



# Bolton Trails Committee Meeting

April 12<sup>th</sup>, 2017

Meeting notes added in red by JML on 4.13.17

## Properties Overview

1. **Bolton Flats** – No updates at this time.
2. **Vaughn Hills**– Easement location between conservation land and Trust owned “Harris” parcel needs to be GPS tracked. Group needs to determine if existing trail can be relocated to the easement. Several wooden trail signs need replacing. The locations and content of these are TBD. The DPW did work both on Vaughn Hill road (washouts) and in the Moen parking lot. The rutted areas of the lot have been filled and compacted with coarse crushed stone. Winslow identified cross trail falls in from Green Road. **This includes one in from the trail head and several others around the pond. Jeff & Winslow to review.**
3. **Bowers Springs**– Lots of beaver activity in the center pond with the water level down several feet in the west pond. One cross trail fall down exists near photo key 2. A new doggy bag dispenser unit for this property is coming soon. The tree warden processed the top of a split tree along the allee. Some cut brush from that project, along with a few fall downs require clearing. **Winslow commented a dead standing tree in the North meadow should be reviewed for removal. Larry stated the water levels at the western pond are high again, and several cross trail obstructions need to be removed.**
4. **Powder House Hill** – An proposed Eagle Scout project will better define the trails across Lot #44 owned by First Baptist Church. These segments connect Powder House with Town Common. Matt communicated a large trail hang up exists near the trail entrance from Sugar and Golden Run. **Greg stated the ES candidate has a broken leg, and the project has slowed. Keith suggested a plant identification walk along the trails on Town Common.**
5. **Zink-Northwoods** – April 3<sup>rd</sup> - Jeff, Matt, and Drew worked to clear multiple issues along the first 500 yards of the Zink trail from Corn. This included two large overhead leaning trees, trailside dead standing, pinch points, and cross trail fall downs. Several large climbing ground vines were section cut. **The Houghton Farm trail system was reviewed and discussed. Several existing trail segments cross over New England Power Company property. Jeff will follow up with the interested parties.**
6. **Rattlesnake** – 3.23 – Jeff and Bob clear a dead standing tree and debris from the Bob Horton TH1 parking area. The existing in field “you are here” signs and posts need to be removed. Julianne sent in a photo of a cross trail fall down on Ridge Loop trail north of “2N”. We plan to process a pine out of a vernal pool at the end of the summer. Keith, Jeff B and Jeff L spent three hours clearing trails on 4.8.
7. **Delaney** – No updates at this time.
8. **Annie Moore** – The loop extension project is approved as currently GPS tracked and will be a high priority project this spring. **Greg identified a cross trail fall down on the secondary loop between junctions H & I. Drew suggested we review lot #35 in Stow and add to the map if conservation.**
9. **Danforth** – The loop trail east of the gas pipeline easement up to Barrett’s Hill peak needs markers installed. **Jeff plans to walk this property before the next meeting.**

**10. Randall-Vinger** – Group discussed adding several trail markers on posts to identify the trail location from H to F. A survey of this area may be required given the tight proximity to private land. On March 31<sup>st</sup>, Gordon and Jeff walked most of this property clearing multiple issues including cross trail obstructions, overhead leaning trees, and trailside dead standing problems and pinch points.

**11. Gould-White Property** – Property needs trail markers. Drew suggested a wooden “PARKING” sign at the single car area close to the trail head. On March 31<sup>st</sup>, Gordon and Jeff walked the Basin Loop clearing multiple obstructions and trailside issues. There is a large old tire on the White property. Betsy has been in contact with the homeowner of 100 West Berlin Rd. An electric dog fence wire and flags were installed across the trail easement. A response was received and Jeff to confirm resolution during the week of April 10<sup>th</sup>.

