



TOWN OF ELLINGTON

Ad Hoc Ellington Trails Committee

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CHERI MURPHY
RECORDING SECRETARY

ERIN STAVENS
CHAIRMAN

LAUREN DESROCHER
VICE CHAIRMAN

VALERIE AMSEL
PAM MCCORMICK
RACHEL DEARBORN
JEFFERY MILLER
LOIS TIMMS-FERRARA
CYNTHIA VAN ZELM
GEORGE VARTANIAN

AD HOC ELLINGTON
TRAILS COMMITTEE
Special Meeting Minutes
February 14, 2018
Town Hall Meeting Hall

MEMBERS PRESENT: Erin Stavens, Lauren Desrocher, Valerie Amsel, Pam McCormick, Lois Timms-Ferrara, Rachel Dearborn

MEMBERS ABSENT: Cheri Murphy, Cynthia van Zelm, Jeffery Miller, George Vartanian

OTHERS PRESENT: Bob Tedford

I. CALL TO ORDER

Erin Stavens called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m.

II. CITIZENS FORUM

No citizens came forward.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A. January 10, 2018

MOVED (STAVENS), SECONDED (TIMMS-FERRARA) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE JANUARY 10, 2018 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

A. Update on 2018 Event Dates [ATTACHED]

The 2018 Event Dates schedule was reviewed, and the Moonlight Hike held on January 31st was briefly discussed. It was reported that 17 community members participated, and it was a very successful event.

V. NEW BUSINESS

A. Individual Reporting of Committee Interests

The Committee members discussed what their individual interests in the group are, and what they would like to see the Committee focus on in the future.

Erin Stavens joined since she was interested in broadening public awareness of the trails in Ellington. Her current interests are trail maintenance, community outreach, and planning new trails projects.

Lauren Desrocher's initial reason for joining the Committee was her goal of reviving the Metcalf property. With that having been accomplished, she now wants to focus on the planning and development of new properties with an emphasis on preserving the historical preservation of the land.

Valerie Amsel is interested in creating more walkable Town trails and increasing kayak access to the Hockanum River.

Rachel Dearborn is interested in creating more bike-friendly trails with specific destinations, such as a trail one could bike to go get ice cream, for example. She would like the Committee to stick to Town-owned property rather than use trails that cross into private land, unless there is the option of acquiring legal documentation giving the Committee access to it. She also promoted the various sidewalk projects in Town, as that will make Ellington more walkable as well.

Pam McCormick's primary focus is on trail maintenance.

Lois Timms-Ferrara is also interested in making the existing trails more bike-friendly as well as the increased access for kayaking on the Hockanum River. Her focus is primarily in the finance and administration aspects of such projects.

B. Establish/Review Committee Mission Statement

The present Committee members discussed what centralized statement would encompass everyone's goals and visions and agreed on the following Mission Statement:

"The goal of the Ad Hoc Ellington Trails Committee is to enhance, develop, and maintain trails on properties owned by the Town of Ellington for community recreation."

The Committee agreed to revisit the wording at their March meeting to include those who were absent.

C. Establish Subcommittees

The Committee established five sub-committee positions and appointed the present individuals as follows:

Committee Advisor: Bruce Dinnie

Trail Maintenance: Valerie Amsel, Pam McCormick, and Erin Stavens

Planning and Development: Lauren Desrocher, Rachel Dearborn, and Erin Stavens

Community Outreach and Publicity: Erin Stavens

Finance: Lois Timms-Ferrara

An email will be sent to the absent members to inquire which committee(s) they may be interested in.

VI. REVIEW ACTION ITEMS

A. Committee Trail Hike: February 17 at 10:00 am – YMCA/Windermere Trail

The Committee confirmed that the group trail hike is scheduled for Saturday, February 17 at the YMCA/Windermere Trail.

Bob Tedford reported that the Parks and Recreation Department has funds and an ongoing agreement with Ellington Printery to produce new maps for 2018. The Eagle Scout mailbox project is complete and the Trails Committee has eight boxes available to place at new or existing trails. Bob also stated that he has one Eagle Scout looking for work to do, and Lauren and Rachel suggested the upcoming need for a bridge on the new Kimball Brook property project. UConn also has community service representatives available for spring work; Erin will communicate with Bob to work out those details. Erin also knows of a Cub Scout group looking for projects to assist with in April. General clean-up of trails and constructing a simple plank bridge at the Batz Property were discussed as possibilities.

Bob suggested including an active liaison from Parks and Recreation to attend the Trails Committee meetings; Erin will send Bob an official request for this position.

Bob, along with Rachel, will look into what parcels are legally available to the Committee as “Open Space” for future property acquisitions. In the future, they plan to send members of the newly-formed Trails Planning and Development Subcommittee to the Conservation Commission to lobby for properties.

Valerie recommended that when the Committee hosts community events, there should be introductions made prior to the start of the event.

