

Bike & Trail Committee Meeting
February 21, 2024, 7:00 P.M.
Community Center Meeting Room, 8 Simpson St, Newtown, CT 06470

Minutes

These minutes are subject to approval by the Bike & Trail Committee (BTC).

Attendees: Brad Accettella, Logan Adler, Jim Bernardi, Glenn Boyle (via video), Charles Zukowski.
Absent members: Geordie Elkins, Barney Molloy, Robert Morris. Public attendees: Jeff Frantz, Dan Holmes, Tracy Van Buskirk

CALL TO ORDER – The meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT – Ms. Van Buskirk reported that after last month’s meeting, she returned to Land Use to get an email showing approval to clear the paths, where they recommended the Conservation Commission (CC) also agree. A number of different trails were listed, and the request for clearing all will be made at next Tuesday’s CC meeting.

Mr. Frantz reported that the State map of the Upper Paugussett State Forest (near Lake Lillinonah) trails has been updated. Maps are available on the State website: [CT Trails](#).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – Mr. Accettella made a motion to approve the January 17th meeting minutes, seconded by Mr. Adler. All in favor. Motion passed.

CHAIRPERSONS’ REPORT

- Mr. Zukowski reported the Frank Pitrone has been appointed to the BTC and could not make the meeting because of a previous commitment.
- Mr. Zukowski reported that he attended the Economic Development Commission (EDC) meeting, where the development of 6 Commerce Dr. was discussed. He spoke to the EDC, noting that trails such as Al’s trail utilize some of that parcel, and requested that any approved projects provide for continued public access. For example, a trail easement on the deed.
- Mr. Zukowski reported that he attended the Planning & Zoning Commission’s (PZC) meeting, where the consultant provided an update on the 2024 Plan of Conservation & Development (POCD2024). The consultants, BFJ Planning, will have a meeting with PZC on the 29th and a revised draft of the POCD2024 will be posted online sometime afterwards.

OLD BUSINESS:

- Al’s Trail Project Status – The understanding is that with the contract revision complete, the design project can begin in the spring. The plan is to create a Greenway from Fairfield Hills to the end of Al’s trail.
- Grant status update - There are no known changes.
- Paper Road Status Update – There are no known changes. There is a map with index available which has circulated to BTC members. Available upon request.
- Minor Trail Reroute Status. The attendees agreed that a list, with maps as needed, would be helpful to keep track of progress.
- Interaction and cooperation with other organizations is ongoing. This meeting was attended by members of the Newtown Bridal Lands Association (NBLA), Connecticut Forest and Parks Association

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(CFPA) and Newtown Earth Day Organization. There was a discussion about contacting Aquarian to explore the possibility of connecting open space and trails in Newtown with the Huntington Ridge Trail, in Collis P Huntington State Park. There was a discussion, led by Mr. Holmes, about the Earth Day Celebration plans. The event is scheduled on April 27th, from 10 until 4pm at the Middle School on Queen St. There was discussion about the possibility of an Earth Day themed hike.

- Fund raising – No changes reported. There was a discussion about Wildlife Habitat Improvement Project (WHIP) grants. Mr. Boyle reported contacting Reverie Brewing about the outcome of last year’s event and will follow up to clarify exactly where the existing funds are shown on the Town’s books. Ideally, there will be instructions of how to add to the account and disburse BTC funds.
- Trail Maintenance / Review – Mr. Zukowski reported on the Half Way River review. He noted that on the Monroe side of the river, there is town open space that currently doesn’t connect with the Newtown space and suggested that BTC request the Town to provide an easement on the undeveloped portion of the 296 Berkshire Rd project. The area had been cleared, so walking was easy.

The next trail review/maintenance event is scheduled for 09:30 Saturday, March 2nd. The meeting location is on the north side of the I84 Housatonic River bridge, where the pedestrian walkway on the bridge is accessed. There is some open space to park on the road that connects to Fish Rock Rd. The plan is to explore the open space on the north side of the river, which faces the Pole Bridge Preserve.

- POCD24 status – The public comment period is closed and the consultant is working with the PZC to revised the draft, which will then be put online for public review some time after their February 29th meeting.
- Deep Brook Farm update – There are no known reportable changes. Negotiations are believed to be continuing.

NEW BUSINESS:

- Pootatuck Watershed Plan – Mr. Zukowski reported having skimmed the extensive plan and noted there is a significant list of projects planned. The draft is available here: [PWP 2024](#).

PUBLIC COMMENT – None.

ADJOURNMENT – Mr. Adler made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Bernardi. All in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:04pm.

Respectfully submitted by Glenn Boyle, Secretary