

Carlisle Trails Committee Meeting Minutes
Meeting Date: April 7, 2023
Minutes Approved: May 5, 2023
Alan Ankers, Secretary

Members Present: Alan Ankers, Roy Herold, Charlene Hinton, Marc Lamere, Warren Spence, Steve Tobin

Members Absent: Chris Chiapella

Guests:

Sylvia Willard, 34 Bellows Hill Rd.

Bob Goldsmith, 771 Lowell Rd.

Jonathan DeKock, 130 Oak Knoll Rd.

Steve Spang, 59 Fiske St.

Brian Waterson, 80 Aberdeen Drive

Chris Roberson, *Carlisle Mosquito*

Meeting was held via video conference.

The meeting was opened by Chair Steve Tobin at 7:35 PM.

Documents Presented:

None

Old Business:

Meeting Minutes:

The minutes from the March 3 meeting were approved as amended.

Bills:

None.

2023 Goals:

Goals – General:

Charlene volunteered to take the lead on creating an inventory of allowed and prohibited uses of trails and easements.

Malcolm Meadows Wet Areas:

On March 22, Steve and Alan, with help from Steve Hinton, surveyed the vertical profile of the trail at the proposed boardwalk location, which is quite steep at one end. It seems that the boardwalk could be configured to have a maximum grade of about 5%, which should be manageable. Some bumpers would need to be dug in a few inches, and some raised a few inches above ground. The option of using duckboards for some portion of the 158-ft total length was discussed, but the general preference was for a standard boardwalk. It may be worth considering the use of corrugated plastic pipe for support, in lieu of concrete bumpers, particularly for the wettest section which is relatively flat.

Tophet East:

Steve reported that he had met with State Park Manager John Aziz and NEMBA president Mary McCarthy on March 16 to discuss the rerouting of cyclists to Great Brook Path. They had concluded that it seemed to be the best solution to the issue, and that appropriate signage would need to be installed. The State Park does not have the resources to provide new signs; a suggestion was for the Trails Committee to fund signs outside the park while NEMBA fund signs within the park. Steve, Marc and Alan scouted the area on March 19 and Steve followed up with a signage plan that would require three signs within the park and two or three at the entrance. He proposed metal signs, about 12” square, matching the typical State Park signage as closely as possible. He will present this to the State Park for approval. He will also check with the Fire Chief regarding the location of signs at the trail entrance from Great Brook Path since there is a fire cistern close by.

For the Aberdeen Drive easement, the original easement document requires the town to provide signage at the start of the easement, the end of Ice Pond Road. Brian Waterson has already ordered a suitable metal sign to direct foot traffic along the side of the road. At the other end, the State Park has installed a laminated paper “Leaving State Park – no Bikes” sign, but apparently this is unconvincing and something more official-looking, such as a metal sign is required. The Trails Committee will provide this after State Park approval. Steve will send a letter to Aberdeen Drive residents explaining what the committee intends to do.

Online Mapping:

Marc reported that he had installed some laminated QR code strips at the Town Forest, along with a laminated “explainer” sheet. His overall idea was to typically put a trail map (from the book) on the first signpost at each trailhead, and then have the explainer sheet on the next one. Steve noted that the QR codes, set up for iPhone, do not seem to work as well with Android phones; Marc will look into this. Steve also suggested including an explanation of how the Open Street Maps link can be used to trace the user’s path.

Other Old Business:**Banta-Davis Dog Park:**

Steve reported that he had attended the site walk on March 7, and plans have now been approved by the Planning Board, which do not appear to cut off any potential trail access points.

Earth Day Event:

Chris and Marc will attend the booth, with a large-scale map of the town-wide trail network, and various other links by QR code to limit paper use.

Twin Peaks Bridge:

Most of the committee visited the site on March 25, when it was discovered that the existing bridge and nearby portion of the trail appear to be on the abutter’s property. Without permission to use that property, that section of trail is probably not sustainable. Steve had since contacted the new owner, who seemed open to discussion but will be out of town for a while, so the project will need to go on hold for now.

The other boardwalk, on Marion's Trail close to West Street, could be done separately. This would mean two separate wetlands filings, but all agreed it was worthwhile to proceed with it. Warren will start work on the Wetlands filing.

Trail Map Books:

Ferns has a new owner. Steve will remind Chris to follow-up with them about once more selling trail map books.

Curve Street Bridge Work:

Alan had sent a note to Town Planner Julie Mercier with a sketch outlining the proposed changes to the Otter Slide trail rerouting. The Planning Board is holding a scenic road hearing for the project on April 10; Alan will contact Julie and join that meeting if she thinks it will be useful.

New Business:

Billerica Estey Road Development:

Jonathan DeKock provided the committee with some background on the proposed development of a lot abutting the Greenough Land; the lot is on the Carlisle side of the town line, but would be accessed by an extension of Estey Road in Billerica. The subdivision was approved in 1929, and Estey Road is one of a number of "paper roads" in the neighborhood, which exist as town rights of way but have not been constructed. The status of the short section of the road in Carlisle is unclear. The Planning Board has asked for input from the Trails Committee in advance of its April 10 meeting. Jonathan thought it would be prudent to ensure that public access is provided from the Billerica neighborhood to the Greenough Land, to give the option of developing a trail in the future if so desired.

A motion was unanimously approved "To recommend to the Planning Board that the extension of Estey Road, on land owned by Richard Annese (parcel # 24-22-37) have provisions for public access to the Greenough Land."

Cranberry Bog - ConsCom Request:

Sylvia Willard noted that there are currently a number of sand "plugs" that cross the drainage ditches and constrain the water flow, but don't cut it off entirely. For the future use of the Bog, ConsCom would like to maintain access across the ditches for mowing equipment, but improve the drainage if possible, and wondered if Trails Committee style boardwalks would be suitable. Alan noted that supporting a load of about 10 tons was a much higher level of engineering, and beyond the capacity of the traditional boardwalks. Small culverts through the "plugs" may be a better solution.

Future Activity Planning:

Alan reported that Bryan Windmiller had agreed to lead a vernal pool walk on April 29. This will be at the Conant Land. Steve suggested trying to get wider publicity for this, perhaps including the schools; Alan will explore possibilities.

Recent Trail Work:

On March 31, Roy, Chris, Steve and Bob Goldsmith installed three duckboards and a series of stepping stones to cross a new wet spot that had appeared at the bottom of the hill to the left of the

parking lot at the Towle Land.

Warren and Steve with help from Roy did some major repair work to restore the Town Forest boardwalk that had been lifted by the roots of a fallen tree. This required extensive cutting of large root sections from under the boardwalk.

Steve cleared trees from Benfield, Marion's trail, Heartbreak Ridge, Piggery trail, Red-tail trail, Cutters Ridge, and Bartlett trail.

Bob Goldsmith cleared trees from Fern loop, Poison Ivy trail (Greenough), and the Davis Corridor and repaired a boardwalk on the Rockstrom Trail.

Warren cleared trees from the Town Forest and Greenough Pines trail.

Schedule Next Meeting:

The next meeting was scheduled for May 5, 2023 at 7:30 pm, to be held by video.

Meeting adjourned at 9:26 PM.