at their October 11th meetings. A public hearing will follow at 7:00, which will give more feedback.
  - Jeff noted that the steps for approving new trails don't necessarily have to happen in order. That being said, it was decided that the Trails Subcommittee would wait until after the public hearing before taking another vote to move forward the proposed plan.
  - Ron went over the FORECO report of Potential Impacts to Reptiles and Amphibians on the Proposed Trail at the Broken Ground City Forest.
    - The bottom line is that Josh Megyesy of the New Hampshire Fish and Game recommends less trail development near the marsh. Recommended not developing on access road as it offers open canopy ideal for nesting turtles or sunning snakes.
    - The area also contains oak trees that were defoliated by the Spogy Moth (aka Gypsy Moth) and a plan is to salvage that timber.
    - Mark Cheever inquired if runoff was a consideration in the trail process.
    - Matt Bowser of NEMBA commented that all NEMBA trails are built to the US Fish and Wildlife Forest Guidelines.
  - Suggestion of a T-Junction connecting Ry's Way with proposed trail.

- Matt Bowser commented that it would pose a potential risk to traffic flow as Ry's Way is a fast and flowy trail. Potential hazard for bikers.
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- Dan Williams spoke and commended the Trails Committee for their efforts and being cognizant of impacts on wildlife in the area and balancing with recreational opportunities in the city. He had heard discussion that the new trail may result in potential closure of Marsh Loop Trail. Jeff mentioned that it would take approval of new trail before that would be an option. The east side of Marsh Loop Trail being the most sensitive area.
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- Fran made a motion to wait until Jim Oehler's presentation and public hearing before Trails Committee goes forward with a vote. Approved.
- Ron's Trail Maintenance Report
  - Emergency Access Road at Broken Ground growing in so he cleared it back.
  - Installed railroad tie at area of drain off on steep slope at Swope Park. Formerly, a log was being used but it rotted out. Removed stones in trail. Took down a hanging limb near vista summit.
  - Tower Trail at Oak Hill. Heavy use area. Replaced rotted out culverts and water bars.
- Heather S. brought up public concern of unhoused population in the Martin Park woods. That is not a Trail's Subcommittee function, but that of Concord Police.
- Spring Trails Checklist:
  - Rik mentioned that he sent out an email but it was ineffective. An email will be sent from an official City of Concord email address trying to confirm if people are still interested in being trail stewards.
  - Mark updated his process on bittersweet removal at Broken Ground. He flagged a bunch for removal and started. However, found that it's a long term project that will require remediation over time. Trees wrapped with bittersweet from the Nowell trail to the beaver pond will take precedent. He did research on best practices for invasive removal. Ron commented that anything pulled needs to be removed or hung so roots don't re-establish. All else can decompose on the ground. Any herbicidal application would need to be contracted.
  - Mark C. also inquired if the Committee requires waivers for trail volunteer work as it's a point of emphasis with his employer the Appalachian Mountain Club. Historically, waivers have not been signed by volunteers in Concord.

- Group Hikes:
  - September (Carl) – Sewall's Falls Trail 09/30 at 9:30 AM
  - October (Fran) - Broken Ground – Howard Nowell Trail 10/28 at 10:00 AM.
- Next Meeting – October 11, 2023