

**Friends of North Andover Trails**  
**Meeting Minutes – February 17, 2016**

**Agenda:** Provided at the meeting. Liz to take meeting minutes.

**Attendance:** Poor weather, small group, 10 members attended.

**Membership & Fundraising:** As a result of the email reminder, there were 24 renewals. Also, 6 new members (from monthly walks). Hope to increase the emphasis on membership and getting involved in FONAT during the upcoming walks, both by the leader and any FONAT members supporting the walk. Inventory of guidebooks is still good, still the main source of revenue.

**Treasury Report:** As of 2016 year-end, the cash balance was \$14.6k, up almost \$2k from end last year. In 2016, sales of the trail guide were close to \$7k. Dues and donations were another \$2k. Expenses were up for the year: re-printing and other expenses associated with the guidebook totaled \$3k; construction project expenses (e.g., Mazurenko Farms) were also ~ \$3k. A detailed report by Steve Dennen was given at the meeting.

**Trail Reports:** The parking area for Rea's Pond Trail has re-opened. The expanded pumping station has left fewer spaces (4-6), but parking is available on Great Pond Rd. Question asked: was there a barrier at the trailhead to prevent snowmobilers from using the trail?

Concern about the "leaning tree" in Mazurenko Farm expressed. From walk in December – we had no issues with people getting under it (thanks to Jim Petty's clean-out of branches) – but it is considered potentially unstable and should come down in the spring.

A lot of downed trees crossing the trails in James Swamp – but on January monthly walk, all could be stepped over. Can wait until spring.

The gate at N. Liberty (BCT re-route) was vandalized, lock removed. DCR replaced it immediately. Discussion on adding "deer cameras" to identify truck trespassers, led to a decision to install one. (After the meeting, Mike Agosti offered to re-locate his to that area.)

Discussion on "adopt a trail" reports – are we using them enough and giving good feedback to those submitting the reports? More on this topic in the 2017 goals.

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**Updates on Projects:** Exciting news on two projects.

The RDA for the Wilmot boardwalk project was approved by the conservation commission thanks to Mike Agosti's and Steve Foster's efforts. Funds have been obtained for the construction materials. There was some debate about the feasibility of constructing the boardwalk in the winter or better to wait until the ground is not frozen.

The SCA Grant application to build a 200+ foot boardwalk on the Farnum property was selected. Value is ~ \$40k and includes 10-days of an AmeriCorps crew, housing for the crew at HPSF, and all construction materials. Local support will be needed for RDA and other required approvals as well as some organization on the design phase. DCR/Pete Luongo is the official contact point on this project. Liz Armstrong for FONAT/BCT. This project will take the BCT off Sharpner's Pond Road and more importantly open up much of the Cyr Athletic Field town trails to DCR property/trails. All thought it is a beautiful area.

**Upcoming Events:** February walk at Town Farm – Rob Jones to lead. The annual Ward Reservation Winter Fun Day – 29-Jan. The Middleton (long-standing) Ice Hike on 29-Jan.

The 2017 walk schedule was reviewed – no changes to the draft. No co-leaders have been identified for each walk. Leaders are encouraged to find new co-leaders for their walks. More on this in the 2017 goals.

**2016 Goals Recap:** Much of the meeting was focused on reviewing 2016 goals. Attached. An ambitious list. Did a great job of progressing or completing most of them. Only 3 were not progressed at all and all of these will be carried over into 2017.

**2017 Goals:** Instead of trying to re-create the discussion, it has been summarized in the attached first draft of 2017 goals. Where possible, I have identified a point person for that project.

A few notes on some:

- **Adopt a Trail:** Rob Jones offered to send a reminder/re-up email to those who have trails. Anyone wanting a trail will be given one. We simply use a trail for more than one adopter (e.g., not co-adopters). We need to use the reports more to guide the trail work, monthly meeting reviews. We should find a way to give feedback where possible when the trail work suggested has been done.

