

**Bike & Trails Committee Special Meeting**  
**January 16, 2019**  
**Town Hall South, 3 Main Street, Newtown**

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

Present: Gavin Arneth, Brid Craddock, Alicia De La Rosa, Geordie Elkins, Charles Foster, Ken Kerin, and Dave Siroky. Absent: Brad Accettella, Matthew Moscatelli, and Jim Zarifis

Also Present: Linda Hess (P&R), Mark Lurie (Conservation), Amy Mangold, Parks & Recreation Director, two members of the public.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Announcement that Matthew Moscatelli is moving out of the state and has resigned from the committee. He will be replaced by Jim Zarifis.

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

1. Motion to elect Brid Craddock -Chair, Dave Siroky- Vice-chair and Geordie Elkins- Secretary made Charles Foster and seconded by Gavin Arneth. . **Motion passed unanimously.**
2. Motion to elect Charles Foster to be Parliamentarian made by Brid Craddock and seconded by Gavin Arneth. **Motion passed unanimously.**

**CALENDAR OF MEETING DATES**

1. Motion to hold meetings on the third Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. made by Charles Foster and seconded by Gavin Arneth. **Motion passed unanimously.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Paula Burton, 31 Longview Terrace, Sandy Hook

Introduced herself as a former trails committee member and is currently working with Western Connecticut Council of Governments (West COG) designing trails has volunteered herself as resource for Graphic Information Systems (GIS) mapping and she has experience teaching trail building expertise and willing to work with the group.

Paula advised that good trail building requires planning and input from users and suggested the committee reach out to Newtown Bridle Lane Association (NBLA) and involve them in the natural surface trails.

Peter Cloudas, 15 Housatonic Drive, Sandy Hook

Introduced himself as a Design Advisory Board member, hiker, biker, snowshoer, and Housatonic Valley New England Mountain Bike Association (HV-NEMBA). He is organizing Newtown Trail Crew and Friends of Al's Trail to build volunteer support for local trail maintenance.

He suggested that the committee engage the +/- 40 people who have expressed interest in the Trail and Bike Committee and reach out to them to help define project priorities.

**POSSIBLE WAYS TO ORGANIZE**

Brid has drafted a document (See attachment: *Bike and Trail Committee - Topics to consider for inclusion on agendas*) that lays out some possible organizational structures, initiatives, and potential community partners to consider engaging. The committee will take up part of the document as discussion items at future meetings.

Alicia will set up a Google site to share informational documents for the committee to share. She will also create a Google Form questionnaire to solicit input from all community members who have expressed an interest in getting involved with trails. The committee will review and discuss the results at the next meeting.

Geordie will oversee researching and seeking grants.

Gavin Arneith will oversee mapping and coordinate with Mark who has GIS experience.

We should consider prioritizing communications early on to gain publicity and build public support for committee work. Web sites, social media, engaging the 40 interested citizens plus Sue Cox from the Hiker group and Dee Davis of NBLA.

### **COMMITTEE IDEAS/SUGGESTIONS**

Focus on the suggestions from Dan Rosenthal that we “look for the quick win” and focus on completing the rail trail, mapping and marking trails, finishing the Fairfield Hills trail, and developing safer bike routes. Plus, an additional focus on Al's trail.

A comment not to start with the .5 mile of rail trail because it is not well suited for public use, there is no parking, and the trail is heavily eroded. It is a bigger project.

There are state grant funds that are available for trail projects. There are town approvals required before a grant can be accepted- we need to learn the process. DEEP Trails Coordinator Laurie Gionatti can help with Recreational Trail Grant guidance. Geordie will organize some people to investigate grants. Library has special grant searching software.

Bicycle Friendly Community is a program to consider pursuing. Woodbury-Southbury has a nice example of one.

Host a volunteer trail building “school.” What is the ability of the committee to recruit volunteers? Are we under town liability? Park and Rec has liability waivers that we can use.

Repair Al's trail, build a pump track for bikes,

### **ITEMS TO INCLUDE IN NEXT MEETING AGENDA**

We want to include on all future agendas the following headings: public comment, new business, old business, Chairman's report, and approval of minutes.

Motion to approve the minutes from the December meeting by Charles Foster and seconded by Ken Kerin.

