

Minutes of the March 5, 2018 Bolton Trails Committee Meeting

Attendees:

Andrew "Drew" Schaubhut (chair), Steve Rothman (note taker), Gordon Taylor, Betsy Taylor-Kennedy, Larry Kunz, Jeff Bryan, Bob Roemer, Chris Fitzgerald, Julianne North

The agenda for the meeting is attached, as are Rebecca's notes she sent out prior to the meeting.

1. We are currently out of trail guide books and more are needed. After much discussion (some of the details below), we recommended to proceed with 50 books, which will have updated maps *except* Houghton Farms, and be called the 2018 book. Jeff L will decide exactly which updates to include. Drew will talk to Jeff L about getting the books done.
 - a. Given the slow progress of the NE Power Co. review, we decided we need to proceed with printing more books before that is resolved.
 - b. We agreed that we should put in all the updates "that are ready".
 - c. We agreed that we should not have books with the same cover year that have different content– that's why this new printing should say 2018.
 - d. We would like to include the updated maps for a few select properties (ex. Bowers Springs, Vaughn Hills, Gould-White) which have intersection labels (the labels originally created for Greg's distance measurements). The unreleased maps with the labels which we're using internally we think need to be updated so they're like the intersection labels on the Rattlesnake map– a smaller font, and each label in a box.
2. The discussion about printing more books lead to some future agenda items:
 - a. Do we want intersection signs on the ground for some of the areas in addition to Rattlesnake. Several folks through that Vaughn Hills and Bowers Springs would both benefit from intersection signs (or, perhaps they should be called "labels").
 - b. Do we want to put back the "You Are Here" maps? In discussions over the past several years, there was a belief that since most folks have smart phones with maps and GPS, maps "on the ground" would no longer be needed. However, now that some of them are gone, they're missed (including by members of the Steering Group).
 - c. Do we want trail segment mileage information on the maps (like AAA road maps)?
 - d. Should the maps include "recommended" hikes/loops.
3. Several people noted that Rebecca's February 23 walk at Vaughn Hills wasn't publicized very well. Several Trust members said they would make sure that in the future, the Trust website will include notice of the walks, and Drew will put them on the Trails Committee website.
4. Gordon will recommend to Rebecca that she consider Powder House and Gould White walks.

5. Following up on the old agenda item about adding trails to the town GIS map, Chris noted that it's already possible to show OpenStreetMap maps as a layer in the GIS system, and OpenStreetMap already includes many of the trails in town. Gordon will follow up with Rebecca.
6. The 3 new trails email accounts set up by Rich from the Trust are working. The accounts are:
 - `TrailsSteeringGroup@BoltonConservationTrust.org`

This contains all the folks who usually attend the monthly meetings, and who don't mind getting lots of trails emails. It's about 15 people. Only individuals on the list can send to the list.
 - `TrailsVolunteers@BoltonConservationTrust.org`

This contains everyone who has volunteered to help maintain trails in town. It is to be used primarily for notices about trail maintenance activities. It's currently between 40 and 45 people. Only individuals on the list can send to the list.
 - `BoltonTrails@BoltonConservationTrust.org`

This is the "public" address that anyone can send to. Several of the members of the Trails Steering Group will get copies of messages sent to this address. When anyone getting these messages responds, they need to communicate with everyone else who got the message what their response was. This address will be replacing the GMail BoltonTrails address, because the Trust mail system allows us much better control over these messages than GMail does.

There's some confusion about what being a "moderator" for these email accounts means. Gordon will follow up with Rich to understand it better.
7. Steve didn't understand that the intersection "caution" photo in the signs inventory is just a placeholder, and the goal is to get a picture of every sign. LATE NEWS: Steve took pictures of a few of the signs and added them to the table, although he found that he needs to work with Drew on the process for updating the table. The goal will be that "techy" Steering Group members can do it (you know who you are!).
8. Bob Roemer lead a discussion about what the DropBox structure should be for Trails Committee data. The group spent some time discussing what's needed. We decided (folks who were there, please confirm this was the final decision:) that at the top level we'd have types of data (photos, maps, raw data, tracks, etc.), and then within each type of data, we'd have a directory (folder) for each property.
9. Jeff Bryan showed a laminated "No Outlet" sign which will be put up at Rattlesnake intersection 2C.
10. Several folks in attendance noted that mud holes on (in) the trails are a major issue in some cases. We decided we'd add them to the projects list. LATE NEWS: Rebecca confirmed that she needs to be involved in any work, whether it's filling holes, or putting in wooden walkways (bikeways), or bridges. In some cases, she would need to take proposals to the Conservation Commission.

11. Bob Roemer is working on a chainsaw guide. The previous training has only been about safety. Bob pointed out that it's also very important that people learn how to bring down trees, so they fall in an appropriate place, with minimal damage to the environment. Bob is going to propose some sort of "proof of certification" for chainsaw work on conservation land.
12. Several people noted that the current residents of Bolton need to be informed about the new rules for dog walking on conservation land– that the folder Rebecca is working on will only be going to new residents. LATE NEWS: Steve and Millie have been at Bowers Springs a few times recently, and perhaps more folks are picking up after the dogs, but there's still huge room for improvement.
13. Gordon noted that Winslow Green will be leading a hike in Rattlesnake for the "Wednesday Wheelers" on Tuesday March 6, due to the storm forecast for March 7.
14. Rebecca unfortunately couldn't attend the meeting. She sent out a detailed status report on what she's been doing (attached). One item from a previous meeting was missing from her list: She was going to talk to Alex LeBlanc, EMS training coordinator, about the need for maps for the public safety people which show which trails can take the "Gator" ATV. There may need to be site visits between public safety groups and the Trails Steering Group.
15. Future agenda items from previous meetings (some of these may already be on the projects list):
 - a. Put up a "No Motorized Vehicles" sign from the storage container at the opening in the stone wall at Harris Farms.
 - b. Should we think about putting a trail along the eastern edge of the Rattlesnake property which goes between the end of the Coventry Wood Trail and (near) intersection 1H?
 - c. Do we need "Conservation Land Boundary" markers at the Rattlesnake/Harris Farms border?
 - d. Has the brush pile from the Garrison House been moved to Bowers Springs?

