

**Nottingham Conservation Commission
Trails Committee meeting Minutes
Thursday, November 4, 2021 – 6:30pm, Conference Room 2
Submitted by Celia Abrams**

Present – Celia Abrams (CA), Susan Mooney (SM), Michael Koester (MK), Deb Kimball (DK), Melissa Berry (MB), Ian Berry (IB), and Leanne Gast (LG). MK left at 7:00pm.

Welcome & Announcements –

The meeting opened at 6:35 p.m.

Approve minutes of 9/2/21 – MK moved to approve the minutes, MB seconded, 5 ayes (DK and LG had not arrived yet). Note: The 10/7 meeting was cancelled.

Task and Action Items Review –

- **Directional trail signs** - Directional signs for Marsh Woods, Kennard, and Terninko arrived and were installed by CA and Dallas Huggins.
- **Blazing –Marston** – Blazing medallions and arrows for Marston as well as a color-matched arrow signs for Kennard have just arrived and will be installed by CA and DK. The Kennard blazes were charged to the trails raffle fund and Marston blazes to the Rec dept budget.
- **Kennard bridge**: The Kennard bridge was built on Saturday, 10/23. All materials were donated by Allan Trant's Exterior Finish Work. Trant and his employee Alex Rawley also donated their time, along with community members Amanda and Scott Cafasso and Alan Rubin, and NTC members CA and MK.
- **Additional Benches**: CA circulated specs from the Iowa Dept of Natural Resources for the Aldo Leopold bench used on the Northwood Area Land Management Collaborative (NALMC) trails. This design may work well for 2 or 3 more benches at Marsh Woods and a couple at Kennard. MK expressed concern about possible wracking. CA sent the bench specs to Allan Trant, who is considering additional volunteer work for the town, including a possible kiosk for Marston. He will communicate directly with the Rec Dept regarding the kiosk.
- **Kiosk panel** at Marsh Woods remains to be designed, printed, and installed. This is a possible use of any unexpended NCC budget money but would be difficult to accomplish in the time remaining.
- **Closure signs** - "Trail Closed" signs came in and were installed at either end of the closed trail on Kennard.
- **Treadway smooth and rake** – optional, after leaf fall.
- **Vernal Pool sign at Kennard** - CA talked with Mark West on advisability of calling attention to this feature. He cited several conservation organizations that had put up similar signs and thought the only concern might be dogs disrupting the pools. The trail is already signed to keep dogs on leash. Following this advice, CA installed the sign.
- **Kennard bridge accessibility** – CA looked for specs for ADA bridge construction and found the US Forest Service Accessibility Guidelines for Outdoor Recreation and Trails (FSTAG). Although there were no specs comparable to what we were planning, the guidelines had specifications for length of trail segments at various slopes which would preclude

compliance on the steep slopes of Kennard Forest without extensive use of switch backs. The width and curbing in the bridge design we used would meet some requirements, and railings could be added at a future date if the trail were to be upgraded.

- **Chainsaw tasks** – MB and IB have cleared several down trees from the Kennard trail and have offered to do any additional clearing that may result from fall storms.
- **Terninko bridges** – John Terninko built two bridges on his trail, with some assistance from nearby residents. He would like to be reimbursed for the lumber and has provided a receipt. CA will forward to SM and SD for action by NCC.
- **Kennard parking signage** – Although several of the bridge building volunteers parked in the field across the road from the Kennard trailhead, there were two hunters' pickup trucks on the north side of the road and additional vehicles of volunteers on the south side of the road for unloading materials. This resulted in a visit from the Nottingham police to request vehicles be moved. CA talked with Michael Kennard about possible signage for the parking area across from the entrance to trail. He again encouraged us to have visitors park there and thought signs would be a good idea. CA asked the group to consider placement and wording, especially noting that neither the roadside nor the field area would be plowed in the winter.
- **Trail Finder posting** – Prepare for posting once the directional trail signs have been installed, which will minimize the likelihood of walkers getting lost.
- **Roadside trail signage** – The hiker icon signs were installed during September at the roadside of Kennard Forest and Marsh Woods.
- **Conservation Commission budget** – If there is money that needs to be spent before the end of the year, NCC can consider using it for materials for benches at MW and Kennard (up to 5?), or possibly a panel for the Marsh Woods kiosk. CA requested to be notified following the 11/8 NCC meeting of balance we should look to spend.

Other –

- **Possible sale of CE property** – CA & SM reviewed the CE deed of the property in question and are of the opinion that public access is guaranteed in perpetuity by the deed, even if the property changes hands.
- **Google Drive** – MK talk with Kelly Dallaire about storing some NTC files on the town server. They are amenable to this for any of the static files (minutes, agendas, deeds, etc.). NTC members would not have easy access to these files though. A file sharing solution such as Google Drive would be more useful for access from home or for shared editing. NCC members have a similar need for shared files, such as for easement monitoring and deeds. CA and DK brought up issues of file ownership when people leave, with the possibility of files being deleted once the owner's gmail account is removed. LG recommended that NCC have its own Google Drive account rather than sharing with NTC. We asked those present who would be interested in being part of a combined group to discuss Google Drive management – IB, CA, LG, DK from NTC, possibly Cheryl Smith and Jon Rydberg from NCC.
- **Future activities** – We considered whether there were other conservation or town-owned parcels that would be good candidates for trails and concluded there were none at this time. Members were supportive of working toward some Accessible trails, perhaps at Marston. This would need grant funding and professionals with ADA trail experience, such

as Student Conservation Associates (SCA). Although many seemed interested in taking a walk on trails in other towns to see what they were doing, we could not find a date in the next month to do this. CA offered to email some trail maps of likely spots people could explore on their own when it fit into their schedules.

- **Tech equipment for meetings** – CA asked the Blaisdell Library if they still loan out the projector and a laptop for use at our meetings as they once did. They do have a projector they could lend to us but not a laptop.

Adjourned at 7:52 p.m. – DK moved, SM seconded, all 6 ayes.