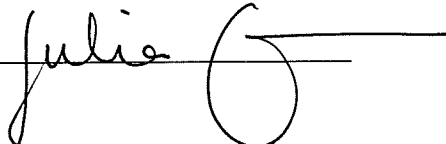
Lauren will contact residents of Woodside Acres to gauge interest in a night hike at the Metcalf Property.

There was a brief discussion regarding reaching out to local gym teachers, guidance departments, and emergency services to recruit volunteers for 2018 projects. Erin also plans to reach out to any inactive members to prepare for new recruiting.

The next meeting will take place on Wednesday, March 7.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED (STAVENS), SECONDED (DESROCHER) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 7:23 PM.

Submitted by: 

2018 TRAIL EVENTS

JANUARY

Wednesday, 1/31: "Snow Moon Night Walk" at the YMCA/Windermere Trail 7PM

-Pending on the interest of this walk, Lauren would potentially plan a couple more of these full moon walks throughout the year

FEBRUARY

Saturday, 2/17: "Trails Committee Walk" at the YMCA/Windermere Trail 10AM

-This will not be a publicized hike. I would rather hike as a committee and evaluate this trail and determine where it needs improvements. I wanted to include it on this list because we did talk about it on the minutes, and with the suggestion of seasonal hikes, I think it would be one less thing to have to worry about.

MARCH

Sunday, 3/25: "Spring Public Hike" at the West Rd Trail 10AM

-Spring this year is March 20th, as well as International Earth Day. Due to not knowing what the weather or the thaw on the ground will be like at this time, I am thinking making this hike at the West Rd Trail. It's a flat trail that isn't super muddy or located in the wetlands too much.

APRIL

Sunday, 4/22: "Earth Day" Event at the West Rd Trail 9AM-1PM

-The Boy Scouts showed interest in doing a cleanup as part of their community service. I think it would be more cost effective to do a land cleanup on the West Rd Trail. That way we aren't freezing in the river and they can help us get some areas under control at the entrance. If everything goes smoothly, I may see if they can make some nice flower beds to help with people seeing the entrance a little better.

MAY

Week of 5/6-5/12: "Wildflower Week"

-I think making a nice post on Facebook about what wildflowers are native to our area so people can try and plant some of their own would be okay

Wednesday, 5/16: "Love a Tree Day"

-We can probably get away with making a nice Facebook Post on this since it's in the middle of the week

Saturday, 5/19: "Hockanum River Clean-Up" at the YMCA/Windermere Trail 9AM-1PM

-Since Earth Day will be on West Rd, working on the other part of the river would give whoever is helping with the cleanup the opportunity to evaluate what trash is coming down river. In addition to this, if the water is still too cold to work in, we can do a land cleanup to the best of our ability on this trail.

JUNE

Saturday, 6/2: "Trails Day" at YMCA/Windermere Trail Time TBD

Saturday, 6/16: "Hockanum River Clean-Up" at the West Rd Trail 9AM-1PM

"Painted Turtle Release" (Following the river clean-up)

-The Boy Scouts showed interest in helping take part in this event. I think this will be a good day to show the community our hard work, and the benefit of learning a little bit about the turtle

JULY

Sunday, 7/8: "Summer Public Hike" at the Balanced Boulder Trail 10AM

-I know parking is scarce, but we haven't paid much attention to this trail and I think it's doable

Saturday, 7/21: "Hockanum River Clean-Up" at the YMCA/Windermere Trail 9AM-2PM

-This is the big one. The water will be ideal for river cleaning and it's a large span of river to take care of. We can most likely get a good handful of people helping community wise. We would have everyone meet up at the Pinney St Fields and then disperse from there.

AUGUST

Saturday, 8/18: "Hockanum River Clean-Up" at the West Rd Trail 9AM-1PM

-This will be the final cleanup of 2018. Ann Harford advised us last year to make sure we are out of the river by September due to the water getting colder.

SEPTEMBER

Saturday, 9/22: "Autumn Public Hike" at Sunset Hill 10AM

-This works out that the first day of fall *falls* on a Saturday. I wanted to switch the trails up and think although Sunset is shorter, not many people know about it and this would get some good exposure for those looking for a hillier trail.

OCTOBER

Saturday, 10/27: "Jack-O-Lantern Walk/Trunk-or-Treat" at Brookside Park Time TBD

-Even if this project is not complete, I think this would still be a great spot to do this event. We can get all the Boy and Girl Scouts, as well as Youth Services involved, maybe even the schools depending on the interest. I know the Fire Department does Trunk or Treat so maybe we can team up with them as well.

NOVEMBER

Saturday, 11/17: "Take a Hike Day"

-We can easily do a Facebook Post for this day and have people comment their pictures of the hikes they took that day

DECEMBER

Saturday, 12/22: "Winter Public Hike" at the YMCA/Windermere Trail 10AM

-The first day of winter is the 21st. I know this is right before Christmas, but kids will be out of school and even if there's a little snow on the ground, this trail will be flat enough to hike comfortably.

