



TOWN OF ELLINGTON

Ad Hoc Ellington Trails Committee

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ELLINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06029-0187

CHAIRMAN
LINDA ANDERSON

VICE CHAIRMAN
CYNTHIA VAN ZELM

VALERIE AMSEL
PAM MCCORMICK
JUDI MANFRE
ANN MCLAUGHLIN
DEANNA WAMBOLT-GULICK
KEN RADZIWON

AD HOC ELLINGTON
TRAILS COMMITTEE
Regular Meeting Minutes
September 1, 2021
Nicholas J. DiCorleto, Jr. Meeting Hall

MEMBERS PRESENT: Linda Anderson, Pam McCormick, Ann McLaughlin, Cynthia van Zelm, Valerie Amsel, Deanna Wambolt-Gulick

MEMBERS ABSENT: Judi Manfre, Ken Radziwon

OTHERS PRESENT: Bruce Dinnie, Tom Palshaw

I. Call to Order

Linda Anderson called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

II. Citizens' Forum: No citizens came forward.

III. Approval of Minutes

A. August 4, 2021

It was noted that the Harvest Festival will be held on October 16th.

MOVED (VAN ZELM), SECONDED (MCCORMICK) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE AUGUST 4, 2021 REGULAR MEETING AS CORRECTED.

IV. Presentation by Youth of the Future Group

Group members Madeleine Willett and Ruby Grotton presented their proposed project, building two sets of 4x5 raised beds at Batz Property to be planted with native species, to be built in early October. The Committee will provide the supplies, and the Group will handle the labor; the beds will be filled with soil and planted in the spring. The Committee provided a list of vendors that sell native plants and that are on the approved vendor list; the Committee asked the Group to maintain the beds moving forward, as long as they are active.

V. Hockanum River Association Report

Tom Palshaw informed the Committee that the trails were sprayed for poison ivy. The West Road Trail was mowed from Lower Butcher Road to the stairs; more mowing will continue next week.

There are four trees that are of concern that need expert help. They are located on Lower Butcher Road, Brian's Way, the pond by the bridge and the most dangerous is on Franklin. Public Works will need to be informed with exact locations so they can put these trees on Mountain Tree's list if it is too difficult for Public Works to take down. Tom Palshaw will talk to Public Works.

VI. Emergency Signs Update

Mr. Palshaw and Pam McCormick completed installation of the Emergency Signs on Windermere, Franklin and West Road. Batz will be measured and the signs installed in the next few weeks, followed by Kimball and Metcalf. At the next meeting, maps with sign locations that are finished will be reviewed and all information will be approved by the Committee and passed on to the Ad Hoc Emergency Services Committee.

VII. Old Business

A. Batz Improvements Progress Report

i. Amphitheater Benches

The benches are finished and installed; the Amphitheater is open for all community groups to use for educational programming.

ii. Amphitheater Ribbon Cutting

The Ribbon Cutting is scheduled for September 22nd with a raindate of September 23rd, beginning at 5:00 pm at Batz. The OKP will be performing a short skit and thank yous are going out to all who contributed to the building of the Batz Amphitheater.

iii. Amphitheater Stage Ramp

The ramp will be ordered from Amazon by Ms. Anderson; Ms. McCormick was thanked for the research she did on this item.

iv. Wildlife Cam

The camera put up by the Girl Scouts caught a picture of a heron dining on frogs in the Batz Frog Pond; the photo was shared on the Committee's Facebook page.

B. Signage Concerns – Vernon Friends of Trails

Ms. McCormick cleared the sign pointing to the continuation of the Windermere Trail heading towards Ellington after crossing the swing bridge and coming to the T. It was covered with weeds before and couldn't be seen; the Friends are happy with the results.

C. Harvest Festival

The Harvest Festival on October 16th, scheduled from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm, will be held at the Nellie McKnight Museum, hosted by the Ellington Historical Society. A Committee table will be staffed by Judi Manfre, Deanna Wambolt-Gulick, Ann McLaughlin and Cynthia van Zelm. Judi and Deanna have come up with some ideas for a craft kit and will be showing how to use National Geographic's SEEK App. They will also hand out Batz maps and a request for bikers interested in a Crosstown Trail.

D. Crosstown Trail

Ken Radziwon, Pam McCormick and Linda Anderson met with First Selectman Spielman, Public Works Director Tim Webb, Town Planner Lisa Houlihan and Recreation Director Dustin Huguenin to discuss a possible crosstown bike/hike trail. All attendees felt that this would be a great asset for the Town. Mr. Webb suggested finding individuals who bike to fill some of the Committee's current vacancies to offer their input. The Committee will get the word out that they are looking for the input of bikers who may like to see a safe, off-road trail in Ellington that could eventually extend all the way to Hartford. The Committee will put a notice in the Town's monthly newsletter, will post on their Facebook page, hand out flyers at the Harvest Festival, visit cycle centers and schedule a TV spot with First Selectman Spielman. The Committee needs support from the community to move forward with this project.

VIII. New Business**A. CT DEEP Grant**

This grant would be great to use for the Crosstown Trail if the Committee would be ready to move forward; it provides up to 80% of funding for planning, installing and maintenance of long-distance bike trails. The Committee will look for this grant next year and hopefully the timing will work to move forward with this project.

IX. Subcommittee Reports**A. Treasurer**

Ms. McLaughlin will be ordering the ramp and reported that there is \$7,651.00 in the budget.

B. Planning & Development

Ms. Anderson said that once there's a frost, a time to walk and map out the Crystal Lake trails will be scheduled with Rachel Dearborn to start that approval process.

C. Maintenance

The bridge at Kimball has moved further downstream but is still in one piece. Ms. Amsel suggested that it may need to be taken apart and rebuilt; however, the water level needs to go down in the brook before any action is taken.

Metcalf needs raking and clipping. Ms. Amsel would like to clean around and in the foundation; boundary signs may need to be put up. She reported that both Batz and Kimball look good.

D. Community Outreach

No further discussion was held on outreach plans.

X. Adjournment

MOVED (ANDERSON), SECONDED (MCLAUGHLIN) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE TRAILS COMMITTEE MEETING AT 7:53 PM.

Submitted by _____


Julia Connor