

## **Friends of North Andover Trails Meeting Minutes**

### **February 15, 2017**

**Present:** Stan, Glen, Rob, Jim, Brian, Deb, Tom, Jeannie, Joe, Mike, Bill, Regina, Adele, Peter, Jeff, Helena, Steve F.

**Membership:** Six new members; two renewals. Glen sees a “great trend,” as membership continues to climb. There are now over 100 dues-paying members.

**Finances:** Steve was not there to give a report, but bank balance is basically the same as previous month. Liz was reimbursed for expenditures.

**Reports from Trails:** Pete Hall cut and cleared various trails. He cut up a big log on Bruin Hill and several in James Swamp, where there were six to eight trees down. The only one left in James Swamp is huge; it’s near Johnson Street, on the Connector Trail.

There was also a complaint about people not picking up after their dogs, especially at the **Stevens Estate**. Glen suggested walkers should be good stewards, not shy about pointing out the issue to people with their dogs.

**Boxford State Forest** main gate (Sharpner’s Pond entrance) is unlocked. Four-wheelers were seen inside the forest.

**Trail Signs** These are directional and identification signs. Stan reported that he now has the materials to make signs with and the high school is willing to do it. He says he would like to take mock-ups of signs onto the trails and “test” them. He said we need to identify the correct locations and correct wording. The project will happen incrementally, rather than all at once, because that is the way the high school can accomplish projects.

A different type of trail sign was also suggested, to be placed on main roads, indicating that a trail is nearby. One example is Hawthorne Place, where someone might drive down on Waverly, without realizing there was a trail nearby. The hiker logo is universal.

**Trail Guides** – Stan said that guides are still selling. More guides will sell as weather warms up. People are asking when the second edition is coming out. He asked for suggestions of new places to sell the guides. Guides are now in stores in Topsfield, Boxford, and Lawrence, as well as North Andover and Andover.

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**Project Updates:** CPA project - \$12,000 has been requested for a boardwalk along the lake. This is part of Stevens to Stevens Trail, Phase II. It was suggested there be additional split rail fence, which seems to be helpful in keeping people back from the lake. This trail is now open to the public.

**Carter Hill – Locust Trails.** This boardwalk can be built as an “enforcement action,” according to Conservation Commission Administrator, Jennifer Hughes. There will be a three-plank-wide bog bridge.

**Farnum Property** -Liz has received final approval for the long boardwalk behind the Cyr Recycling Center, to be built by AmeriCorps volunteers from July 24<sup>th</sup> through August 2<sup>nd</sup>. Crew will be trained and supervised. Boardwalk will be 150 feet. This group can only work on state forest land.

**Eagle Scouts-** There are now two Eagle Scout projects at Woodchuck Hill. Phil Vissering is working on the trail; he has submitted the proposal. Anthony will work on the boardwalk.

**Wilmot:** Steve Foster is working with Mike on this project. Material has to be brought in a mile. Unless they get permission to bring in a vehicle, it will need to be hauled in. He asked for volunteers.

**Leonhard Farm:** Trail is planned. Trailhead is at end of Bruin Hill Road.

**Hike Report** – Rob Jones- Sunday, February 12 Town Farm to Farnsworth. Six people hiked and snowshoed in “blizzard conditions.” Trails were already broken in and trees protected participants from the wind. Rob encouraged people to go on this hike next year. Some of the trails are parts of old carriage roads.

**March Hike** – Sunday, March 12. Boxford State Forest. This is an extended hike, four hours, rather than the usual two hours. Mike and Glen will lead.

**Under the Spreading Chestnut Tree: A Presentation on the Past, Present and Future of Chestnut Trees** Wednesday, February 22, 7PM, Flint Memorial Library Activity Room, 147 Park St, North Reading, presented by Mark Meehl and David Lent

**Smolak Farms** – Mike Smolak is planning to create a system of trails around the farm, including the Meeting House Commons land. Members of the Meeting House Place Association are interested in helping. Mike said he created trails years ago, but they haven’t been

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maintained. The property includes a quaking bog, called Ironwood. He is asking for guidance from FONAT and would like to bring several people from Meeting House Commons to the next meeting. Glen suggested this project might call for a sub-committee. These trails would be open to the public.

**Next FONAT meeting** will be March 15, at 6PM at 1 Johnson Street (The Brickstore on the rotary.)