
Minutes of the January 04, 2024 Bolton Trails Steering Committee Meeting

Attendees:

Bob Roemer, Gordon Taylor, Betsy Taylor-Kennedy, Andrew Schaubhut, Steve Rothman, Keith Silver, Larry Klien, Abbie Maguire, Colin Blackmore

Chairperson - Andrew

Note taker - Hemali

Meeting maps: <https://www.boltontrails.org/Latest-Meeting-Map>

Fyfeshire Bridge Repair - Bob

- No updates.

Walks and events - Drew

- New Year's Day walk was very well attended. Drew led the walk at the Horse Ring Trail which will be called "Florence Sawyer Area". There were about 40 participants at the event.
- Everyone gave good feedback. Participants were given a few bailout points. A few people left early. Some areas of walk were tricky. People helped each other to cross those sections.
- We discussed that doing the hike on a holiday was helpful to get bigger turnout.
- Monthly hike for February can be done on MLK Day or President's Day or during that week. No one has volunteered to lead. Ballville Trail has not been done yet and has good parking for a monthly hike. Delaney was another trail that was mentioned as we have not led a hike for a long time. Other trails were Houghton Farm and Zink-Northwoods.

Vaughn Bridge installation - Keith, Larry, Drew, Gordon

- Larry, Gordon and Keith had another work party. Structure is complete now.
- Building rock ramps on either end are still to be completed. Keith and Gordon mentioned that one end might be about 50% done while other end is close to complete. Keith brought stone that was leftover from work done in his yard and used wheelbarrow to bring the stone.
- We realized that we do not want to repeat this 7 times. With FRP material, you would still need same amount of rock. Bringing rocks and pea stone to the site would be challenging. Since wheel barrows can only carry certain amount it will be a lot of trips which will be challenging work.

- Gordon mentioned that he is meeting with Rebecca to discuss the bridge work and the challenges. They would like if town can let them electric wheel borrow or some tools like that to accomplish tasks like these.
- Even though this project is closed to parking, this is not easy to use electric wheel barrow. It is not easiest bridge to bring material over as the terrain is challenging to bring a wheel barrow. Gordon and Keith think that terrain for other projects will be less challenging to bring electric wheel barrow.
- This project was challenging due to higher water level. They used hybrid approach as they had to dig deeper trench and build up the ramp. Removal of roots was quite challenging.
- How to carry pea stone was never finalized. Initially, Cynthia mentioned that they can use horses but that has not happened. They will still need to carry pea stone with FRP or wood.
- Gordon and Keith will be suggesting to Rebecca that if we can do a few FRP bridges to save money and use that to rent electric wheel barrow for pea stones

Derby Field, Horse Ring and Sawyer School to Berlin Rd Connector - Drew

- Dan felt comfortable to allow the pass through for New Year's Day hike as he had discussed with Slede family multiple times in past, but this was temporary access. It would be best to get an easement or trail license. It would be good to get a formal document.
- A section of trail along 580 Main Street need to be relocated before opening this trail to public. This will be next step to do.
- Soccer field section of the trail won't be completed until the Grant is done. There is no timeline for that yet.

Vinger-Venable Route clearance - Gordon

- No updates but all vines are dead so this is a good time to do some work.

Brush Hog purchase and storage - Larry

- No Updates.
- Bob suggested that he will check if he can help revive the existing brush hog.

Trust meeting - Drew

- No updates for Vespa property. They are waiting for a lawyer on how to remediate the part that needs clarification.
- There may be a property near Bowers that someone is looking to sell. Drew does not have details yet.

- Annual Trust meeting - Trust is looking into different venues. Trust is planning to have a talk from Kathy Romeo about “Children in nature”. This was the plan pre-covid.

Major projects. List limited to top 3 priorities

- **Bowers**

- There is no new work done for invasive plants during this season.
- Larry was away so no new update.

- **Ballville Trails/The Oaks**

- Gordon has added map on the website. There is parking space. We can take this off.
- Connect Ballville Trails/The Oaks to Fyfeshire - Drew
- The only thing left is the connector part. Drew asked to not publish before everything is finalized. We need an NDA done as well.
- Drew is waiting to discuss with Rebecca for feedback and help to figure out the next regulatory steps about NDA, etc, and do the presentation to ConCom.
- Gordon is supporting this project as the owner of the property that will be part of this connector.