**12. Welch Pond** – We are still exploring the extension of a trail across his property to Sawyer Road. The Schartners are worried that the release of their property to continue the trail for Welch Pond might allow the neighboring farm to develop the adjacent 20 acre lot. Following this concern, it was explained that the trail would not impact land ownership or use. Further conversations are required. **Scott asked in the Gould-White property access off W. Berlin Road could be included in this map.**

**13. Bolton Overlook** – No updates at this time.

**14. Wilder Pond** – TC to schedule a site visit for future bridge location with David Russel. A new residential subdivision is planned for Lot #3 adjacent to Wilder Pond. Over 4 acres of new open space will be created, capturing the trail and bridge that we not part of the conservation parcel. The property boundary corner has been flagged by D&D. A new trail through invasives needs to be cleared to determine next steps. **The group reviewed the plan and the new subdivision.**

**15. Fyfeshire** – The correct trail easement location across Schartner’s parcel was surveyed and flagged on 10.26, mapped and reviewed by Schartner. Initial trail clearing started on 10.7 with the trail completed to 25%. Completion of this project is a high priority this spring. A larger tree has fallen into the pond behind the dam. **We are planning a work party in collaboration with Trinity Church on April 30<sup>th</sup>.**

## **Other TC Items**

**1. Website Stats** – Averaging 947 page views and 260 unique visitors per week. The highest peaks in the last thirty days were 175 page views and 49 unique visitors in a day. Rattlesnake continues to be the most visited property page, with the “TC in Action” in second.

**2. Inventory Spreadsheet** – On going. Material estimates for 2017 will be completed in April.

**3. Microsoft One Drive** – storage for photos, and historical documents (on going).

**4. Next TC Meeting** – is scheduled for May 17th.

**5. Trail Distances** – Complete. Maps include all junctions coordinated with the master distance spreadsheet. Implementation for public consumption is still under consideration. The group discussed possible implementation options. In the maps might include a key with junction references or along the trail segment line between two “pins”. Having loop trail walks identified with both time and distance data was discussed. Installing this data in the KML files was suggested.

**6. 2017 Trails Guide** – The 2017 edition of The Bolton Trails Guide is published. Two versions were developed for 2017. One “Trust” version is available for free to members, and one “TC” version is for sale at Town Hall for \$10. The guide received a 2017 grant from our Bolton Cultural Council!

**7. Logo Patches** – all new for 2017 are the 2.5” PVC Velcro-backed Bolton Trails Committee logo patches. The first order for 25 should deliver the first week of April. See Jeff for a patch.

**5. Chainsaw Safety Guidelines & Certification** – This workshop was held on April 2nd, led by Steve Schneider at TH3 Rattlesnake. Greg, Gordon, Jeff, Larry, Drew, Matt, Keith, Rebecca, Winslow, and Jeff were in attendance. With an 8am start, Steve spent three hours reviewing saw types, features, operation, maintenance, chains, and safety gear. The group then spent time in the woods reviewing several demonstrated techniques. An article and photographs was submitted to Cyndy for the Independent. The current certification form is posted to the website.

**6. Trail Cutting & Clearing Manual** - will be developed to address best practices in clearing existing trails and establishing new ones. This document will also include safety guidelines for hand tools. The plan is to photo document our processes during the season and compile into an organized format.

**7. Earth Day** – May 6<sup>th</sup> from 10am to 2pm on Town Common. The Bolton Trails Committee will have a table with trail mix, information, guide books, and scan-ready maps providing varying self-guided hikes into Power House. Everyone is welcome to attend and suggestions are appreciated.

**8. NEBA Trail School** – May 20<sup>th</sup> Oxford, CT. Drew found a day course where “*These courses are perfect for riders, trail enthusiasts, land stewards and land managers interested in learning about what makes for sustainable, enjoyable trails and how to take care of them.*” More information at <http://www.nemba.org/events/nemba-trail-school-south-oxford-ct>

**9. Fyfeshire Work Day** – The BTC and Trinity Church (care of Tim Joyner) have scheduled a group work day at Fyfeshire on April 30<sup>th</sup>. There will be at least a dozen people in property working to resolve multiple maintenance related projects. Details will follow. Mark your calendars!

**10. Trail Easement List** – Scott suggested we organize and prioritize a list of existing easements to ensure public access ways are not “lost” over time. The group will discuss next steps and identify who will take on this research project.