



STATE OF CONNECTICUT – COUNTY OF TOLLAND
INCORPORATED

TOWN OF ELLINGTON

Ad Hoc Ellington Trails Committee

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Ad Hoc Ellington Trails Committee
Regular Meeting Minutes
October 7, 2026
Hall Memorial Library

MEMBERS PRESENT: Linda Anderson, Cynthia van Zelm, Deanna Wambolt-Gulick, Donna Allen, Tom Palshaw, Robert Barone, Stuart Lanz

MEMBERS ABSENT: Valerie Amsel, Ted Conklin, Bill Schultz, Dan Chamberlin, Ann Harford, Steven Austin, Ryan Bibeau

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 pm.

II. Citizens' Forum: No citizens wished to be heard at this time.

III. Approval of Minutes

A. September 9, 2026

No quorum was available to make and pass the motion accepting the minutes.

IV. Old Business

A. Hockanum River Crew Report – Signage

Mr. Barone reported that the trails are getting used and tree maintenance is underway for trees that have fallen across the trail spaces. The Y trail is overgrown, so some are going off trail by the industrial park. Between Pinney and the conduit, it is not blazed. Another viewing area has been opened up, and there is a plan to put a bench in that area. Ms. Anderson noted that Eagle Scouts are very eager to help with similar projects if needed, as Eagle Scout projects require construction.

Mr. Palshaw noted that there has been a suggestion for a trail along the sewer line, down by the pond area. This could be something that could be roughed out while it is dry and checked on in the spring to see if it is dry enough to construct a trail. Ms. Anderson positively noted that if a trail could be put in, it could help keep hikers away from the sewer line and out of the industrial park area.

Mr. Palshaw also shared that all signs pertaining to West Road have been pulled. Boundary markers have been put in instead. It is officially not a trail, and this has been communicated to all involved parties. Mr. Palshaw continued that he has informed 911, via Jack Turner, that the emergency signage has also been taken down. He continued discussing signage concerns on Windermere, concerning confusing spaces and

lack of visibility at night. He noted that there are too many signs at H12 and H11, making it challenging to see where the trail goes.

He suggested putting a map icon on the H12 and H11 posts which would show which way the trail continues, with an arrow indicating direction. These posts would help guide people to the midpoint and eliminate confusion. Mr. Palshaw also suggested using motor vehicle signs to indicate how to return to the Pinney parking area. Ms. Anderson is concerned that a motor vehicle sign might not be clear enough for hikers and suggested a sign directly labeled "parking". Ms. van Zelm suggested a "P" sign to show parking. Ms. Anderson and members of the Committee voiced support for the map signs but suggested making the parking indicator clearer with signs that read "parking." Ms. Anderson wants to reduce confusion, especially for less experienced hikers.

B. Conservation Report

There was no report at this time.

C. CT Trail Finder – New Map (Crystal)

The map is still being finalized but should be completed in a few days. Mr. Palshaw requested a copy of the map for emergency signage once it is finalized.

There is a gate at C7, and it was asked that the dirt road indication be eliminated on the map and to indicate private property on the other side of the gate. When it comes down the hill by the electric wires that go across, it will be indicated that it is private land and private property signs will be put up. The map will also have C8 indicated, the new gates, and the bench. A description has also been added and a QR code will be automatically updated.

D. West Road Closure

There was nothing additional to what was discussed above.

E. Batz – Concerned Citizen/Boundary Signs

Ms. Anderson is still trying to reach out to walk the trail with the citizen and address concerns as needed.

V. New Business

A. Welcome Newest Member, Ted Conklin

He was not present but has been added to email and phone communications.

B. Batz Camping Complaints

Two complaints arose from the Scouts from camping at Batz. First, it was reported that there are hornet nests in the outhouse, and second, there was concern about the amount of poison ivy. Ms. Anderson reached out the Public Works to report these concerns. It was agreed that, going forward, Public Works will check the outhouses for nests and will clear those currently there. The poison ivy in the field is too extensive a space to be sprayed, and it is largely ineffective in a space that size. She suggested possibly adding an indicator to the sign, warning about the presence of poison ivy.

C. New Map for Crystal

There was no additional discussion.

VI. Subcommittee Reports

A. Treasurer – \$4,403.27 is the current available budget.

B. Maintenance

1. Batz – Checked by Ryan for down trees

Ms. Anderson shared that Mr. Bibeau did not find any downed trees, but one of the old chestnut trees next to the community garden is beginning to fall apart; he moved portions of it out of the way, by the stone wall.

As soon as a hard frost happens, Public Works will go in and mow everything: the pollinator garden, the area where the birds are nesting, and the fields.

2. Need to check Crystal and Highland

Ms. Anderson asked members of the Committee if they can join her to check Crystal and Highland for downed trees; she shared that she also would like to spray for poison ivy once there is a hard frost.

C. Community Outreach

1. Fall Foliage Walk or Bike with Vernon Greenways Saturday, October 10th, 9am, behind Loom City Cycles, 520 Hartford Turnpike, Vernon. Two-mile hike/10-mile bike ride. Big thank you to Vernon Coffee Roasters providing coffee and donuts

Ms. van Zelm reminded members of this upcoming event. Meet at Loom City Cycles to start, where there will be coffee and donuts provided by Vernon Coffee Roasters for the hikers/bikers.

2. Northern CT Land Trust Walk – October 17th at 1 pm with Friends of Valley Falls; hike through Andrew Webster Knapp Property to Rails to Trails, then up ridge overlooking Valley Falls Park; walk can be steep, 1-1.5 hours, then 2:30 pm tour at farm museum; meet at Valley Falls parking lot at 1pm

This is an upcoming event.

3. Wildlife Out Your Window, October 14, 2026, Hall Memorial Library, 6:00-7:00pm in upstairs meeting room. Talk given by Brad Timm, wildlife ecologist and author on nature you can see from your window.

Ms. Anderson spoke of this event, noting that registration is required but that attendees do not have to be Ellington residents. Brad Timm gave a similar talk at Avon Library and it was a good event. The cost is being split with Hall Memorial Library.

4. Northern CT Land Trust Walk – Skyline Scenic Area at 10 am on October 25, 2.5 miles, up and downhill; meet at rear of Somers Town Hall, 600 Main Street, Route 190

This is an upcoming event.

5. Trail of Treats, October 26th (rain date October 27th) at Tedford Park, 5:00-7:30pm; need help setting up at 2:30 pm (tent/decorations), getting ready at 4:30 pm to hand out candy/rings, breakdown at 7:30 pm

Ms. Anderson, Ms. Allen, Ms. van Zelm and Mr. Bibeau will be there during the event to hand out candy. Mr. Lanz and Ms. Anderson will do the set up and breakdown of the canopy, and Ms. Anderson and Ms. Allen will do the decorating.

6. Annual After-Thanksgiving Walk, Saturday, November 28, Snipsic Lake Road, 10a

There is no rain date, and parking will be on the Ellington side.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 7:31 pm.

Submitted by


Julia Merriam