Wildflower Walk – Hemali

- Hemali showed the webpages. Image for the trail now has clickable link which would open the pages.
- A bit more work left before these pages can be reviewed by the group.
- We discuss if we should use QR code at site that would load the page for that area. Gordon can help with that once pages are ready.
- Also, discussed that we should have a wild flower walk planned once the project is ready. We will need to update the labels before that can happen.

Newsletter

- Tentative agenda items were discussed.
- Bridge work is in progress and need for volunteers
- Vaughn hill switch-back improvements.
- We discussed the new findings at Rattlesnake but it is not for newsletter.
- Gordon and Drew will send more topics for newsletter.

Vaughn Hills Trail Improvements

- Woodside Drive trail (segment M-N-P) and reroute near steep section (segment I-J). Drew, Keith, Larry.

- Woodside Drive segment has been pretty rough with all that rain. It is probably worth closing that section.
- Re-route of steep section is done. The original trail section needs to be brushed off which will force people to use new trail.

Approved projects, not started

- Welch Pond Trail to Sawyer Road.
 - New trail was marked by Gordon but when Drew found it too steep after review so that project is on hold until they find another route or option.
 - Drew asked at the trust meeting if anyone knows the abutters and ask if we can use some of their land to be able to do a zigzag route which would be easier to hike. It is also not easy to tell boundary in that narrow section. We discussed if we can find old boundary markers and see if we can do a zig zag within the boundary.
 - We will need to wait until the snow is on ground. Other option is to end the trail there but since a lot of hikers are cutting through private property, that we wanted to create a trail just in case people want to get out to Sawyer Road. Owners decided to close off the section since there was some trouble with partying in the woods.
 - Bridge repair at Rattlesnake (also noted on trailcare.com)
 - Drew wants to wait till Fyfeshire bridge is repaired and see what is left before ordering more wood for this bridge and find storage for it.

Bolton Summits - Drew

- 2023 Summit challenge has ended but there are 6 hats left. If someone completes that challenge and sends an email, we will support it until the hats are left.

Area Review

- <https://www.trailcare.com/map>
- Vaughn Hill
 - New issue reported by Betsy for a tree that is not fixed yet.
 - Moen has a tree down and the area was very muddy. Keith reported that DPW fixed a pot hole.
 - Wilder pond has a big trail that Drew reported that is a big. That one needs chain saw. We probably can't park there due to snow.
 - Gordon asked if Ketan can help.

- Someone sent an email about Bowers Springs. Larry took care of it.
- Ballville Trail has tree that needs to be removed.
- Greg took care of a tree at Annie Moore.
- RattleSnake has a tree down but the section is mostly used by Drew on mountain bike. Gordon has reported one as well which needs a saw.
- Drew took care of one on Powder House trail.

Items deferred because of Rebecca's absence

- Trail color coding
- Eagle Scout project near TDNC area
- Mass Trails Bridges State Grant Update - Rebecca
 - Wilder; Anything new on the trail route
 - Common driveway
 - Trustees land
- Volunteer projects.
 - Boy Scouts: Vaughn submerged bog bridge removal, repair, Peach Hill bridge repair (needs ConCom approval), Ballville trash removal, Wilder Map Sign, Rattlesnake Bog bridge...

General Deferred business

- Century Mills Update
- Guidebook. 2024/2025 - potential target updates
 - Ballville/International Trails
 - Derby Field/Horse Ring
 - Extended Powder House, include true summit and "Church to pipeline cutoff?"
 - Welch Pond Trail to Sawyer Road.
 - Vinger-Venable route correction.
 - Century Mill
 - Tom Denney hike route

Any other Business

- Drew brought up chainsaw certification class. Couple of people said that they are interested. Abbie, Keith, Dan Mahoney, Paul and Ketan are interested.
- Bob said that he could host again. Steve Snider had done the training last time.
- Bob's chainsaw manual is very detailed and is really a good document.
- We discussed that this should go in the newsletter after the training is completed as trails crew had a refresher course.

- Dates were discussed. Gordon and Bob are out in April, we decided that May is a good month for training.