
Minutes of the July 01, 2024 Bolton Trails Steering Committee Meeting

Attendees:

Andrew Schaubhut, Steve Rothman, Larry Kunz, Bob Roemer, Gordon Taylor, Betsy Taylor-Kennedy, Chris Chairperson - Larry

Note taker - Hemali

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

Mass Trails Bridges State Grant Update - Rebecca.

- Keith, Larry, Drew, Chris, Keith, Gordon
 - Keith has been leading the work. Drew, Chris, Keith, Gordon and Larry have been working on this project. They have completed third bridge and are ready to work on the next one. Gracie's Bridge is the next one on list. All the lumber is there.
 - Drew asked about design. It is 12 feet long but has same design as others. Hand rails are most likely not needed as it is not too far from ground.
 - We still need to build ramps for the two bridges that are done. Rebecca is responsible to get the rock for that. The pea stone is there but she will provide other materials like trap rocks that is needed for ramp. We are also waiting for screws.
 - Gordon said that they can start taking off the footing for Gracie's bridge in the meantime.

Fyfeshire Bridge Repair - Bob

- It is still wet due to rain.

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

- No updates yet. Rebecca, Drew and Pam, the town planner are waiting for construction to begin so the town can engage to allow for existing trail on the private land.

Trust meeting - Drew

- SVT came in as guest and talked about a new map and their scaling system but you can also provide your scaling system.
- The middle of the town is most important to them so Town Common, winery, etc. Betsy brought up that they are bit later otherwise their proposal can be plugged into Master plan. Hopefully we can take advantage of that and the new mapping system.
- They also discussed about Annual meeting, what went well, how to drive more traffic and they started discussing next year's meeting plans.
- There might be a fall photo contest.
- Summer challenge passes are still getting picked up from library which is a good thing.

Wilder

- Common driveway
 - Formal permissions from land owners is needed. It should be documented so Davis family knows what they agree to.
 - There is no final map yet. Current plan is to go above the tree which takes more land. Rebecca was going to produce a track as there is no track yet.
 - Would this be a formal easement with lawyer involved? Rebecca has said that we should have a documented agreement with email exchange with all the land owners.
 - Rebecca mentioned that the footpath along the side of Common Driveway is not a DPW responsibility. Gordon and Larry mentioned that once someone has tested the weed whacker with sickle bar. Current machine cannot handle anything with wines. The one that Larry and Gordon had checked out was about 4000 or so.
 - Larry will talk with Rebecca.
 - Formal permission from Davis family has agreed

Major projects. List limited to top 3 priorities

- **Bowers**
 - Invasive Sessions - No new sessions has been started yet. We wait for the work being done around dam area but clearing poison ivy can be started.
 - Areas around the trails at Bowers are completely taken over. Since the current weed whacker does not work well with wines, Larry would like to get conversation going with Rebecca for next year's plan.
 - Larry might bring lawn mower to clear some of the poison ivy. Poison Ivy is not invasive Gordon brought up that it is dangerous to work with so it is hard to find volunteers to remove it from high traffic areas and where it might impact the trees.
 - Culvert clean up. Culvert is getting flooded and is buried in water and mud to clear up the water that is getting flooded. It is not clear how deep the culvert is but it is not easy project. The change in water flow is changing the area around the meadow so it requires diagnosis and finding a solution to fix the issue.
- **Ballville Trails/The Oaks:**
 - To connect along North Brook trail. Project is approved by ConCom. Drew has put up a sign with DEP number. He has started to frame the bridge but he has not put deck or other part of the bridge. Gordon said that the bridge team will be able to help.
 - Drew said that he is having a hard to find orange flags. It would be good to have a GPX track for it. He has been also working to clear the brush. Drew said that the plan was to use trex in this area but he did not know if there is any leftover. Gordon and Drew might take a look.
 - Drew will wait for Rebecca as it is not on Two land and the CR is from the trust. He does not know how much would Rebecca want to support it. Drew is submitting reimbursement with the Trust.

