

Bedford Trails Committee

Meeting Minutes – Wednesday, May 13, 2015 –7:00pm at the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan Community Meeting in the Town Hall Auditorium, with short meeting to follow in lower level conference room at Town Hall.

Participants – Paul, Dan, Michael, Chip, Kristin, Mark, Bruce & Adrienne

Meeting Minutes – Tuesday April 14, 2015 minutes approved unanimously

Distribute new T-shirts – Chip noted that he would like to have an iron-on decal made that would match the public trail marker and would say “Bedford” around the top of the circle and “Trails” around the bottom of the circle.

Update on Trails Committee Charge – Elizabeth has reviewed the draft charge and it will be reviewed by the Conservation Commission at their next hearing. She had noted that the charge should reference applicable laws.

Membership vacancies – Once the charge is finalized it will go to the Selectmen for approval and then the Committee can fill the two vacancies. Ralph Hammond is interested in one of the vacancies and the 2nd spot is to be determined. Clem may be interested and also Art Smith.

Trail Guide – A final draft of the Trail Guide went to the printer for a proof copy. Peter will send out a PDF for review to see if there are any additional comments.

Bog Bridges, Trail Blazing, Mapping & Maintenance

Discuss Trail Map Inventory Sheets – areas that remain; Michael did Harvard Drive, Paul did Minnie Reid and will do Altmann. Dan asked about the best way to submit information – either marking up a trail map or simply sending comments in an email. There are lot of ticks and mosquitoes.

Map boxes – status update; Paul put up a new map box today at O’Connor CA on the kiosk. He will email a picture to Kristin for Annual Report. Paul has 4 map boxes left and following completion of trail inventory we will decide where they will be placed.

Trail posts/signs – status update; For Peppergrass Brook CA at Harvard Drive, a laminated map on a post would be better than a map box so it won’t need to be re-stocked with maps. Paul demonstrated a prototype. Discussed having an orange sticker that means “You are Here”. The legend would note the orange dot. Bruce also noted a QR Code would be good on each map.

Donovan Drive/Governor Winthrop CA – entrance post & Certificate of Compliance; Ralph is making the intersection post and we need an entrance post on Donovan Drive. The entrance post should be 5-10 feet back from the curb and DPW will call in for the DigSafe ticket.

Michael noted he needs a heavy metal rake to work on removal of garlic mustard along the

new trail. Paul will confirm there is a post ready and will drop it off at Mark's house. Michael noted there is a post lying on the ground at the end of Fletcher Road.

Huckins Farm – update on review of easement; no update.

Old Middlesex Rd – status update; no update.

Peppergrass Brook CA – bog bridge status from field check; Michael noted there are about 10 bridges in there, most of which are two planks with a bunch of small cross-pieces. Three of them need to be replaced, and they are about 9 feet long. There are two long plank style bog bridges and they are fine. There are some low areas that need bog bridges and it may be possible to relocate some of the existing low bog bridges and then install the new style bog bridges where the wet areas may be deeper. Chip also mentioned that it would be nice to have a connection across Peppergrass Brook to the Carlson CA trail, but it's just too wet. On the existing Carlson trail, it would also be worthwhile to look into having a boardwalk replace the existing individual bog bridges but that would need to be a separate conservation filing.

Proposed Bedford Circuit Trail Loop – status update for trail marker and easements; no update.

Bog Bridge NOI – Kristin reported that we want to file soon for the permit. Discussed adding Peppergrass Brook CA bog bridges to the Notice of Intent and we will eventually need to pin down the exact locations and proposed lengths. For Town Campus bog bridges around the small pond, Mark had previously provided proposed lengths and locations that will need to have GPS data collected to add to the trail map. A bog bridge building day will need to be scheduled when we have a better idea of what is needed. Adrienne noted that the plan for the new filing will be to note the specific locations we have now and then leave it open to adding more locations in the future if needed over the course of the permit term. Mark confirmed that any existing old style bog bridges that need to be replaced with the new style is not part of the new filing. Paul will confirm the existing stock of bog bridges and let us know. Wilderness Park needs a bog bridge replacement. The new bog bridge permit will include the following specific locations: Town Campus, Governor Winthrop, 350A Concord Road, Peppergrass CA, Huckins Farm and Old Reservoir. Michael noted that there is a lot of mud on the north side of Fawn Lake that may need some bog bridges but the overall trail condition will also be looked at as part of the Community Preservation project.

Review of unknown trail near Two Brother's Rocks to Billerica along the Concord River – Mark noted that the trail is too wet. On snow shoes it was possible to walk. Hal has both the Bedford and Billerica trails GPS'd but they couldn't get into the area to see where the existing blue blazes lead to since it was too wet. Mark also reported that the section of boardwalk near the Mill Brook is still there as a bridge to nowhere and is in excellent condition except that the entrance has become overgrown.

New Business

Discussed a potential bypass trail at Altmann CA that would allow a more direct connection to the river that avoids the wet trail past the vernal pool. There is some confusion about if the trail already exists and if not, would it be acceptable to the Altmann family to add it. A trail walk is scheduled for next Tuesday and Paul and Michael will try to attend. Elizabeth is also working with Yan to create signage for interesting plants along the vernal pool trail. Once there is a field visit we will finalize if the plan to add a new trail will move forward, which would then need an RDA filing for work in the buffer zone and a change in the blazing scheme. Any changes to Altmann would also need to be finalized for the Trail Guide.

Trail Walks & Public Education

May 2nd – Michael and Jim went to Fawn Lake and had about 10 people. The weather was excellent and everyone enjoyed it. Jim has the binder.

June 6th – needs a leader/National Trails Day; Bruce will check if he is available to lead.

Next meeting: Discuss next meeting possibly on Wednesday, June 10th at 7:00pm Conservation Commission hearing for bog bridge NOI. Dan will not be able to attend. The rest of the Committee agreed to the date change.

Meeting minutes recorded by Kristin Dowdy and approved on July 14, 2015.