

---

## Minutes of the September 11, 2023 Bolton Trails Steering Committee Meeting

### *Attendees:*

*Bob Roemer, Gordon Taylor, Betsy Taylor-Kennedy, Andrew Schaubhut, Steve Rothman, Keith Silver, Abbie Maguire*

*Chairperson - Larry*

*Note taker - Hemali*

### • **Summer Backyard Bolton. Sept 16**

- Gordon, Betsy, Drew, Larry, Ketan and Hemali volunteered at the event.
- 9 Guidebooks were sold. 8 were purchased using cash, 1 Venmo and we lost one person due to not able to pay via credit card.
- Drew will help in the next one and would appreciate if someone can join him.

### • **Mass Trails Bridges State Grant Update - Keith, Larry, Drew, Gordon**

- As per Gordon, the details that Rebecca sent via an email don't seem to match with original grant application.
- Gordon and Keith started to look into the project but they realized that what they need is not present. They met with Cindy to discuss this as well but she also agreed that material did not seem to match with the Grant application.
- Next steps are to meet with Don Lowe will locate one of the hard copies or digital copies of grant and check if what Rebecca ordered is as per grant application.
- Technically we have to put a change order for the State Grant application if material is different so they want to make sure that material matches the Grant.
- Drew asked if Don gave a timeline by which he will get back to you. Gordon and Betsy said that they did not get the date by which Don will get back to us. Don seems to be very busy right now so we don't have any idea how quickly we will get an answer from Don. Gordon felt like he might have more work since Rebecca is out.
- The order was at the Koopman store. Some of the items, like pea stone at Bare Hill Road, Landscape fabric at Rebecca's office but wood and rest of material is at Koopman office and they are waiting to hear back from us.
- Summary is that we need to implement using the material that was approved by the State grant. Once we have clarification on material someone will need to put the purchase order for it.
- Landscape fabric is locked in Rebecca's cabin and no one has any idea if it matches the requirement.

- **Fyfeshire Bridge Repair**

- Gordon went to check the container. Wood and other material is ready but we can't do this work due to rain.
- Gordon, Betsy and Keith were concerned if the concrete might set and get unusable due to moisture in the air. Bob assured that this material is packaged with internal plastic liner. It is very waterproof. Material will not ruin if unused due to weather.
- Bob will check with Steve Snyder as his son had shown interest to do this work.

- **Trail Marking Improvement**

- There is no update.

- **Walks and events Gordon and Drew**

- Gordon will lead the trail walk at Barrette's Hill on September 29 at 2 p.m.
- Drew will lead the one in November on Black Friday.

- **Bench Location. Liz, Drew, Gordon**

- Liz has a park bench that was awarded as part of a volunteer project.
- Big Rock at Vaughn Hill is a nice area but a bench there can be a good option. If we select Town Land, we need to get approval. Drew suggested that top of Rattlesnake would be better since its a ConCom land.
- Bench is not assembled yet so its easier to transport. Drew suggests the place where the summit marker is. Drew will talk about this with Liz during ConCom meeting.

- **Trail Maps and Guides - Gordon**

- **Map rework**

- Gordon has reworked all the maps as the base layer that was used for maps no longer exists.
- Gordon has created his own base layer after downloading houses, streets, etc. We reviewed this base layer during the meeting. It looks good and is created by Gordon, so we will not lose it. This took some time to complete.
- New base does not have any words on it for road names, etc., but that probably would work better.
- Gordon will give a tutorial to anyone who wants to this. Mass mapper needs to be learned. You have to download KML file, etc and then convert to what you need.
- Any new maps will use this base from now onwards.

- **Guide sales**

- Town Hall has 5 or 6 copies. Eli has about 12 copies. Drew has 14 for Backyard Bolton.
- Total 25 copies left from old version.
- **Trust meeting update - Drew**
  - Oak Trail - Drew met with one of the owners and walked the back of their property together. The owner is concerned about the trail being so close but he understands that this is where the easement is and the house is built that way. They have flagged the trees together. Drew has explained the work and said that he will give them heads up when they do the work in that area.
  - Drew has not reached out to any other homeowners as there is no other major work.
  - There is an area that has pile of old Christmas trees and brush. Drew suggests that we move it back on their lawn. They were all given the warning letter saying that the trails should be kept clear.
  - Trust mailing list for quarterly emails is ok to be used.
- **\*Volunteer projects.**
  - Boy Scouts: Vaughn submerged bog bridge removal, repair, Peach Hill bridge repair (needs ConCom approval), The Oaks trash removal, Wilder Map Sign, Rattlesnake Bog bridge...
  - No updates to this list.
  - Drew will meet with Scout master and share the list of projects. They can contact Drew if they are interested to work on one of these projects.
- **Major projects. List limited to top 3 priorities**
  - Bowers
    - Jan Johnson and Larry worked on buckthorn clearing session. There is still two to three afternoon of work before end of the fall to complete the whole area.
    - Bittersweet and poison ivy are other vines that needs to be maintained.
    - Larry and Gordon are looking into brush hogs which will help with this project and other places.
    - Bob is suggesting to have replaceable front end with a sickle bar.
    - Town brush hog is Gravely which does not start and if it starts then it does not last longer. Bob says that Gravely if properly cared would last for a long time.
    - Bob also said that we need industrial type as current one did not handle bittersweet well. It wrapped around the handle bar.
    - Eagle Scout project near TDNC area
      - There was an article in newsletter that this Bowers project is the upcoming project.
  - Wilder; no new update on the trail route
    - Common driveway

