

Bike & Trails Committee (B&TC) Meeting
June 19, 2019
Town Hall South, 3 Main Street, Newtown

MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO THE APPROVAL OF THE BIKE & TRAILS COMMITTEE

Present: Brid Craddock, Geordie Elkins, Charles Foster, Greg Rintzinger, and Dave Siroky.

Also Present: Linda Hess and two members of the public.

CALL TO ORDER – 7:05

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion to accept the minutes of the 5/15/2019 as submitted was made by Charles Foster and seconded by Dave Siroky. **Motion passes unanimously.**

PUBLIC COMMENT

Paula Burton presented a map of Newtown to the committee that was produced by WestCOG. She noted that it was a first draft and asked members to look for missing elements or data should be added to future versions. The map can serve as a planning tool. It includes open space, trails, and road. Bridle Trails are missing, but they may be easements on private property and may not be public information. Brid asked if we could get an electronic copy from WestCOG. Paula thought so. It would be nice to have the map so that we can use it. NorthwestCOG has a comprehensive trail map for Litchfield County. Ideally, we would like something similar for Newtown.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Meeting with Newtown Forest Association- Peter, Geordie, and Brid met with NFA board to present a survey of Al's trail damage where it crosses their property. Proposed the two groups create a joint working group to coordinate workdays, and to clarify permission and liability of town volunteers working on NFA property. We mentioned that we would be designing standards for trails and proposed that they consider adopting them too, so that there is consistent trail marking in town.

Parks and Recreation- Linda Hess is moving and will no longer be the Park and Rec representative to the Committee. Clinton DePaolo will be the new representative. Amy reached out to American Ramp Company and they are willing to help with grant writing and contributions to the proposed bike park. Carl Samuelson and Amy Mangold have a spot on the next Fairfield Hills Authority meeting to propose bike park locations.

Still River Greenway- Dennis DiPinto, Director, Ridgefield Park and Rec. He worked for 16 years to get Still River Greenway approved. He said 100K people using the trail. Funding was 80% Fed and State funding to 20% local. Project cost \$2.8 million. There is a PDF of a slideshow documenting the process. (PDF is posted on Workplace) He is willing to come present to the committee.

Donations to the Committee- Bob Tate, Finance Director, Town of Newtown, is setting up a donation account for the Bike and Trail Committee. Memo line on the check needs to specify Bike and Trail Committee. It is possible to have sub-accounts for specific project. Brid will ask Dan Cragin to see if he can add a donation button to the web page.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Trail Meeting- Idea is to have a **Winter Newtown Trails Symposium** to build community support. Why do we want to have it, what are we planning to accomplish, and who do we want in the room? We want to raise awareness of the committee and trails and engage fellow town commissions. Raise awareness off the committee and educate people about recreational resources in town. What are some ideas for topic or activities to attract people? Speaker

from CT-DEEP to talk about analyzing trail use and the payback from trail use. We want to try to get topics that will make it appealing to an audience of all ages. Children's book author or activities. Include how-to of winter outdoor activities- geocache, orienteering, hiking, biking, snowshoeing, trail etiquette education, outdoor emergency protocol, and wildlife education. A company like LL Bean or REI might be willing to host a class/workshop. Brad knows people involved with mountain biking that could come speak including People for Bikes or Mike Vitti the president of CLIMB. Could we build film festival? When? Weekend in January – February. Where? Community Center and Park and Rec as possible location and partners.

We will need to decide who we want to attend and do some personal outreach to get people there. Start with reaching out to clubs and groups.

Chaz and Brid will prepare a survey for our board to solicit ideas for the Winter Newtown Trails Symposium, it will be put up as a form on Workplace.

Board members are encouraged to contribute thoughts and ideas in writing prior to our next meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

Reports From Sub-Committees:

- **Communications**
- **Grants**
 1. The application for the National Park Service Grant is moving forward. Geordie and Paula have been working on it. We have support letters from NEMBA, WestCOG, First Selectman, and Newtown Forest Association. We are waiting to hear about letter from Park and Rec and Conservation. The grant is due June 30.
 2. Brad is working with Park and Rec on a People for Bikes grant for a bike park at Fairfield Hills. Dickenson Park will be the back-up location. Park and Rec is the official applicant as they have better connections to get this across the finish line. This committee is supporting Park and Rec on the application. Anyone interested in helping with the application should talk to Brad.

Fall 2019 Grant Cycle

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|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| Online application opens: | June 17, 2019 |
| Online Letter of Interest due: | July 26, 2019 |
| Notification of LOI status: | September 6, 2019 |
| Full Applications due: | October 18, 2019 |
| Grant Award notifications: | by December 6, 2019 |

- **Mapping, Marking & Approvals**
- **Volunteers**
- **Events**

For public outreach and raising awareness of trails and the committee, we will consider hosting a guided walk for Al's Trail. The walk will be from Fairfield Hills to Commerce Drive. Committee members suggested ideas for the walk including having experts in topics like pollinators, tree id, birds, history, geology, trout etc. talk about different aspects of the trail and surrounding landscape. There are breweries at both ends of the trail, we may be able to include one of them in the itinerary to link our work to local businesses. Registration through park and rec. Geordie will pick some dates and flesh out a plan based on Committee ideas and bring it to the July meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT

ADJOURNMENT

Motion to close the meeting was made by Charles Foster and seconded by Dave Siroky. **Motion passes unanimously.**

Meeting adjourned at 8:25

Respectfully submitted. Geordie Elkins, Secretary

Next meeting July 17 pending survey of committee members to make sure people are not away.