- There is also a lot of poison ivy in the area by Sawyer Road. Gordon can help if Drew contacts him.

Walks and events

- Abbie's hike was good. There was a good turn out. Abbie found the stamp locations before hike and sort of guided people there since one of them was not easy to find.
- Larry said one of the group got separated and got reconnected in the parking lot. Is there something that can be done for this? Gordon and Betsy said that hike with the pace of slowest person or have a sweep who can ensure that everyone in the group is part of the hike.

Wildflower Walk – Hemali

- No updates as It is not good time to put signs in due to poison ivy.
- We discussed how do we want to set this up at the area. Gordon had proposed QR code which can work. The problem with QR code is that it is very dependent on cell phone reception.
- A self-guided walk just like the one at Fyfeshire might be better idea where there is a sign that allows people to read about plants at a kiosk.
- Steve mentioned that there is fairly good coverage but it also depends on tree cover in the area.

Approved projects

- Welch Pond Trail to Sawyer Road - on hold until Drew contacts the home owners.
- Bridge repair at Rattlesnake (also noted on Trailcare.com) - This bridge is going to Sawyer Grist mill. No update yet but they will make it with 3 stringers to standard 3 feet width.
 - The lady that lives near the Skinner property, has allowed Gordon and Winslow in past through her property. She might allow volunteers again if we ask her nicely.
- Bog bridge at Rattlesnake.
- Vinger-Venable Route clearance - Gordon
 - Rainforest needs clearing. Drew and Gordon said that we can go there one day to clear the area. They need weed whacker and other tools that allows you to clear the area.
 - Larry and Gordon also discussed using sickle bar in these areas. Bob asked if they found one. Gordon had found a self-powered, walk behind sickle bar that was about \$2000. There was one that took sickle bar or mower attachment.
 - Larry mentioned that last year mower would start, and after little bit, it will stop and then it will start again but stops again.

- People cannot complete the All Trails Club since this section is blocked.
- Replace the sign at Haynes-Wheeler - Gordon
 - Sign is ready to go. The area where the sign goes needs to be sanded, cleaned and painted before new sign can be put up.

Chainsaw training

- Rebecca is not going to sign the training. Bob suggests that the Trust should sign it.
- He also mentioned that we should also do an outdoors training where you go out and see how to actually cut the tree or handle the chainsaw while doing trail maintenance.
- Bolton is the only town around here that allows volunteers to use chainsaw provided we have taken the training.

Sign Database

- Someone asked about sign database so Gordon put the link up on the agenda.
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1LUFOfmopVxOHxnb8QIkdiNJPjnd-nkSdTR8I0ifP_zk

Trails Conference

- We are too late to offer a presentation I think, but you never know. Gordon shared a link to the trails conference. It has a lot of good agenda including chainsaw training.
- It is also good way to meet with other volunteers and get to know what other towns are doing.
- They have topics like bridge building, mapping, invasive plants, etc. They also do a field trip sometimes.
- Gordon mentioned that it is interesting how other towns have done their maps. They also sometimes take maps from online like google and use it.
- <https://www.masstrailsconference.com/>

Area Review

<https://www.trailcare.com/map>

- Bowers - Chris has pointed out a tree. Drew tried but his chainsaw was broken so he could only get to 80%. He will go again to complete that work.
- Powder House has two. One near the pipeline.
- Vaughn Hill - A couple of tree down. One sign needs a nice plastic.

Deferred

- Trail color coding **FY25**
 - Rebecca was going to order this for FY25
- Eagle Scout project near TDNC area No updates, therefore no work may take place.

Volunteer projects suggestions.

- Boy Scouts: Vaughn submerged bog bridge removal, repair, Peach Hill bridge repair (needs ConCom approval), Ballville trash removal, Wilder Map Sign, Rattlesnake Bog bridge...
- Century Mill Update
- Brush Hog or refurb/sickle bar purchase and storage - Also should be ordered for FY25
- Guidebook - Next major edition 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