Bolton Trails Committee Meeting Agenda

March 5th 2018 - Houghton Building at 7:00PM

1. Conservation Agent Items
 - a. News/Updates/Requests for Help (Rebecca's choice)
 - b. Houghton Farm/Zink-Northwoods access Status from NE Power Co.
 - c. State (or other) grants for trail improvements
 - i. <http://clifbarfamilyfoundation.org/grants-programs/small-grants>
 - d. Guided Hikes series
 - e. Invasive Species Updates
 - f. Volunteer Land Steward Update
 - g. Trails data on Town GIS layer
2. Group Email Accounts Update
 - a. TrailsSteeringGroup@BoltonConservationTrust.org
 - b. TrailsVolunteers@BoltonConservationTrust.org
3. Cloud Storage - Drop Box Update
 - a. Trail Projects List - automatic update on website
 - b. ConCom Container Inventory
4. Trail Sign Inventory status/update
5. Property Updates
6. Bolton Trails Committee at community events throughout the year - recommendations and volunteers to lead

March 5th 2018 - Houghton Building at 7:00PM

Conservation Agent Items

- a. News/Updates/Requests for Help (Rebecca's choice)
- b. Houghton Farm/Zink-Northwoods access Status from NE Power Co.

Comments are in review with NEPCo. Counsel. Will update when we hear back however it is important to note it was estimated this may take up to 4 months but should be a shorter timeline.

- c. State (or other) grants for trail improvements

Reviewing Small Communities Grant and PARC (next year) grant

- i. <http://clifbarfamilyfoundation.org/grants-programs/small-grants>

Clifbar grant must be a non-profit but may apply to trail work

- d. Guided Hikes series

Guided hike series will be between 1-1.5 hour long hikes through various conservation properties. Toward the middle of Spring the walks will be hosted by New England Wildflower Society at Fyfreshire, I am hoping to have another "a day in history" walk/event at Fyfreshire in collaboration with the historical society and Rona Balco. I am working to plan other presentations and walks with other specialized professionals as well. I plan to host at least one at the end of every month.

February 23rd (although short notice in advertisement) turned out to be a wonderful group on a great day to walk Vaughn Hills around the impoundment to North Peak!

The next walk will be March 23rd at a Location TBD. I am currently deciding the location and am stuck between Gould-White, Powderhouse, Rattlesnake (Phillips Trail) or Vaughn Hills (Moen).

- e. Invasive Species Updates

We need more assistance on data collection and pulling now that the weather is getting better let's get people involved! Please send me data that has been collected in Bolton (on Conservation Land or Not). Use the app "Outsmart" and before you upload to the state database screen shot the data and email to me please and thank you. If paper form then email to me as well! Paper documents are available on the conservation page website.

The dates to avoid confusion will also be reiterated on the conservation calendar on the town conservation dept. page calendar.

- f. Volunteer Land Steward Update

The Conservation Commission will be voting on the new Land Steward or rather to accept or repost the position for Volunteer Land Steward position.

- g. Trails data on Town GIS layer

We are currently working on upgrading our systems internally in town hall but this may be addressed in a couple months at that time. It would be interesting to hear from the group to see if this is of interest OR if it is more beneficial to keep the trails located on the committee website.

There is a good argument for both!

2. Group Email Accounts Update

- a. TrailsSteeringGroup@BoltonConservationTrust.org

- b. TrailsVolunteers@BoltonConservationTrust.org

thank you!

3. Cloud Storage - Drop Box Update

- a. Trail Projects List - automatic update on website

Thank you! Could you please email me the address for this access again?

- b. ConCom Container Inventory

The inventory has not changed aside from I have a few tools such as clippers, grubber and rake in my truck for the ISMP work.

4. Trail Sign Inventory status/update

Some of the signs may just need to be sanded and possibly a fresh coat of paint?

Also assessing the Gould-White trail sign issue (as it seems to keep leaning?)

5. Property Updates

Wrapped trees at Bowers Springs to deter beavers...still need about 2 more rolls for rest of appropriate trees

Potential Trail easement/parking agreement at Environmental Pools? (awaiting response)

Boundary Marking needed goal should be AT LEAST one property at year (if anyone is interested)

Proposed work to restore plants at Rattlesnake...Conservation Dept. will be made aware on March 6th meeting once plants are in place please Do Not Disturb them there is proposed signage to go along with the work

Where are there trails aside from Houghton and Vaughn Hills that need formal easements?

Mrs. Jones has approached the town to see level of interest in Vaughn Hills (missing puzzle piece) parcel. BOS and ConCom showed interest with no concerns mentioned! This donation will occur in FY19 as part of a tax credit program from the state and will take about a year. Will update when new news.

6. Bolton Trails Committee at community events throughout the year – recommendations and volunteers to lead

EARTH DAY?!

Clean ups?!

Community Yard Sale?! (Set up at town common and sell trail guides etc?)

Book Sale? (Coordinate with library to table and have trail guides for sale?)

Also note World Water Day (March 22nd) the Conservation Dept will be hosting a story hour and activity with the childrens dept at the library & April 20th (Earth Day April 22nd) we will be hosting a story hour and planting seedlings again with the childrens dept at the library in an early celebration of earth day!

Thank you all for your time and effort!

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