

Trails Coordinating Task Force

Thursday, May 22, 2014

Groton Senior Center

Meeting Minutes

I. Call to Order. Meeting called to order at 4:06 pm.

II. Roll Call

Members in Attendance: Joellen Anderson , Mark Berry, A. Neil Brown, Denise Descheneaux, June Evered, Bernie French, Deb Jones, Debralyn Marshall-Baker, Bruce McDermott, Gail Munn, Bea Reynold , Joan Smith, Sue Sutherland

Alternates in Attendance: Sidney Van Zandt

Members Absent: Diane Glemboski (Alternate member), Carla Henschel, Brea Rafferty, Eric Morrison, Rita Schmidt, Rick Steven, Rita Volkmann.

Guests in Attendance: Shawn Greeley, Daniel Erhart, Groton Public Library.

III. Citizen's Petitions, Comments and Concerns. None

IV. Approval of Minutes - March 27, 2014.

Motion to approve these minutes made by Bruce McDermott, seconded by Joellen Anderson. The minutes were approved unanimously.

V. Correspondence/Communication. None.

VI. Reports.

Mark Berry suspended the posted agenda to allow for the showing of a video produced by Shawn Greeley and Daniel Erhart of the Groton Public Library. The video is a public service announcement promoting Groton's trails which will be shown on several local television channels. The committee unanimously praised Shawn and Daniel on the excellence of this video. Mark announced that the grant application for funds to print up flyers for Groton's trails was denied by Chelsea Groton Bank but that the application will be submitted again next year.

a. Avalonia. Joellen Anderson reported on the following:

1. Jenn Miele, a staff member at the Groton Public Library, created two displays in the Groton Public Library. One celebrates the 100th anniversary of Connecticut Parks Day, and the other is on trails. She also produced a bookmark that contains website addresses of trails oriented organizations, local and beyond.

Avalonia provided most of the content for the exhibit.

2. Avalonia's chainsaw use policy has been approved by the board. The policy covers safety and liability for volunteers working on the trails and requires them to sign a release.

b. Copp Property. Neil Brown.

1. Copp has received two grants. One of them expires on 12/12/2014 so they wish to exhaust this money so as not to lose it. Neil sent a request to the Groton Town Manager to allow them to use up the funds that have already been received. The existing project went slower than planned as they try to use people from Groton Public Works and the weather doesn't always cooperate. This grant is being used for improvements to the parking lot and for the open space area.

Kent and Frost are working on the plans for the actual trail grant. Then the physical work will go out to bid. There is a strong stipulation from the State that part of the trail must be handicapped accessible. The trail will be laid out in a large circle that goes around the perimeter. There isn't enough money at present to complete the entire trail. As much work as is able will be done. Some areas are wet and rocky. Bruce McDermott noted that there is even one area where there is a rope to assist people to get up a steep slope. This area belongs to Groton Utilities. Some of the property lines are indefinite.

Mark added that one of the early projects will be to upgrade the parking lot and entrance. There will be a kiosk with information. A Boy Scout doing his Eagle project has installed 9 posts in key areas in the park that need good signage.

- c. **Cross Town Trail.** On Saturday, June 7, National Trails Weekend, there will be a cross-town hike from Bluff Point starting at 9:30 am, to Lands End and returning at 1 pm.
- d. **GOSA.** GOSA is offering a Sheep Farm tour on Sunday, June 8, from 10 am to 12 pm. Not all these trails are open to the public. They also offer hikes on the Avery Farm every Sunday at 2 pm. The Avery Farm trails are presently privately owned but GOSA has applied for grants to buy this property. They should hear about the grants in September and continue raising the remaining funds. GOSA is also working on access points along Candlewood Ridge. This is a two-year project. They received another grant to purchase 1,500 shrubs.
- e. **Town Trails.**
 - 1. Mark informed the group that the RTM approved \$50,000 for trail enhancements. \$25,000 is set aside as matching funds. \$25,000 was approved for trails improvement. This will be used to identify rights of way, signage improvement and possibly permitting design for an East/West bikeway. Joan added that idea behind the East/West bikeway is to connect employment centers in the city with areas in the south. This is in the Trails Masterplan.
 - 2. Debralyn said that the Mumford Cove people have decided that the U-turn for bikes might be possible. All trail work will be confined to Groton Utilities' right of way. Construction will continue as there is money that must be spent.
 - 3. Mark will be approaching the Traffic Authority about placing 6" x 6" public trail signs around town. Bruce volunteered to collate a list of preferred sites. Please contact Bruce at:

brucemcd@yahoo.com

Bruce asks that you also send a photo of the site if possible.

- f. **TriTown Trails.** Bea reported that the building of the trail from the Preston border will start soon. The contract has been signed with Kent and Frost and the trail has a grant for an official sign on the Preston border. This is a start on the trail's physical presence. The trail committee is offering a hike through the reservoir property in Ledyard on Saturday, June 7 at 10 am, leaving from Sandy Hollow Road in Ledyard. The trail committee has been given permission to conduct five walks a year on this property. Debralyann added that public utilities are required to offer some public recreation as part of their charter. As a private utility, Groton Utility is not mandated to provide recreation so they are resisting because of the additional manpower required to monitor the trails, etc.

VII. Old Business.

- a. Signs, the brochure, the PSA video presentation have all been discussed.

VIII. New Business.

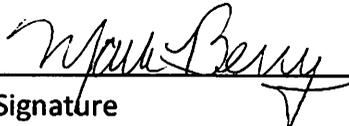
- a. **Beebe Pond Trail Extension Project.**

Mark showed slides of a study that a Coast Guard Academy cadet, Austin Fullmer, made of Beebe Pond. His project was to make a connection from Beebe Pond to Town's End. Austin found some existing trails in varying states of usability and provided charts and video of all his work.

IX. Next meeting – June 26, 2014, 4 pm. Groton Senior Center.

- X. **Adjournment.** Motion to adjourn made by Sue Sutherland, seconded by Bernie French. The meeting adjourned at 5:08 pm.

Minutes have been approved and accepted.



Signature

6/26/14

Date