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- Signs: 3 4x8 ft. sheets of KolorKore material is now on-hand for N. Andover town trails, BCT and Boxford Trails. We need to get started on designing the trail signs for the towns. School facilities are booked up until March.
  
- Trail Improvements:
  1. Short boardwalk over a wet area to connect the 'pasture loop' to the 'cabin loop' and 'island loop' without going through Windrush horse pasture (objected by WR) and could eventually connect back to Lacy St to make a nice big loop.
  
  2. Bigger/ longer term project - connect Windrush trails to Fuller Loop in BSF. Extensive boardwalks needed between uplands through cedar swamp (could be a historic draw - very large cedar swamp!) Does not need to be horse friendly, agreeable with landowner in between.

Windrush supports both of these projects.

- Other suggestions: Bring back the nature walks and advocating for a new parking area at Rolling Ridge. These were not discussed, but Glen wanted to add them to the draft goals.

## Friends of North Andover Trails

### 2016 Goals

(Reviewed January 2017 FONAT Meeting)

#### Trails Stewardship

- Establish the “adopt a trail” program, focusing on getting new people involved in monitoring trails. **DONE.**
- Re-route the BCT into Middleton, including adding new markers and supporting improvements as allowed and as detailed in RTP grant proposal “Recovering the Lost 50”. **Re-routed the trail, obtained funds for two boardwalks, received approval for Wilmot boardwalk.**

#### Trail Improvements

- Focus on Mazurenko Farms, including brushing out the trails, completing connector trails, improving the wetland crossings, trail markings, and parking area. **DONE.**
- Re-establish the CYR athletic field/recycling area trails. **DONE.**
- Add two (2) loop trails to the Bruin Hills area, jointly with Greenbelt. **Not Done.**
- Establish a viable “construction group” for boardwalks, kiosks, etc. **In Progress.**
- Establish a strong link to the Eagle Scout projects. **Improved.**

#### Stewardship

- Progress town and/or Greenbelt acquisition of the property identified adjacent to Greenbelt’s Wilmot property. **Not Done.**
- Follow closely the Edgewood expansion, insuring parking area and trails are retained or expanded. **DONE.**

#### Active Outreach

- Expand the current number of leaders/co-leaders organizing monthly walks. **Yes, but...**

#### Passive Outreach

- Progress the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of the guidebook. **Not Done.**
- Expand the website to include a reporting page for volunteer activities – trail monitors, sub-committee on signage, construction group. **DONE.**

**Friends of North Andover Trails – 2017 Goals**  
**(First Draft - January FONAT Meeting)**

**Trail Stewardship**

- Continue to support and expand the “Adopt a Trail Program”. (RJ/LA)
- Continue to expand “construction group” for RDA’s, design, construction, etc.
- Make input into all Eagle Scout projects “automatic” (Foxwood Drive). (GA/SL)

**Land Stewardship**

- Advocate for the town acquisition of the “unowned area” near the Lost 50. (LA)

**New Trails**

- Support Greenbelt – Leonhard Farm Trail and new trailhead area. (GA)
- Add two (2) loop trails to the Bruin Hills area, jointly with Greenbelt. (RJ)

**Trail Improvements**

- Obtain approvals and construct 2 boardwalks on the BCT/Middleton re-route: Wilmot, BSF using Field Pond Grant funds. (MA)
- Obtain local approvals and support construction of the boardwalk on DCR – Farnum property using SCA grant funds and AmeriCorps crew. (LA)
- Design, construct and install new signs on town trail areas and the BCT. (GA/SL)
- Obtain CPA funds and construct boardwalks on the new Edgewood – area Trail. (GA)
- Obtain local approvals to construct a boardwalk on the Carter Hill – Highland Trail, using existing wood. (RJ)
- Advocate for a new parking area at Rolling Ridge.

**Active Outreach**

- Expand the current number of co-leaders for the monthly walks. (Leaders)
- Bring back the nature walks (GA).

**Passive Outreach**

- Progress the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of the guidebook. (GA)