**Motion passed** unanimously

**NEXT MEETING DATE-** February 20th at 7 p.m. at Town Hall South, 3 Main Street, Newtown.

**ADJOURNMENT-** Motion to Adjourn by Ken Kerin and seconded by Dave Siroky. **Motion passed unanimously.** Adjourned at 8:35

Respectfully submitted, Geordie Elkins, Secretary

## **ATTACHMENT TO THE MINUTES**

### Review and discussion of Mission Statement Document provided by Dan Rosenthal

Develop Mission Statement – review and discussion Proposed Goals –

review and discussion

Identify 2019 year end goals

### Discussion on the Committee Organizational Structure Chair

Parliamentarian -Robert's Rules Secretary

Corresponding secretary Sub-  
Committee Chairs

### Discussion on sub-Committee Designations and Definitions Maps &

Technology

Acquisition & Easements Grants,

Funding and Finance

Partners (non-profit & commercial) Town Resources

Signage Trail Marking

Accessibility Volunteers &

Stewards Maintenance

Current Year Projects Other?

### Discussion of Sub-Committee Assignments

#### Maps

Identify committee members, non-profit and town resources who can create ARC GIS by ESRI maps for the purpose of creating a comprehensive trail maps of all public access recreational trails including town owned and other all other organization owned trails.

Set map standards.

Identify and appropriate best software for the purposes of trail map generation. Prepare written document for future trail map makers on how to apply standards with instructions how maps have been created.

Create process for documenting changes to map standards. Identify interconnection list of trails to connect.

Identify problems in trail connectivity. Identify new trails for development.

Identify water trails for development, river, pond and lake.

Create a process to provide specific and detailed maps to the committee and sub-committee's upon request.

Brid Craddock  
59 Main Street  
Newtown, CT 06470  
203.448.0758 bridcraddock@gmail.com

December 19, 2018

## Bike and Trail Committee - Topics to consider for inclusion on agendas

Identify and propose committee wide technology standards, Google Suite, similar?

### Discussion of Sub-Committee Assignments, continued.

#### Acquisition & Easements

Identify short and long term properties to acquire for the purpose of trail access via acquisition or easement.

Coordinate with Town Resources sub-committee to remain current on all notices of sales, purchases and easements of Town lands.

Negotiate with appropriate town of Newtown departments/boards/commissions and staff to obtain access to new trail properties.

Negotiate with appropriate non-Town property owners to obtain access to new trail properties. Set calendar for all trail acquisition and easements for new trails and for the interconnection of existing trails. Create watch list for desired property acquisition for properties currently not available.

#### Grants, Funding and Finance

Identify available grants. Select grants for application.

Document requirements for grant application.

Create a tool kit for grant applications for use by sub-committee and future sub-committees to ease the grant writing process.

Coordinate grant application deadlines and calendars of Town of Newtown departments/boards/commissions and staff to ensure the meeting of grant deadlines. Draft grants.

Submit grants for approval to committee and office of the Selectman. Submit grants to grantee.

Coordinate with the Town of Newtown to acquire funding from the Town.

Create a method to quantify and measure the value of trails to the Town of Newtown in dollar values.

Thus removing land from development and reducing the cost of town provided services. Document the process for application to the Town for funding.

Create and manage a calendar of deadlines for application to the Town for funding.

Seek financing through means other than grants such as gifts and easements.

Coordinate with the Town of Newtown to create a process to accept gifts and easements of property.

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Discussion of Sub-Committee Assignments, continued.

Partners (non-profit, commercial, governmental)

Identify our partners, some examples may be:

Non-profit:

- Newtown Forest Association (1300 acres in Newtown, many with trails)  
[www.NewtownForestAssociation.org](http://www.NewtownForestAssociation.org)
- Newtown Bridle Land Association [www.nblact.com](http://www.nblact.com)
- Newtown Hikers Sally Cox 203-426-9903 or 203-830-9032
- H2H Hudson to the Housatonic Regional Conservation Partnership [www.H2HRCP.org](http://www.H2HRCP.org)
- RCP Regional Conservation Partners <http://www.ctconservation.org/regional-conservation-partnerships>
- Fairfield County Regional Conservation Partnership <http://www.fcrpc.net/>
- Weanitoge Heritage Land Trust <http://weantinoge.org/> Pond Brook Trail, Newtown
- Bethel Land Trust [www.bethellandtrust.org](http://www.bethellandtrust.org) Properties abut Newtown town lines
- Redding Land Trust <http://reddingctlandtrust.org/> Properties abut Newtown town line
- Wildlands and Woodlands A vision for the New England Landscape  
<https://www.wildlandsandwoodlands.org/> Redding
- East Coast Greenway [www.greenway.org/states/connecticut](http://www.greenway.org/states/connecticut)
- League of American Bicyclists [www.bikeleague.org](http://www.bikeleague.org)
- Others?

