

# Bedford Trails Committee

Meeting Minutes – Tuesday, July 14, 2015 – 7:30pm DPW 2<sup>nd</sup> floor conference room

**Participants** – Michael, Bruce, Mark, Hal, Dan, Paul, Steve, Kristin, Adrienne, Marlies Henderson (visitor) and Chris Kovalchick (new attendee)

**Meeting Minutes** – Wednesday May 13, 2015 (short meeting following Pedestrian/Bicycle Meeting) approved unanimously.

**Bay Circuit Trail re-route proposal update from Marlies Henderson** – Marlies from Billerica reported on Bay Circuit Trail and showed new blazes. When they were updating blazes it was noted there is a gap in the blazes through the town campus. Mark suggested that instead of having the trail go through the town campus, it could be re-routed to go down Railroad Avenue to Loomis Street and then north on the Narrow Gauge Rail Trail (NGRT). Kristin reported that Art Smith, who was involved with the original BCT trail layout, noted via email that when the BCT was laid out it was a deliberate urban decision to pass by the schools, library, first parish meeting house, and old burial ground in the historic district and that he would not be in favor of changing it. Art also noted that any change to the route would need to be voted on by the Selectmen since they had declared it as it is today. Marlies noted that the Bay Circuit Trail board typically supports any changes a community might want for their section of the trail. Mark noted that he feels the more direct route on the NGRT is not too far from the town center but that it's more desirable for bicycles due to its simplification. It would need further thought since there is not a consensus on keeping it the same versus changing it. Michael asked the committee if they would want to approach the Selectmen about changing it or leave it the way it is. Dan agreed that it is difficult to follow the BCT through the Town Campus since there may not be sufficient blazing. He also noted that it appeared the proposed route change would be slightly shorter and asked if changing the distance would matter and Marlies said it would not. Adrienne asked if the BCT has a specific charge that would help in deciding the route. Marlies would check on that and let the Committee know. This will be held for the next meeting. Mark also noted that input from the Bicycle Committee would be important as well as Ralph Hammond's opinion given his knowledge of historic sites.

Marlies also noted that the BCT has "The Cabinet of Curiosities" which could be put on display at the Bedford Library as a traveling information station for people to see. It is currently at Wolbach Farm in Sudbury.

**Update on Trails Committee Charge/Membership vacancies** – Michael noted there are a few minor changes proposed. The latest revision from Conservation included specific reference noting being subject to wetland laws and Town Wetlands By-law, however the Committee feels they are subject to all applicable laws, which goes without saying and that it's not necessary to list just a few. It was suggested to delete the reference to any laws. Dan also noted that he is not in favor of using the

term "passive recreation" in the purpose paragraph, since the definition is not clear. Hal suggested removing the word "passive" and it was decided to strike the clause and end the sentence after "Bedford trail system". There was also a typo in the second to last paragraph. A motion was made to approve the changes above to delete "for passive recreation" and "subject to...(laws)" and was seconded. Revised charge approved unanimously. DPW will send to Selectmen with a courtesy copy to the Conservation Commission.

**Trail Guide** – passed around latest proof copy of Trail Guide for review. The size of the guide is nice, and the only concern is the narrow margin and smudging ink with fingertips. Mark made a motion that the trail guide should be given to all members free of charge and it was approved unanimously. Kristin noted Elizabeth completed her review and DPW will incorporate her comments. It was also discussed that the regional trail maps would be included on 2 pull out pages that are double sided. Hal and Paul noted that inside of the guide is not waterproof like the front and back cover. Also discussed that changing the Bay Circuit Trail would affect the maps in the guide book. The trail guide would be available for sale at the town hall, DPW and possibly at the depot. Kristin will check with Peter on how much extra it would cost to have each page laminated or printed on water proof paper. The committee will not make a profit on selling the books, the money will go into a revolving fund for future printing or trails committee needs.

### **Bog Bridges, Trail Blazing, Mapping & Maintenance**

Recap of Bog Bridge NOI approval and OOC – Kristin reported the Conservation Commission approved the NOI and received the Order of Conditions. Bog bridge paperwork will still be submitted to ConCom for review of each individual site.

Vegetation Analysis by wetland consultant – the Beals and Thomas consultant, John Thomas, will be in Bedford on July 22<sup>nd</sup> to complete the vegetation analysis for the bog bridge sites listed in the NOI (Huckins Farm, Peppergrass CA, Governor Winthrop CA, Town Campus and Old Reservoir). The proposed trail at Altmann to avoid the wet area near the vernal pool is on hold until the fall when we can have a site visit with Elizabeth. Paul noted there is a large tree down near the steps in the stone wall, where the proposed trail would go. The trail guide will correct the issue of the small section that showed as double blazed (blue and orange).

Schedule Bog Bridge building day – The inventory is low. Following the site visit with the wetlands consultant we will have a better idea of bog bridge lengths that are needed. Proposed date is Saturday September 12<sup>th</sup>. Mark noted we should change from nails to screws so it holds up better. Bog bridge ramps will also be needed. Paul noted to connect bog bridges we can use metal straps.

Discuss Trail Map Inventory Sheets – areas that remain; Dan will check Carlson and Langone. Paul will check Altmann, already did Minnie Reid. When inventory is complete we can update trail maps and have a confirmed bog bridge count. Mark noted that the best way is to add sticky notes onto trail map PDFs.

Map boxes – status update; The boy scouts put up a plastic map box at the new kiosk in the MCC parking lot by Fawn Lake. Paul can install the standard map box for consistency.

Trail posts/signs – status update; Ralph is working on lettered posts for Mark that will be completed after the PMC ride. Paul showed Elizabeth the prototype plastic trail map sign he made and she told him to install near Minnie Reid to see how it weathers. They would be used in locations that did not have a map box. Paul also noted there are rotting picnic tables at Minnie Reid. He can take them out and bring to the landfill. Michael will help Paul.

Donovan Drive/Governor Winthrop CA – status update; Mark and Michael fixed the 16-ft bog bridge. Mark brushed the trail when he was last out there. Michael has removed more invasives – bittersweet and poison ivy. Mark noted the trail may need hardening such as mulch, but that would need approval since it's in the buffer zone. Michael asked if there is a landscape cloth that could be installed since vegetation grows back so quickly. The best way to keep the trail open is for more people to walk it.

Huckins Farm – update on review of easement; no update.  
(Old Middlesex Rd – status update;)  
(Proposed Bedford Circuit Trail Loop– status update for trail marker and easements;)

### **New Business**

Mark noted he removed a down tree on the Narrow Gauge. Elizabeth reported there is a tree down on York CA, near the northerly trail entrance by the sign. Hal will take care of it. The other tree down is on the neighborhood path between Dunster Road and Sunset Road.

### **Trail Walks & Public Education**

June 6<sup>th</sup> – recap from Bruce; no one showed.  
July 4<sup>th</sup> – trail walk cancelled for holiday  
August 1<sup>st</sup> – needs a leader; Paul will check his schedule  
September 5<sup>th</sup> – needs a leader

**Next meeting:** Tuesday, August 11, 2015

*Meeting minutes recorded by Kristin Dowdy and approved on September 8, 2015.*