

Wilmington Trail Committee
Minutes for October 12, 2023

Members present: Joanne Yankura, Bob Fisher, Julie Koehler, Jeff Menges, Carol Bois

Alternates present: Alan Baker, Matt Danzico

Public: Jeremy White, Marshall Dix, Gretchen Havreluk

Meeting called to order at 6:04pm by Bob Fisher.

1. Changes to the agenda - none at this time
2. Public Comments - none at this time
3. Approve minutes from 9/14 - Request made to clarify item 7b into two separate bullets. Minutes will be updated and resent for approval at next month's meeting.
4. Financial report - Last mowing bill reviewed, remarks made about general fund vs 1%, will be a topic next month. All in favor of approving financial report.
5. HTW Project Updates:
 - a. Discuss parking area and driveway permit - Joanne shared permitted updates from Doug, on 10/31 there will be a site visit, timeline shared and permits should be finalized in February 2024.
Permit request from DRB was approved pending 30 day period. Valid for 2 years.
Concerns about parking overnight and/or on road will be dealt with by very clear signage. Additional concern during the HTW project is for homeowners along the trail, signage will also aid with this.
Updates from a meeting with Highway Superintendent Marshall Dix: discussion about size and capacity of parking area; one vs. two entrances and added culvert to parking area; surface options and maintenance needed
Marshall shared thoughts about using the current snowplow/bus turn around, or even just for winter. Bob shared that the location of the parking lot was designed so equipment could access the trail/staging for the project so as not to impact the existing boardwalk. The lot will be done after the completion of the trail project.
Motion made by Bob to commence the permit process for the Fairview ave access lot with the town, and to approve the town highway department as the contractor. Joanne seconds the motion. Further discussion: Matt inquires about renewing or extending a permit past a deadline. Bob shared that a request for extension is needed prior to expiration. Marshall will ask about a 2 year period. All in favor of this motion. None opposed. Motion passed.
 - b. Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative (VOREC) Grant Update - Joanne shared information on grant opportunity: we will be pursuing the implementation track. Timeline: Deadline is Dec 15 for submission, award notification Feb 28, by May 31 agreement development period, implementation is June 2024 until Dec? 2025. 50k minimum and no max limit. There is not a match required, but if there is some other funding the application will be stronger. Another additional piece to strengthen application is innovation/creativity: could include information on history of trail or include some type of interpretive section on improved trail.
Grant requires impacted land owners sign off on permission. Two landowners outstanding to connect with. Gretchen suggested sending a registered letter asking them to call and

discuss. Jeremy suggested checking with his family for the Fairview ave lot as it is currently for sale and they may know how to contact the owner.

Discussion followed of landowner permission for trails, they are stored in a binder. Alan and Matt suggest scanning and organizing the permission slips.

Actions: start grant writing, get landowner permission, and begin signage updates

6. Trail Signage: replacements, design/content - Jeff and Carol shared ideas on need for uniformity of design and information included in trail head markers.

Action: members to share any ideas for information that should be included with Jeff and he will report next meeting.

Design will be discussed further next month, but will be universal to all trails.

7. Mowing report from Jeremy White - Wet and stormy year, many trees down. Going forward it needs to be identified if the TC will be responsible for trail opening/clearing for mowing or will the contractor be responsible for taking care of this and billing for extra time. TC will allow for inclusion of extra billing for trail clearing/opening by the contractors in their bids.

Jeremy suggested that bids be out earlier for the contract for next summer so contractors have more time to prepare.

Primitive trail section on whites road should be added to the list in the bid.

Mapping for mowing was discussed. TC will attach a highlighted map with distances included on the request for proposal for contractors to review. Also include "walk behind brush mower" in equipment needed description.

(items 8 and 9 switched to allow for Jeremy to continue sharing about social media)

8. Managing WTC Social Media Pages - Overview: there was a facebook page created by TC but it is currently dormant. Jeremy White has sent up a group (discussion style) "friends of the wilmington trails". Bob clarified rules surrounding social media and open meeting laws. When managed by a town entity, pages are more conducive to meeting laws but groups can be run by anyone from the public.

TC is interested in adding a link to the "Friend of the Wilmington Trails" facebook group to the Trails town website. TC will inquire with the town about adding this link, with a disclosure that it is not managed by the committee.

Jeff will take over admin responsibilities of the official TC facebook page, Matt will coordinate with Smitri.

9. Trail work priorities/work bees -

- a. Joanne shared a list of trail maintenance needs:

Primitive trail - bridge has suffered from flooding and stream has moved. Joanne will check about access and we will discuss at the next meeting to make a plan for repair next year.

HTW bridge - will continue to discuss options after reviewing photos and seeing in person

Signage along beaver brook - Julie will repost signs this week

Gravel in front of the boardwalk on HTW by wastewater treatment - no further discussion

Tree down on primitive trail - Jeremy will look into upon reviewing and signing work waiver from town

Tree down on Shearer Hill - Bob will complete maintenance

Tree off of haystack road on valley trail and another by tennis courts, both cut up - no further discussion

Sign post on Chimney hill - will address at next work bee if time

- b. Work bee - October 26th, meet at Mill street trailhead 4pm to check out HTW bridge.

- c. Health and safety discussion - Jeremy stated there is a liability waiver that the town has for volunteers. Bob will look into this and report back. Carol may look into other pertinent safety information for volunteers.

10. Additional Public Comments -

Jeremy makes a recommendation that the trails are closed during rifle season and youth weekend. Many members of TC agree for reasons of safety and respect. Additionally, Jeremy shared that as a member of the fire department he has been involved in woods rescues. They are lacking in manpower and if the trail isn't wide enough they can't get the equipment in/out. In the future, it would be ideal that if a trail is more than half a mile long the trail is wide enough to accept a side by side/ATV. Another recommendation is to add a half way marker on all trails and first responders will be notified to ask callers if they have passed the marker on their journey to help identify location quicker and easier.

Motion made to adjourn meeting. All in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:50pm.