Governmental:

- State of CT DEEP [www.ct.gov/deep/cwp/view](http://www.ct.gov/deep/cwp/view) Upper Paugussett State Forest
- Massachusetts Audubon [www.massaudubon.org/get-outdoors/accessibility/accessible-projects-and-partners/accessible-trails-manual](http://www.massaudubon.org/get-outdoors/accessibility/accessible-projects-and-partners/accessible-trails-manual) Watertown Braille Trail
- WESTCOG Western Connecticut Counsel of Governments -Ives Trail.  
<https://westcog.org/environmental-management/land-conservation/ives-trail-greenway/>
- Lake Lillinonah Authority <http://www.lakelillinonahauthority.org/>
- Lake Zoar Authority <http://www.lakezoarauthority.org/>
- Others?

Commercial

Local, regional and national commercial entities with an interest in trail development.

Design and implement an outreach program to all partners.

Prepare a tool kits for working with partners:

non-profit commercial  
utility providers (Gas, Electric, Water) governmental,  
State of CT  
Other?

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## Bike and Trail Committee - Topics to consider for inclusion on agendas

### Discussion of Sub-Committee Assignments, continued.

#### Town Resources

Identify town resources, contact information, scheduled meeting calendars, deadline for application for support, required reviews, report all changes to committee and sub-committees. Solicit updates from Town Resources of sales, purchases and easements of Town lands.

- Land Use Department
- Technology and GIS (Arc ESRI mapping)
- Parks and Recreation Department
- Economic and Community Development Department
- Grants Administration – Planning Department
- Conservation commission
- In Land Wetlands Commission
- Economic Development Commission
- Fairfield Hills Authority
- Lake Lillinonah Authority
- Lake Zoar Authority
- Legal counsel, who is our legal counsel?
- Side walk commission, does it still exist?
- Complete Street project with the Town of Newtown Traffic Officer ??

#### Signage and Trail Marking

Identify trails for new or improved signage, coordinate with Town departments/boards/commissions and staff to ensure trail signs comply with zoning regulations. Coordinate with sub-committees to install, repair or improve trail markings.

Coordinate with accessibility committee to designate trail signage and marking for improved accessibility.

#### Trail Uses and Accessibility

Identify trails for appropriate use for pedestrians, bicycles, dogs, baby strollers, horses, skiers, snow shoes, canoe, kayak, fisherman and similar and for variously disabled persons.

Create a difficulty rating similar to skiing trails, such as black diamond, blue square and green circle to indicate the trails difficulty.

Identify dog trails for off or on leash walking.

Create policy for multi-use trail cooperation, including shared use by pedestrians, animals and wheeled transportation including wheelchairs.

Identify “All Persons Trails” for nature seekers with disabilities Consider creating an accessibility trails manual

- Massachusetts Audubon [www.massaudubon.org/get-outdoors/accessibility/accessible-projects-and-partners/accessible-trails-manual](http://www.massaudubon.org/get-outdoors/accessibility/accessible-projects-and-partners/accessible-trails-manual) Watertown Braille Trail

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## Bike and Trail Committee - Topics to consider for inclusion on agendas

### Discussion of Sub-Committee Assignments, continued.

#### Volunteers & Stewards Outreach

Solicits, coordinates and manages volunteers for committee and sub-committee projects. Works with non-profit and commercial entities to obtain volunteer labor for work on sub-committees and trail work.

#### Maintenance

Solicits input from committee members, non-profit, Town, commercial and private trail owners to identify the trail maintenance needs and to rank the importance of the maintenance.

Develop and manage a trail inspection process, map and calendar. Develop a trail management plan, map and calendar.

Identify and report trail violations and encroachment. Identify emergency trail repair.

Identify and documents cost of trail maintenance to prepare a maintenance budget.

Identify and prepares report detailing the best way to protect our trails to ensure environmental sustainability for flora and fauna.

Coordinates with Town resources. Coordinates with non-profit organizations.

Coordinates with other sub-committees such as Maps, Grants, Funding and Finance and Volunteers & Stewards Outreach.

#### Current Year Projects

New trails and completion and connection of existing trails scheduled to be complete in the current calendar year.

Solicit from the committee and sub-committees new trails and existing trails to be worked on in the current calendar year.

Collect trail work details.

Coordinate with all committees, volunteers and partners to allocate and manage resources. Coordinate with departments/boards/commissions/agencies and staff to ensure successful project completion.

Report to the committee on status of work. Assess the success and failures of projects.

Create a manual of best practices for trail installation and improvement.

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