- Trustees land
- Ballville Trails/The Oaks:
  - Everything is done except arrows needs to be installed. Then we have to wait until there is a clear understanding with the home owners.
  - These trail maps are on UMap but not available on website.
  - Maps still need to be completed. Gordon needs more information about land and the Bolton Airport that used to be across the road.
  - The Oaks Loop Trail - Drew, Gordon, Larry
  - Connect Ballville Trails/The Oaks to Fyfeshire - Drew, Gordon
    - This is still in influx. New director Steve Altman who is a lawyer is coming up with questions for golf course. Golf course thinks that we can do what we need but wording says within 25 feet, so we want to make sure that the language is not very clear but they are comfortable with what we are planning to do before we create trails.
    - Escalante group has hired a conservation person to work with this project.
- **Volunteer newsletter - Hemali**
  - A newsletter is ready to go but since no one gotten a test email so Hemali is sending one more time. She shared the newsletter with the group to get feedback.
  - We checked that test email went out to Drew.
  - Hemali asked if new archeological find by Bob can be shared on the website. Bob says that there is no problem with sharing quarry location.
- **Wildflower Walk - Hemali**
  - There are a lot of images. Hemali is working on good pictures and have a question if we want to create an area on website where we can share pictures with details. We have good amount of ids.
  - Create a section on the website with title like “Plants at Rattlesnake” and share the images of plants with information about the plants. Along with this if we can also share how to identify plants with some good resources.
  - We will create ID tags for the walk that would have plant image, common and scientific name. Then the website would have more details about the plants.
  - Hemali will check with Elizabeth about the websites before we share online. Go Botany and iNaturalist app is a good one. Bob said that it's very broad. It will even id a photo of spider. Betsy said that iPhone also offers ways to ID plants and birds, etc.
  - INaturalist also uses your ID as a way to document plants and flowers, etc for research projects.
  - We can probably do a guided walk once this project is done.

- **Other Business**

- Vaughn Hills Trail Improvements: Woodside Drive trail (segment M-N-P) and reroute near steep section (segment I-J)
  - Water bar project is ready to go. Switch back is another project that is ready to go. Drew may get started on that one. Drew might co-ordinate with mountain biking community that can help with this project.
- Bolton Summits / Hills of Bolton
  - 25/26 people have done the project.
  - Drew will propose this as 2024 challenge as well.
- Jan Johnson's email:
  - Jan Johnson had a concern about mountain bikers dominating the trails at Vaughn Hills making it hard for her to hike. She was also concerned about seeing less wildlife.
  - Betsy mentioned that mountain bikers do a lot of work to maintain trails.
  - Larry mentioned that should we mark popular mountain bike trails with signs like watch out?
  - Bob mentioned that mountain bikers have been biking with ear phones listening to music and are not paying attention to others on trail. A sign reminding to be alert about other trail uses. We do have triangle sign that shows who should yield whom.
  - Bob says that areas that are more worrisome are the trails where there are challenging jumps for them. They need to be more careful.
  - Drew mentioned that all trails are shared by everyone. We do not allow motorized vehicles.
  - Drew brought up that mountain bike association (NIMBA) is proposing to practice gratitude and respect other trail users.
  - Bob mentions that if we are putting signs then they should be on the uphill trail before they start going downhill.
  - Bob mentioned that if something happens then it There was an incident when a person that got injured and we had 2 police departments, 2 fire departments and state cops. The person got charged and we came very close to not allow mountain bikers on trail.
  - Larry will respond to the email from Jan Johnson. We don't have recent plans to make trails ADA compliant.
  - Rebecca is interested as we could get funding for this project. Rebecca also does a story book project at Fyfeshire.

- **Area Review - <https://www.trailcare.com/map>**

- Zink-Northwoods - After the storm, we should probably review these areas to see current status.
- Fyfeshire - Town has been clearing sides of streets but not the trail. We will need weed whacker to clear the trails that have overgrown.

- Randall Road had a tree down but we looked into whether it falls on town land. Looks like that is part of the town.

- 

- **New news from Bob**

- Bob applied for a state planning assistance grant in May. It has been awarded last night. Rebecca, Bob and others applied to support master plan. Don has agreed to have town provide matching fund. Bob was surprised that there was a letter from assistant secretary on a Sunday is not
- Randall Arendt will review Bolton planning and sub-division documents. He will also do a workshop for the whole town. This is OSRD - Open Space Residential Development. We now have a new town planner.
- Bob has copies of his book if anyone would like to read them. Larry, Gordon and Hemali were interested to read this book. Book name is "Rural by Design". His approach was to create housing that reduces environmental impact.
- Betsy and Gordon discussed that there is a lot of work at Keyes Farm. Someone called since they would not complete their trail badge as a massive tree fell across the trail. It requires a chainsaw. We need help to do this work as there are a large number of trees.

- **Deferred business**

- Century Mills Update
- Horse Ring/Derby Field area Trails
- Guide book 2024-2025. Potential target updates:
  - Ballville/International Trails
  - Derby Field/Horse Ring
  - Extended Powder House
  - Welch Pond Trail to Sawyer Road.
  - Vinger-Venable route correction project.
  - Century Mill
  - Tom Denney hike route
  - Bolton Hills