



TOWN OF NORTHBOROUGH Trails Sub-Committee

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Monday June 17, 2024

Northborough Trails Committee

Northborough Police Station Meeting Room

Attendees: Brian Belfer, Bern Krafsig, Ginny Lemmerman, Victor Jacek, Paul Middleton, Jeanne Cahill, Sherral Devine

7:05 p.m. - Meeting opened by Brian Belfer

- 1) Brian introduced himself and we went around the room to do introductions.
- 2) Bern made a motion to approve the May minutes. Victor seconded. A unanimous vote approved the minutes
- 3) Brian started a discussion on maintenance items.
 - a) Initial mentions were made concerning general need for mowing and sign maintenance.
 - b) Brian reported that he had weed-whacked most of Stirrup Brook last year, suggested that the trail may need another pass.
 - c) It was also mentioned that Carney and portions of the Aqueduct may need mowing attention as well.
 - d) A brief discussion occurred about whether there were any restrictions regarding what portions the committee had with respect to mowing sections of the aqueduct, and if the DPW would perform any of that mowing. The consensus appeared to be that the DPW did not participate in that mowing activity but that the Committee only mowed within Northborough boundaries, For example the portions of the aqueduct in Berlin were out of our area.
- 4) New Projects were discussed. Two projects were mentioned for this summer but need to be discussed by a larger group than present for scheduling.
 - a) Bird Song trail bridges need replacement.
 - b) The floating bridge at Cold Harbor by Cherry Street needs to be replaced.
- 5) Project Updates. –The completion of the Mt. Pisgah project was recorded.
- 6) New Business
 - a) Paul Middleton said that a picnic table is available for donation for use on a trail. More may be available after that. He mentioned the possibility of involving Scouts for placing the tables
 - b) The main discussion surrounding the tables centered on where to use them.
 - i) The initial suggestion was to place the first table at the Birchwood riverside lawn area. The ability to drive close to the location was also a plus.
 - ii) Other potential locations considered Additional sites on Old Farm (in addition to the existing table overlooking the Assabet), the Meadowbrook trailhead, and Birdsong.
 - iii) There was discussion of sites at Watson Park as well. That discussion led to questions on mowing maintenance and development of additional garden spaces at Watson. The understanding on mowing Watson indicated that that job is owned by DPW. The members of Sustainable Northborough mentioned that they had requested to the DPW that they not mow Watson in August in order to accommodate pollinators but the DPW indicated that they had to mow Watson then because their schedule only had a slot during that time to do it and no other time was available.
- 7) There were updates from the attendees on other items of interest.

- a) Sherral advised that the Conservation Commission is expecting to have an update soon on the upcoming Forestry plan but did not have a firm date.
 - b) Brian reported that construction on the ADA trail is ongoing. That end of the trail at Edmunds remains closed to the public but he had been able to gain access and view the work completed so far. It was suggested that it might be helpful to place signage at the Rice Avenue and Meadowbrook trailhead advising hikers of the closure at the other end of the trail
 - c) Brian reported on hearing from the Shrewsbury Trail Committee. Brian attended an STC meeting last year but has not made it to one this year. He suggested that it might be worthwhile to connect with them and explore projects of mutual interest. One such project could be the establishment of a trailhead at Northborough Crossing in the future in order to connect from there to trail projects in Shrewsbury.
 - d) It was also announced that STC is holding a Full Moon Hike at Carney in October.
- 8) The last portion of the meeting was focused on attendees from Sustainable Northborough.
- a) Jeanne reported that there needs to be additional work at the Meadowbrook trail head to remove additional invasive vines.
 - b) Jeanne also reported that there had been at least three new dumps of lawn debris at the Meadowbrook trail head since the previous clean-up effort.
 - i) She said it was unclear if all the dumping was from neighborhood residents although she intimated that some residents implicated neighbors. But it might be that landscaping services might also be involved.
 - ii) There was a discussion of approaches to curb the dumping. A suggestion was made to get the DPW to place some boulders to block access to the dumping area. It was also suggested that appropriate signage advising of the illegality might help to discourage further dumping.
 - c) Ginny gave information about a new brush removal day this coming Saturday, June 22.
 - i) Part of the day will be spent removing burning bush and educating people on the best techniques to do so. She described the girdling technique. Girdling is the complete removal of a strip of bark around the base of the plant. Girdling disrupts the movement of fluid movement so the shrub dies.
 - ii) There will also be efforts to deal with ivy and bittersweet.
- 9) Bern made a motion to adjourn at 7:55. Paul seconded. A unanimous vote approved.

Adjourn at 7:55 p.m.