

Readfield Trails Committee Minutes

November 30, 2022

Present: Paul Bessette, Nancy Buker, Jackie Drouin, Greg Durgin, Steve Hayes, Greg Leimbach, Rob Peale, Holly Rahmlow, Henry Whittemore, Bruce Hunter, Dana and Amy Therrien, Linnea Koons

Excused: Megan Lachapelle

Rob opened meeting at 6:50 p.m.

Greg L. agreed to be timekeeper

After introductions of the committee members, Dana and Amy Therrien spoke about building a new trail around a field at the Fairgrounds and doing some bridge improvements, which they would sponsor. Since the trail would be on property other than town property, there are limits to what Trails can do. There was considerable discussion about what trails might serve what purpose and how to proceed. The Therriens are going to approach the school about possible trails. Steve and Rob volunteered to help.

Rob moved that we investigate the possibility of a minimally improved trail around the Maranacook field and improvements to bridges on school property. Greg L. seconded. Unanimously approved.

Henry moved that minutes from October be approved with Rob's three changes; Greg L. seconded. Minutes approved unanimously.

Treasurer Jackie reported that our current balance is \$5,730.79, which includes our carryover. We have not spent anything in the last few months.

Rob reported that Brian at the Greater Augusta Utility District will donate four posts for the signs at the Carlton Pond. Rob mounted the signs on trees, but they aren't very visible where they are. Rob asked for volunteers to install those posts before the ground freezes. No one present had the time, but Rob said he would talk to Howard and Greg D. about doing it. If they can't, the project might have to wait until spring.

Paul has been working on QR codes to give hikers access to the maps. He said that some of the maps don't show up very well. He's going to talk to Dennis about how to do individual maps for each trail.

Rob asked Holly about her husband Don doing some more map work. (He did the original maps.) She said she would check.

Stewards reported on their trails. Rob updated the committee on the Fairgrounds. Several trees were removed. Eric is re-forming the working group on the Fairgrounds project. Rob will be out of town, so Steve and Greg L. said they will attend the meeting on Dec. 14. Henry asked if the Trails Committee has staked out a position on the project. It was mostly agreed that our focus is on the trails and the memorial to Ken Clark. Of course attendees can offer their individual opinions.

Steve said the Fairgrounds trail is in good shape.

Greg L. said he is going to push Eric on the culvert for the Morrill Road trail.

Nancy said her husband David walked the Fogg trail and talked to an abutter, Peter, was inquiring about some pink ribbons along the edge of his property. No one on Trails knows anything about it. Paul said the Fogg Farm trail needs some blazing and bridge work. He will put out a call via email.

The budget for next year needs to be planned. Rob said he'd like to see some of the trails along the Fairgrounds parking lot widened to accommodate wheelchairs. We will need more bluestone, signs for the Morrill Road trail, and perhaps some equipment such as wheelbarrows/two-wheeled carts and boundary paint.

Steve suggested we might need to do some work on the existing trail along the stone wall on school property. Greg L. said he would help scope it out and see what work it might need before we approach the school for funding.

The Conservation Committee offered its thoughts to the Comprehensive Plan Committee suggested policy, which Rob sent out to all of us to read. The RCC response to 7.1 begins:

"RCC believes that it would be entirely impractical and counter-productive to consolidate the work of the Recreation Committee, Conservation Commission and Trails Committee into a single entity. Each of these groups has clearly defined responsibilities, a full agenda of work and committed members. Our respective work does not substantially overlap and where it does there are available avenues to work together. Members of RCC have little interest in being involved in organizing the Town's sports programs and similarly we assume that Rec Board members don't want to spend their scarce time working out the details of a timber harvest on

the Town Forest. The combined responsibilities of the three groups far exceeds the reasonable capabilities of a single volunteer committee.”

We discussed possible responses but were unable to develop a statement agreeable to all, other than that the Trails Committee does not want to be combined with the other committees but is willing to work with the other groups as needed. Rob will draft a summary of our thoughts based on the discussion to send to the comp plan committee, which he will send to anyone who wants to see it.

After the meeting Greg D. sent the following updates re what other committees are doing. (Due to technical difficulties, Greg was not able to hear the Zoom feed and left the meeting.)

“RCC: Our last meeting focused on the town forest harvest and the repair of the road, both of which are large projects. The income from the harvest (done about every 3 to 5 years on different sections) goes into an account that the RCC has “jurisdiction” over.

“Dennis Price and Eric will be meeting with the committee next week to discuss what went awry in the process regarding the Recreation Department Fairgrounds plan last year.

“Comp Plan: My first meeting since rejoining this committee. Focus was on working on the current section, getting clarity on it and setting final goals and policy. Our next meeting Dec 21 will focus on presentations regarding past chapters to finetune and possibly approve final drafts, the local economy, and survey results that should be tabulated by then, and current land use. Proposed timeline for completion: January meeting, February/March public input, finished plan late March or early April, June vote.”

Henry moved we adjourn; Steve seconded. Adjourned at 8:47 p.m.

Minutes prepared and submitted by Holly Rahmlow