

Concord Trails Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

09/11/2024 City Hall, 2nd Floor Conference Room, 41 Green St.

Present: Fran Philippe* (Chair), Mark Cheever* (Vice Chair), Andrew Gould*, Rik Van Riel*, Rebecca Ross*, Gail Page*, Judy Barrett Weatherbee^, Jeff Lewis (Conservation Commission), AnneMarie Skinner (City Planner), Ron Klemarczyk (Consultant City Forester), Carl Matson (Trails Ranger), Alec Bass (Assistant City Planner – Community Planning)

**members*

^alternates

Guests: Matt Bowser (Central NH NEMBA), Mike Ferguson

1. Meeting called to order at 5:17 p.m.
 - a. Alec Bass introduced; will be taking over as City liaison for Trails Subcommittee once other positions are backfilled.
2. Review of meeting minutes from September 11, 2024. Corrections:
 - a. AnneMarie is one word, not two
 - b. 3.1 – should be suggested “numbering” as opposed to boxes
 - c. Only mentioned trails procedures, but other documents were included as well. After some discussion it was determined that a statement, “All of the changes as recommended by the Conservation Commission were agreed upon” is sufficient, and to remove 3.i to 3.iv.

Rebecca Ross made motion; Rick Van Riel seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

3. New Business
 - a. NEMBA Broken Ground Trail Update (Matt Bowser):
 - i. The trail is complete and 65 unique riders (and handful of runners) have used the new asset.
 - ii. Matt proposed several names (as reflected in the supporting document) but noted that it would be up to the subcommittee to provide guidance.
 - iii. Educational Signage: Matt noted the interesting geologic features of the site; a retired geologist would like to contribute pro bono content for signage that NEMBA is willing to pay for and install. It was noted that the potential new middle school location would make this site and signage an asset for environmental education.
 - iv. Matt invited the committee and the public to join for a Trail Day to continue work on the site including a bridge on Saturday, October 12, 2024, from 9:00

a.m. to 12:00 p.m. with a cookout after. More information is available on the Central NH NEMBA social media sites.

v. Questions:

1. A question was raised about signage and whether that was a safety issue to have congregation points on the trail. Mr. Bowser recommended signage could be just off the trail to avoid this issue.
2. Chair Philippe opened the floor for a quick discussion on names for the new trail.
 - a. It was determined that Broken Ground was too confusing, given the larger system of Broken Ground trails nearby.
 - b. It was proposed to look into metamorphic map for naming inspiration, but the type of rock could not be determined in time. The subcommittee decided to not delay.
 - c. After some discussion, the name *Ghost Pipe* after the white flowers that are common in the area (of genus *monotropa* which Mr. Bowser had suggested) was agreed upon.

Mark Cheever made a motion to approve the name Ghost Pipe; Judy Barrett Weatherbee seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Trails Maintenance and Reporting

a. Rob Kelmarczyk (City Forester):

- i. Cleared downed trees on the Riley Lot
- ii. Completed Beth's bench – plaque in next week so will be deployed shortly
- iii. Worked with Chair Philippe on history of owners of the cellar holes (Curtis, Frost, and Kimball).
 1. Joseph Eastman – founded the Frost cellar hole and sold to the Frost family. Eastman family was prominent in founding of East Concord.
 2. Curtis family had the Curtis one, eventually owned by Concord Lumber. Near Curtisville Road.

b. Carl Matson (Trails Ranger):

- i. Continuing with clearing of brush on trails; including trees on West End farm trail.
- ii. Swope Trail-Carter Hill connector to District 5 road; noted the trail closed signs were looking ragged so had those printed out along with updated map including areas with no biking permitted.
- iii. Merrimack River Greenway Trail, new section opened. Noted unhoused population has been removed. MRGT volunteers removed bittersweet and other invasives; should decrease unauthorized use.
- iv. Started easement monitoring on Morono Trail; no violations.

- v. Easement between golf course and Sewell Falls area – Mr. Matson encouraged to remove temporary bridging planks that were installed without approval.
- vi. Jim Hill Riverwalk – no blowdowns to report.

