

Minutes

Norwich Trails Committee and volunteers monthly meeting

7 pm, April 6, 2022

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

Attendees: (all by Zoom)

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

Volunteers and members of the public: George Clark, Jim Faughnan, Bob Fiskén, Stephen Flanders (scribe), Peter Griggs, Nick Krembs (facilitator), Sean Ogle

AGENDA

1. **Approval of agenda:** Williams called the meeting to order at 7:05 and asked for any changes to the agenda. None were offered.
2. Comments from those present: He then asked for comments from those present about items not on the agenda. None were offered.

Old business

3. Memos to Selectboard: Deferred from March NTC meeting: After brief discussions, the NTC approved by consensus to pass the following two items in the agenda packet to the Norwich Conservation Commission (NCC) for action.
 - a) Trails overview—Also to the Norwich Planning Commission
 - b) Burton Woods Road load limit—An alternative to reclassification as a trail

Infrastructure

4. Update from the UVTA: Ogle reported that the Gile Mountain counter had been turned away from the trail and asked that anyone seeing that occur report it to him.
5. Posting for mud season: Reports from volunteers: No trail closures were reported as necessary this year.
6. Reports on recent trail blockages and actions taken or planned: Krembs reported that Doug Hardy (H), Faughnan (F) and he (K), had cleared trail blockages from fallen trees, as follows: on the Betty Booth Trail (F & K), Blue Ribbon Trail (H & K), the Blue-Ribbon Connector Trail (F & K), and the Upper Ballard Trail (F).
7. Trail projects for 2022: The following were discussed for scoping the actions needed and scheduling the work.
 - Betty Booth Trail: Segments on the north side of the brook are eroding and require water-bar work. It was agreed to await further engagement from Brie Swenson and Jane LeMasurier with the landowners on the south side of the brook to explore the authorization of trails, leading to the King Arthur Baking Company. Mowing the area and the stream crossing would be issues, if trails were authorized.
 - Gile Mountain treadway: Faughnan reported that there were a few trouble spots for which materials were already staged, both above and below the VELCO powerline. These would be candidates for a few hours of work.
 - Parcel 5 damage repair: Fiskén reported that some shovel work would be needed to repair damage done to the intersection of the main loop with the short cut to the parking lot.

- Brown Schoolhouse Road wet area: Faughnan and Fisken reported that a crew with gravel brought to the bridge and transported by wheelbarrow could improve the safety to mountain bikers of the existing drainage ditch on the uphill, southwest side of the Brown Schoolhouse Bridge.
 - Heyl trail routing from Bragg Hill Road: Flanders reported that it had been recommended for the trail to follow the new VELCO road along the powerline, abandoning the original routing in from Bragg Hill Road and possibly bypassing the old route at a steep section that leaves the right of way.
 - Powers Road drainage and treadway: Fisken reported that this is a heavily used connector trail between Bradley Hill and Patrell Roads and has a lengthy wet area in a gully. Fisken, Flanders and Ogle were scheduled to meet on 8 April at 2 pm to scope the project.
 - Gile Mountain Tower: It was decided that, apart from a few loose steps reported, no substantial action was required.
 - Schmidt Bog: The NCC will discuss the steps required to enhance the utility of this town-owned property by clearing invasives, repairing the walkway, and possibly providing interpretative signage.
 - Woody Adams parcel: Layne reported several areas of poor drainage in the section where the woods road approaches Turnpike Road. Krembs agreed to organize a visit to the site at 2:30 on April, 8.
 - A-frame Bridge: Krembs will recommend a schedule for transporting the materials and constructing a replacement bridge, funded by the Norwich Women's Club.
8. Kiosk construction: Faughnan reported that the kiosk signage has been delivered and he is prepared to construct six 2 x 3-foot kiosks and two 3 x 3-foot kiosks, when funds are made available.

Financial

9. Funding needed for 2022 trail infrastructure projects and sources to apply to: It was decided that there wasn't a need to apply for grant funds at this time.
10. Women's Club grant for kiosk signage: Flanders reported that the eight remaining kiosk signs had been ordered and invoiced to the Women's Club for reimbursement. The materials have been purchased for trail signs, as well.
11. NCC Trails budget: Hubbard reported that some reprogramming of the NCC 2021-22 budget had been required. He will report the balance at the May meeting that can be applied to bridging at the Ballard Park end of the Ballard Trail. The 2022-23 budget contains funding for trailhead kiosks and bog-bridge replacement—likely to be applied to the Schmidt Bog. Funds for the trailhead kiosks will be available July 1.

Other

12. Happy Hill turnaround: Layne reported that the town manager has not responded to the request for parking at this location.
13. Appalachian Trail Corridor: The USFS has not sent its decision on crossing trails. Word was received that only one multi-use trail would be authorized at the Joshua Trail crossing point.
14. Trails and Paths Master Plan Committee: Discuss schedule and scope
15. Future website map formats: Will be an agenda item for May.
16. Items for May meeting
- Trail survey reports for work schedule
 - Future website map formats

- Sale of printed trail maps—it was agreed that this will not be an activity of the Norwich Trails volunteers unless a substantial demand is demonstrated. It won't be on the May agenda.
- Bench at the Brown Schoolhouse Bridge—Nick Fabrikant has offered some alternative ideas.

17. Adjourn: Krembs adjourned the meeting at 8:30.