

# Trails Coordinating Task Force

Thursday, February 28, 2013

4 PM – Groton Senior Center

Meeting Minutes

## I. Call to Order

## II. Roll Call

Present: Mark Berry, Laurie Gorham, Brae Rafferty, Deb Jones, Bea Reynolds, Tom Jannke, Jean-Claude Ambroise, Joellen Anderson, Ray Munn, Sydney Van Zandt, Doug Ackerman, Debbie Marshall-Baker

Guest Speakers: Andrew Bowne (GIS), Chad Frost

## III. New Business

### A. Chad Frost – Insight into unified trail systems

- Kent & Frost have been involved in designing trail systems in the region for the past 10 years. They are currently designing a trail for Copp property; they are 50% through the design development phase.
- They have started on signage recommendations because people are getting lost on the trails.
- He sent Debbie several sign images which she printed out and Chad then used the images to talk about their recommendations for signage.
- 4x4 posts at all trail intersections with the town trail logo. With a sign there people know they are on an approved town trail. Signs also increase people's knowledge of trails that may not be right next to their house.
- The logo signs could include the name of the trail, perhaps distances, and directional info. Naming trails is good for the same reasons we name roads. Helps people create a mental maps of the trails.
- Posts are important rather than trees because trees fall down and require less maintenance by the town. Posts also make it easy to put additional trail designations, such as where the Tri-Town Trail will be winding through a Groton-designated trail.
- They are working on signs for Handicapped accessible signs as well.
- QR Codes: smart map application so that people would be able to see where they are on the trail.
- Mark mentions universal symbols (for hikers, horses, etc.). These are easily recognizable by people who don't speak English.

- Mark asks about trail difficulty signs. Chad says these are mostly not necessary; perhaps only warning signs for very difficult, rugged areas as exist on the Copp property.
- The Educational Component: Any trail system should have a large Trail Entrance Sign with rules of trail usage and a large map on it. Other, educational signs are effective for specialized purposes: watershed information, fishing sites, places where there might be outdoor locations, etc.
- Wood carved signs although beautiful, do not last long and so are hard to replace. They recommend instead laminated signs with plexi-glass. Some companies are making signs with PVC wood but they are more expensive.
- Cost: Large signs mounted by a contractor range from \$1,500-\$3,000. The post mountings cost a couple hundred. Small metal signs can be made for a couple hundred dollars. The little logo signs cost even less, \$20.
- Post installation: 18 inches – 2ft deep filled with gravel. They have found this is the best system for longevity rather than cement and have not had sign theft.

B. Andrew Bowne – Town of Groton GIS – demo of GIS system

- Andrew showed the map of the Groton Trails system. It is made up of many sets of data mostly from aerial photos. There are designated trails on the map; but there are also many undesignated trails and paths, some of which might not even be trails. There are also proposed trails on the map, from the 2004 Master Plan. Chad notes there are also trails not on the GIS map because they weren't picked up on the aerial photos. (The last flights for photos were done in 2009.)
- The work of the committee will help Andrew define the trails that exist.
- The group discusses how we are going to accomplish the on-the-ground work in verifying actual walking trails. GPS by itself is not adequate. Property lines are less accurate, although sometimes the deed will have info about property lines.
- Chad suggests that if the committee starts with a couple of town-owned properties that have a lot of trails, the committee can go out and walk those areas. The Master Plan can be revisited in the process.
- Private property: there is no standard process for attaining access for a trail onto private property. Chad outlines 3: buying the property; a legal

easement; written agreement of understanding. Mark points to the CT Forest & Trail's Conservation Easement form that is used as a good model.

- The group looked at the map of the Beebe Trail as an example showing where some "trails" are actually property lines. Sydney suggested a connector on the Cutler(?) Bridge so that kids from the school could use the trail

C. Joellen Anderson talked about a proposal to nominate the 6 mi Cross Town Hike Route (that has been used for the past few years in support of National & CT Trails Day) for a CT Greenway.

IV. Approval of Minutes – January 24, 2013 Special Meeting

Sydney Van Zandt made the motion to accept the minutes. Seconded by Joellen Anderson. Abstained: Jean-Claude Ambroise.

V. Correspondence/Communication

None

VI. Reports

None

VII. Old Business

Review samples of trail signs submitted

Images of trails signs to be e-mailed to Task Force to review at home for next meeting.

VIII. Next Meeting – March 28, 2013 4 PM Groton Senior Center

IX. Adjournment

Joellen Anderson made motion to adjourn the meeting. Seconded.

Minutes have been approved and accepted.

  
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Signature

3/28/13  
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Date