

# Trails Coordinating Task Force

Thursday, March 28, 2013

4 PM – Groton Senior Center

Meeting Minutes

I. Call to Order

II. Roll Call

Membership in Attendance: Joellen Anderson, Mark Berry, Laurie Gorham, Sidney Van Zandt, Rick Stevens, Brae Rafferty, Deb Jones, June Evered, Bruce McDermott, Debralyn Marshall-Baker, Joan Smith, Sue Sutherland  
Membership Absent: Allen Goulet, A. Neil Brown, Eric Morrison  
Guests in Attendance: None

III. Approval of Minutes – February 28, 2013

Brae made the motion to accept the minutes as amended; Joan seconded.  
Motion passed, 1 abstention.

IV. Correspondence/Communication

- Mark received an email from Sidney regarding the Mortimer Wright property which they walked recently. 3 trees are down. They are located on the upper trail that goes parallel to Public Works. Parks and Rec Dept. will have them cleared.
- Joellen mentioned a brochure distributed by Groton Biz that identifies places to go in Groton, including some of the parks. She noted it contains a LOT of errors in it. She thinks the Mystic Chamber of Commerce developed it but if it is to be reprinted, it needs to be corrected. Mark will reach out to whoever is in charge of this brochure.

V. Reports

None

VI. Old Business

a. **Trail Signage & “Branding” of the Groton Trails System:**

How can we accomplish a unified system of trail markings among trails on the different properties?

- Groton Trail Logo: Two designs for a Groton Trails logo were submitted by Chad. The group liked one of them in particular, and everyone from the

respective trail groups (Avalonia, GOSA, Pequot, TriTown) appeared willing to post these along with their individual signs.

- **Boundaries:** GOSA uses yellow diamonds on trees on the **outer** edge of the property line to designate boundaries; Avalonia has signs that say “Leaving Avalonia Land Conservancy Property.” There was no discussion about which method might be used for the Copp property.
  - **Blazes & Posts:** Groton Parks & Recreation likes posts, rather than colored blazes to designate trails. If posts are used, many signs can be posted, the Groton Trails sign and the property owner’s sign. 12x12 posts are being installed on the Trolley Trail. Avalonia and GOSA use blazes to mark their trails.
  - **Approved Use Symbols:** Avalonia and GOSA have signs at their trail heads using the symbols commonly understood as “approved use”, symbols for hikers, bicycles, no motorists, no smoking, etc.
  - **Naming Trails:** The Town would like to name the trails, but when a trail is wooded, blazes are needed to help hikers. Joan says natural features are useful for naming.
  - **Entry Signs:** Some trails do not have good entry signs. Mortimer Wright does not have a good sign. Bruce says a sign pointing to the trail should be on the road too.
  - **Website:** Bruce looked at the website in the trails section and said the maps were really hard to read.
- b. **6-mi Cross Town Hike Route.** Joellen and Sidney have started inspection of the trails that make up this designation, starting with Mortimer Wright. Currently, the Cross Town Hike (an annual event) has to walk on the road between Merritt Family Forest and Beebe Pond because a bridge near Cutler school was removed. There was much discussion about the bridge and alternatives in connecting the two trail sections. Additionally someone asked if there is a greenway space near Judson Road to connect Beebe and Pequot? Deb says it’s “on the radar.”

## VII. New Business

- a. **Greenway Nomination Concept:** The State of CT is accepting nominations. Deb talked with Laura Gianotti who said nominations don’t have to be trails or a defined route – they can open spaces, as long as it can be used for recreation. Any nomination has to be endorsed by the Town Council and the Town’s Conservation Commission. The Town will be submitting a nomination for these two areas: the Groton portion of the TriTown Trail and the G & S Trolley area (Lilly Lane).

Designated greenways help in recreational trails grants applications. (You get 15 extra points!).

--However greenways are NOT always public right of ways, Joellen says, which could be confusing to people.

- b. **Trails Maintenance Workshop:** Mark is putting a workshop together to the October. Groton park staff will participate in the training, which will include the fundamentals of trail building and maintenance. Some outside organizations might be invited to participate but the workshop will be daytime, during the week. Joellen asks how volunteers know what they are allowed to do in terms of trail maintenance and could that be clarified. Unfortunately, volunteers cannot do major work on trails on Town property because of insurance purposes. Groups can get around this but it is an extensive process involving the Town Council and signing waivers, etc.

Mark's previous position had a program where folks "adopted" trails. People would walk the trail in the spring. Mark will check with Town officials about doing something similar in Groton.

- c. **Coast Guard Students** – status of their GIS 'ground truth' of Pequot Woods Trails  
Two students will walk the trails to identify points of interest and problems. They have just started this week.

VIII. Next Meeting – May 23, 2013 4 PM Groton Senior Center

IX. Adjournment

Minutes have been approved and accepted.

  
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Signature

5/23/13  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date