

Minutes

Norwich Trails Committee and volunteers monthly meeting

7 pm, November 3, 2021

Zoom: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82651305884>¹

Attendees:

Norwich Trails Committee (NTC) members present: Craig Layne and David Hubbard. *Absent:* Cody Williams.

Volunteers and members of the public: Stephen Flanders (scribe), George Clark, Jim Faughnan, Bob Fiske, Peter Griggs, Elisabeth Hammer, Doug Hardy, Byron Haynes, Toby Kravitz, Nick Krembs (facilitator), Jane LeMasurier, John McCormick, Gerry Plummer, and Cathie Redpath

AGENDA

1. **Approval of agenda:** Hubbard called the meeting to order at 7 pm, noting the presence of a NTC quorum. He designated Krembs as the facilitator of the meeting. The AT Corridor discussion was moved ahead to become item 7.
2. Comments from those present: At the end of the meeting, Haynes mentioned the need for a physical map design to sell at Dan & Whit's. The format is 11 x 17. Flanders and Plummer will develop a replacement to the traditional map.

Trail infrastructure

3. Update from the UVTA: No report
4. Reports on recent trail blockages and actions taken or planned:
 - a. October 17th – Work on Ballard Grand Canyon stream crossing, bridge relocation: Griggs summarized the work done at the crossing, which included removal of the remnants of the previous structure, armoring the channel with stones on both banks, and placement of two stepping stones in the channel.
5. Trail kiosks—FY 2021-2 Trails budget: \$2,500
 - a. Update progress: A new kiosk is slated for the Beaver Meadow Road trailhead to the Blue Ribbon Trail.
 - b. When to replace at P5, Ballard Park, Gile Mountain: Discussion concluded that no immediate action is required. Roof to be replaced on P5 kiosk.
6. Trail kiosk signage
 - a. Approve material to be shown for Gile, Blue Ribbon, Parcel 5: The only indicated change was for a simplification of the no-dogs policy sign to say “Dogs on Leash” to avoid the suggestion that an ordinance required them to be on leash.
7. Appalachian Trail Corridor
 - a. Report on action from USFS: There was no correspondence from the USFS.
 - b. NTC position on Barred Owl/Joshua Trail: Flanders had drafted two draft versions of a memo to complete the NTC's response to the USFS request for input on its offer to authorize three of the four trails in the original NTC proposal. (The NTC's letter endorsed two of the three proposed trails, but reserved judgment on the Joshua Trail to allow further comment.)

¹ For dial-in information and assistance, see next page.

Hardy made reference to the July petition that he coordinated, which advocated for more trail crossings than supported by the USFS, and he recommended awaiting the agency's response to that petition. A lengthy discussion about the Joshua crossing converged on the concept that the NTC ask for authorization of two separate existing routes: the "Barred Owl" foot path and the western-most "flow" mountain bike trail. Hubbard emphasized that any recommendation be based on a demonstrated consensus of the trail-using community. Hardy offered to share the materials that represent the consensus of the July petitioners to the USFS on all the proposed trail crossings, including the Joshua Trail, for discussion in the December meeting.

8. Work days to schedule:
 - a. November 14th—Gile Mountain water bar cleaning: Time to be announced.
9. Conversion of Burton Woods Road segment to a trail
 - a. Update on NCC action: The Norwich Conservation Commission has sent a memo to the selectboard via the interim town manager, proposing the conversion. As of this date, it had not been placed on the selectboard agenda.

Financial

10. Planning for FY 2022-23 budget: Parking—Draft report to Norwich selectboard
 - a. Gile Mountain: Krembs reported that Jeff Goodrich had developed some detailed engineering figures on which the NCC could base a one-time request for design and construction funds. The range of options are for the selectboard to a) include the project in the town operating budget, b) draft a warrant article for voters to approve directly, or c) circulate a petition for a warrant article.
 - b. Burton Woods: Parking is subject to a trial arrangement with the landowners.
 - c. Elm Street: The trails budget has a \$350 provision for fill material to address parking there.
 - d. Happy Hill Road: Parking capacity is subject to a determination by the interim town manager, what portion of the turn-around will be delimited by a no-parking sign.
11. Trails infrastructure budget: Hubbard outlined the following elements, comprising a \$2,750 Trails line item:
 - Kiosks: \$1,200
 - Bridge replacement: \$1,200
 - Maintenance materials: \$ 350

Other

12. Items for December meeting
 - a. Identify consensus for AT crossings.
 - b. Schedule construction and installation of remaining kiosks
 - c. Confirm signage for kiosks
13. Items for future meetings
- 14. Adjourn:** Krembs adjourned the meeting at 8:30 pm.