
Minutes of the March 01, 2021 Bolton Trails Steering Committee Meeting

Attendees:

Larry Kunz (chair), Hemali Parekh (note taker), Rebecca Longvall, Bob Roemer, Gordon Taylor, Betsy Taylor-Kennedy, Andrew Schaubhut, Ed Sterling, Robotics team, Greg Matte, Greg Kabachinski

Chairperson - Larry

Note taker - Hemali

FSS Robotics Team - Proposed Improvements to Town Center Trails

Michelle Tuck and team members of Robotics team from Florence Sawyer school gave a presentation. Ed Sterling and Greg Kabachinski from Parks and Recreation attended meeting and joined the presentation.

Community service is one part of the Robotics program work for the year where a team plans and makes a proposal. This year, they propose

- To improve Powder House Trail by clearing fallen tree branches and other debris using tools like shovels, chainsaw (adults to handle this work), wheelbarrows, etc.
- To set up letterboxing and fairy houses along this trail.
- To build out jumps, ramps and obstacles course for mountain bikers. They plan to use ladders and other sturdy materials like wood, etc. to build out ramps.

Presentation was put together carefully with lot of details. Following points were discussed during our meeting.

- Presentation was not clear about the part of the trail that would be modified by using all of these ideas. A map that is clearly marked about location of each of these activity would be needed for review.
- Some part of the land belongs to the church so Robotics team would also need to reach out the church.
- Rebecca mentioned that trails are for passive recreation where trail users use trail for hikes but real purpose is conservation and environment and natural impact to wildlife and land needs to be taken into account. Some parts of the proposed plan is more suitable to a site which is designated

for active recreation (land that is managed by Parks and Recreation and is used for sports and other activities.)

- Property owners would also have a say and depending on placement, they also need to be notified.
- Mountain bike ramps need to be maintained and bring in additional challenge of risk of injuries and liabilities. This really belongs with park and recreation department. Ed agreed with Rebecca and said that further review has to be done with Park and Recreation dept.
- Trail committee members would also like to know the plans to maintain fairy houses and letterboxes once installed. Who will own management and maintenance of these structures. Robotics team said that fairy houses and letterboxes would be designed so they can be managed by anyone who uses them.
- Material used for ramps, fairy houses and letter boxes also needs to be reviewed and has to be approved by ConCom. Material should be sourced as locally as possible
- Ed asked that each of these ideas would need its own proposal and should be presented and reviewed individually.
- Greg Kabachinski mentioned that a proposal was approved in the past year or so for robotics team to allow them to build a natural playground and spider web. This team can complete that work instead if they like instead of working to get this one approved.

Volunteer data collection form and system - Hemali

- We reviewed the latest version of the form. Email should be required but not phone number. We will hide country. Add a select all option. Disclosure at the top looks good.
- Next step for the form is final clean up and send it out to our volunteer list to gather information from everyone.
- We would also like to have an event form for events. Anyone can join the event, once they join we should gather information and add them to volunteer list.
- Unsubscribe link would be nice to have.

Self-guided tours - Rebecca, Hemali, Drew and Gordon

Rebecca and Gordon have posted self-guided tour of Fyfeshire which also has historical details, images as well as natural resources. Rebecca wrote the draft which was reviewed by Hemali, Betsy and Gordon. Gordon gave a thorough review and added Sawyer loop as well as historical information. Gordon also generated QR codes for these.

Rebecca has been in touch with Rona Balco who has a lot of information about Fyfeshire. Rebecca has included that as well as some details from the "History of Bolton" book.

Going forward, Rebecca would like to get more of them done. It would be nice if multiple people start working on these and we use larger group to get them reviewed.

Web site updates and improvements

'Close' button for Covid banner is hard to access as it is usually at bottom of screen and is unreachable in some browsers. Can that be made easy to reach?

Gordon and Hemali will take a look and improve that.

- Gordon has created an area to post about wildlife postings and sightings on website. This looks nice.
- Gordon also made minor changes to improve website. Events page and few other pages have been improved.

Signs

- We are waiting for ground to thaw before doing any work.
- A facebook post about "poop at Bowers" was discussed. Rebecca is working on poster where someone is about to step into the poop as well as a plan where animal control officer would provide information and be available on site. Presence from animal control as well as a sign might make an impact.
- We are aware of this issue and past attempt to deter by placing a sign had not helped so, Rebecca is working on a better plan.
- It was brought up that no one knew where the keys for poop bag dispenser were kept. Ed from Park and Recreation mentioned that now

new keys have been made and we know where they are. (Bob Roemer noted that original keys were in the shed on the Common)

- There is no by-law to cover if they did not pick after their dogs. Identifying who the owner was that did not pick up is also difficult. Some towns tag dogs and use DNAs to identify dogs.
- Next steps is to work out fines and how to enforce this.
- As a side note, a dog sign is broken near town hall which needs to be replaced.

Discuss about any major projects

- Wilder - Rebecca is organizing an invasive removal party with TerraCorps member as part of his internship work. This would also be announced on Bolton Access TV. It will be at Bowers so would be led by Larry. Groups of 10 on various parts of the property would be allowed as per covid-19 guidelines.
- Oaks (wait until March, but need to tell abutters). - This has been mentioned at ConCom - maybe an April project
 - Rebecca will send out a notification to abutters. Whole month of March is kept aside for this work so, anytime the weather is good, this can be done.
 - There was a question about where to park if we plant to do the work. Rebecca mentioned that there is a parking which is on the map.
 - Keep brush pile away from houses to make it obvious so people don't dump their brush pile on top of that.
- Proposals for extended Powder House Hill Trails towards Harvard and Golden Run Roads.

Area reviews

- No change for extended trails from Powder House
- Can we move easement for Schultz Farm? Justin's relative has asked about this. Rebecca will check and get back to them.

- Pond names - Mosquito Pond is an old name that was used for a significant amount of time, but is no longer referred to by that name. Also formerly, larger pond was called Wattaquaddock Hill Pond.

Bowers

1. Blowdown on -wire mesh will need to be removed and it would need to be repaired. DPW can help with this once snow is gone. Beaver solution device will be fixed by the company that installed it and does annual check on it.
2. Larry asked if there is an acceptable way to reinforce siding for the path and protect from getting it pulled out by animals. Rebecca answered that if animals are moving it then there is not much that can be done. But if this is done by hikers than having a presence of animal control officer and educating hikers would reduce this from happening. Volunteers and individuals who care would also be able to help and add a stick at a time to build it out and encourage people to not touch it.
3. Larry asked if we can use “u-shaped” stakes but, this would require a lot of stakes (expensive) and a lot of hours to install them which is not a good solution for this.