There was some discussion about a sign at Daisy Beach Picnic Area. After some discussion it was determined that signage for this area was not in the purview of Trails Subcommittee.

Mr. Matson also received a call about a collapsed bridge on the Richards property. He removed some hazardous timbers. Mr. Klemarczyk noted land management at this property could be challenging. Once the power company has concluded their work nearby a renewed focus on trails management can be explored.

5. Other Business

- a. For your information – adopted trails procedures and criteria
 - i. These were approved and adopted by Conservation Commission.
- b. Beth's Bench – update
 - i. Mr. Klemarczyk noted that work has been completed, awaiting a plaque to install.
 - ii. It was suggested the bench look out at the brook at the falls.
- c. Fall trails stewards – when will the checks begin; reminder no use of chain saws; keep track of hours
 - i. Rik van Riel will email stewards with a reminder for checks and send new guide in draft form.
 - ii. Mr. van Riel is the point of contact for stewards and maintains the official list. He will share the list with City representatives whenever a change is made. The City should continue to store waivers and other official records.
- d. Review of Trail Maintenance Guide
 - i. The subcommittee reviewed the draft circulated prior to the meeting and recommended the following changes:
 - Add date
 - Add page numbers
 - Add “in the spring and in the fall,”
 - Refine formatting
 - Include city liaison contact information (planning division email)
 - Add reporting dangers or hazards to the responsibility
 - Add section for safety:

Recommendations for Safety:

Trail stewards are responsible for their safety while on trails. They are encouraged to bring a first aid kit, sufficient layers, and tell a friend or family member when and where they are doing trail maintenance.

PLEASE NOTE: Trail stewards are NOT permitted to use a chainsaw unless approved by the City of Concord.

Trail stewards are advised not to take action on dangerous or hazardous conditions including confronting individuals; stewards are advised to directly report dangerous or hazardous conditions to the City.

- Add section for limitation of duties:

Trails stewards are reminded that their duties encompass trail maintenance and not trail building or expansion.

- Add section for new stewards

Anyone interested in becoming a trails stewards should contact planning@concordnh.gov

- ii. The committee commends Rik Van Riel for the great work here on drafting the initial guide. His diligent efforts to empower stewards with the knowledge to better serve our community is very much appreciated!
- iii. The committee agreed that this draft should be published to trails stewards to incorporate their feedback this week.

e. Russell Pond sign – update

- i. Chair Philippe connected with AARP and they hiked the site together recently; it was noted that City/Trails Subcommittee can submit for a grant that will cover the cost of signage.
- ii. A visual from the Snow Bowl (from 1948) was shared, with Chair Philippe's suggestion that we add a red line noting where the current trail moves over the landscape.
- iii. A title was encouraged: "Concord Ski and Outing Club's Winter Recreation Area"
- iv. Line to be included: This sign courtesy of the Concord Trails Subcommittee plus [city logo]
- v. Chair Philippe will send the text and design; and then go to Advantage Signs to get a quote, and then bring to AARP to approve the grant. A proof of the sign will be brought to the Conservation Commission.

Motion made to approve the draft for the sign was made by Chair Philippe. Amendments were proposed by Rebecca Ross. Amendments unanimously approved.

The motion was passed unanimously.

f. Hikes

- i. October 26, 2024 – Wendy Olsen, Batchelder Mills, 9:00 a.m., meeting place at gate just past Broken Ground School and overflow parking in school parking lot
- ii. November 16, 2024 – Janice Mistler, Swope-Winant Connector, 10:00 a.m., parking in Swope parking lot
- iii. December 7, 2024 – Bob Lyon, Oak Hill, 9:00 a.m., parking in Shaker Rd parking lot
- iv. January 2025
 1. Boscawen Town Forest Trails – January 18 – more info TK
- v. Morono Park Skunk Cabbage – March 29
 1. More info TK

Additional items discussed:

No update on All Persons Trail; but recommended to check out recent article on Manchester Cedar Swamp.

6. Meeting was adjourned at 6:42 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Cheever