

Bike & Trails Grant Committee Meeting
February 12, 2020, 7:00 P.M.
Fairfield Hills Town Hall Meeting Room 3
3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT

MINUTES

THESE MINUTES ARE SUBJECT TO APPROVAL AT THE NEXT MEETING.

ATTENDEES

Committee: Brad Accettella, Brid Craddock, Ken Kerin, Dave Siroky, Greg Ritzinger, Geordie Elkins, Mark Lurie (Conservation Commission liaison)

Guests and Public: Stephanie Stroud (NPS Advisor), Stephan Bastrzycki (NPS Advisor), Peter Cloudas, Glen Boyle

CALL TO ORDER- 6:02

NEW BUSINESS

- Review Trail Action Plan Vision, Mission, and Goals

Stephanie shared examples of action plans that other groups have drafted. Share examples of action plans. (Japanese Remembrance Walking Trail, Greenway Coleflax, WA) Our goal is to produce something similar for Newtown. They are instrumental in pursuing grants as they show grantors that you have a plan and are serious. She will share these electronically so that other committee members can understand where we are going.

Ask for volunteer to help create a poetic vision statement- Brid will ask a local author to review the Vision statement to wordsmith it. Newtown Connectivity Action Plan Committee may be the name of the group and also the final document that the group produces. The group needs a core that will commit to produce an end product, but there may be people that float in and out of the group as capacity dictates. Decision makers will make up this committee. Landowners managers, high interest, high knowledge, and capacity to participate. We want to keep the communication aspect to be represented in the vision, mission. Add objectives- Al's Trail, Greenway, Rail Trail (It may be part of the action plan.) Send comments on edits by email

Comments: Remove "mountain" from biking, and whitewater. We want "diverse use" rather than multi-use.

- Plans for Al's Trail site condition audits

Quick takeaways from the day's practice audit- We want to engage landowners in the audits and will use them to build relationships. We want to build a list of groups to engage. One key focus- initially focus on the vision for Al's Trail. Are we okay with different sections of the trail having different uses or design standards? Right now the trail has does not seem very coherent and we need to address that. The land use agreements need to be solidified legally. Rob Sibley has knowledge of the use agreements. In the short run, we may need to use some roads or utility easements while we work on restoring the trail.

- Build list of trail stakeholders to engage in long-term trail planning.

Review proposed tour locations and dates- Audits will help us identify problems, work with landowners, and permissions. The best way to move forward with Rob is to have Brid go to Rob's office and ask for information on landowner permissions. Each section on the map seem doable, but we may want to change the order so that we do the harder ones last. Start where we know the landowners and the partners that we will be inviting to join us. These audits are an opportunity to have a partner give us a tour of certain parts of the trail.

We need volunteers to be lead coordinator for specific audits.

The audits need to include assessments of : Safety, re-routes, points of interest that we should capture, areas that should be avoided (wetlands, private property), restoration and clean-up areas, trail width and design, existing trail uses (ATVs, equestrian, etc.)

We want to make invites for the next meeting. Brad will work on text for an invite. Add Newtown Design Advisory Board and Newtown Bridal Lanes to invite to the Planning group. Send invitees draft vision, mission, Goals, and an explanation of the grant and what we are trying to accomplish.

Technical Committee will be made up of people with high levels of expertise, but not as interested in wider network of trails. We can allow invitees to self-select which group is the best fit for their participation. If they do not want to be on Planning they can be on Tech.

- Next Steps

Create a stakeholder list

Create a communications plan

Create an outreach strategy

Create a finalized "Tour of Al's Trail" series of site audits

Continue compiling inventory

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ADJOURNMENT 7:02. Brid Craddock made a motion to close the meeting at 7:02. Seconded by Chaz Foster. All in favor. Passed

Respectfully Submitted,
Geordie Elkins, Secretary



NEWTOWN CONNECTIVITY ACTION PLAN COMMITTEE

VISION, MISSION, GOALS: (DRAFT) FEBRUARY 2020

VISION

A Newtown that is a renowned "outdoor town," with thriving businesses and passionate ambassadors supporting a network of safe, connected trails and scenic open space. It is a hub for recreation activities of many different kinds, and connects residents and visitors alike with the natural beauty of Fairfield County, and beyond.

Other potential additions: clear signage, trail book, blueways, connected sidewalks, sport specific signature events, connecting to MA, youth programming/intro-to-sports, multi-sports (rock climbing, white water, mountain bike, hiking), wildlife viewing, trail-supported economy

Considerations: Keeping focus on AI's Trail as a priority?

MISSION

The Newtown Connectivity Action Plan Committee will.....

- Create a "Newtown Connectivity Action Plan" to guide strategic efforts for trail planning in Newtown
- Create partnerships and build relationships to foster a community around trails and open space in Newtown
- Gather inventory about Newtown Trails, especially AI's Trail, which has been identified by the community as a high priority
- Engage stakeholders through communications and outreach

GOALS

- Create a safe and connected network of multi-use trails
- Create connections to destinations such as schools, neighborhoods, shopping/business districts, community centers, village centers, and recreation opportunities
- Create opportunities and connections for underserved parts of the community
- Create access for all users, especially youth, the elderly, and disabled
- Create a regional attraction, promote tourism and boost the local economy
- Create informative maps and information widely available for the general public
- Link to long-distance regional trails and open spaces
- Create opportunities for year-round recreation
- Create an organization/coalition to promote stewardship and sustainable maintenance
- Promote opportunities for health and well-being
- Create opportunities for community resiliency and alternative transportation
- Create opportunities to interpret local history and stories

"TOUR OF AL'S TRAIL": DRAFT SCHEDULE (FEBRUARY 2020)

AUDIT ONE PARTNERS:

- CONNECTICUT FOREST & PARKS
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AUDIT TWO PARTNERS:

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AUDIT THREE PARTNERS:

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AUDIT FOUR PARTNERS:

- ACCESSIBILITY GROUP
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— Al's Trail

