

Friends of North Andover Trails

Minutes of Meeting

August 21, 2019

Present: Rob Jones, Dale Cripe, George Edmonds, Glen Aspeslagh, Joe Lehman, Jeanne Velde, Jim Murphy, Stephen Foster, Stan Limpert, Jeremy Dick, and Helena Minton

Membership: Jeanne reported that FONAT has six new members. There are now 71 active members, who are paid up on their dues, and 159 in total. One new member recently made a large donation.

Treasurer's Report: Steve was absent. Glen said there was no major update. Jim has been reimbursed for the new green canopy and Tom was reimbursed for a second wheel.

Guidebook: Two guidebooks were sold at Neighborhood Night Out. Stan has been overseeing guidebook distribution and sales for several years. He would now like to turn this responsibility over to someone else. Looking for volunteers.

Trustees of the Reservations: Jeremy Dick, Superintendent for the Central Region, gave an update. The Trustees now have ownership of Mary Cummins Park, 210 acres in Burlington, with access to 60 acres owned by Woburn. The Stephens Coolidge property is planning major expansions over the next three years, with renovations to the house, additions to the gardens, and a 60-car parking lot. The Trustees also want to focus more attention on Weir Hill. As Glen pointed out, that is the premiere hiking spot for people in North Andover.

Someone mentioned that the Stevens to Stevens Trail could use more signage – yellow disks.

Trails Report:

Leonhard Farm is in good shape, except for some downed trees, according to Glen who walked the trail recently. He said it looks as if it's being used regularly.

George Edmonds reported that one short section that connects to Osgood Hill is very muddy. Glen said it has been getting muddier every year. George wondered if a boardwalk is needed, perhaps 15-feet. Some of the signage needs to be improved; disks are missing. He also wonders if some of the foliage along the lake could be cut back for better views. Glen said "Vista clearing" is a sanctioned activity, as long as it involves branches, rather than whole trees. Glen proposed that he and George go out together to look at the areas George talked about.

Knight Work Volunteer Day: Twelve Middle School students cut back brush and helped clean up areas of the Cyr Recycling Trail.

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Smith & Nephew Volunteer Day: Glen said ten employees from this Andover robotics company picked up trash and cut back brush along some trails in Boxford State Forest. Another group from the company may volunteer in the future.

Events Recap:

FONAT Picnic on July 17th was cancelled due to rain.

Mazurenko Trail Work – Locust Trail to Ridge Trail clearing with Rob, Jim and Tom. Mike Carey, a new volunteer who lives nearby, has done some trail work by himself.

Bay Circuit- Cyr Trail – 7/14 15 participants, led by Mike Agosti. Some hikers had trouble walking on the stone wall. It is clear a boardwalk is needed. (FONAT will hold off on guided hikes on this trail, until a boardwalk is in place.) Farther on, as the group started to cross the new bridge, at least one child was stung by a wasp. It turns out that there is a wasp nest under one of the boards. At that point, Mike decided that the group should turn back. A smaller group of about 6 people drove to Sharpners' Pond Road and approached the boardwalk from the other direction, then proceeded along the trail to the open space under the wires, and looped back to the road. No decision has been made as to how to deal with the wasp nest.

Mazurenko Hike – 8/11: 43 participants led by Jim Murphy and Dale Cripe, with Joe Lehman, Jeanne Velde, and Helena Minton as assistants. Hikers met at Rea's Pond parking lot and had a chance to see the new kiosk, then walked a loop along the Locust and Ridge trails to the Mazurenko lot on Bradford Street. Then half the group went back up to Carter Hill. It was a very good turn out on a beautiful day.

Edgewood: Glen gave a talk about FONAT and the trail system and what can be found in nature. His talk was very well received. Attendee Betty Wright said she would like to work on plant identification.

Neighborhood Night Out: 8/6 A scaled down version of National Night Out was held at St. Michael's parking lot. Joe Lehman brought FONAT's new canopy and table. There was a modest turn-out and two guidebooks were sold.

Ongoing Projects:

Interpretive Signs for the beaver education project for the Cyr Recycling Trail. Liz and Deb are working on the signs.

Bay Circuit Trail –BSF: Mike will add extension to boardwalk.

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BCT- Cyr Recycling Center- Boardwalk along stonewall near Berry Street– Jim Murphy will attend Conservation Commission meeting and start permission process.

Lake Trail Boardwalk – Jim Murphy said this boardwalk is basically completed. Jim also said that Larry Pope, of Salem, N.H., did a lot of the work and has been a great help to FONAT. Jim wondered if there was a way to thank Larry. Jeanne will write a letter and send him a tee-shirt.

Mills to Hills Bridge: After six years, this project is now nearing completion. There is a stone dust trail and paths have been mowed. Rob and Steve will finish bridge; plan to work on August 24th. Maintenance/mowing will be important in the future to make sure the trails are well-defined.

Rail Trail: It was mentioned that someone in the community is interested in revitalizing the rail trail project.

New Business/Discussion:

A local eagle scout has expressed interest in building a boardwalk. FONAT will help him find a project.

Rolling Ridge: The Rolling Ridge director, Lawrence Jay, is working on outdoor improvements in anticipation of an upcoming anniversary. He wants to have a 3-4 car parking lot, with a kiosk and gates.

Artisan Market/Events: The July Artisan market was cancelled due to extreme heat.

Hickory Hill Road: There is an easement for neighborhood access to Mazurenko Farm, but signage is needed asking hikers to be respectful of property, to keep dogs leashed, etc.

Upcoming Dates:

September 7th: Shawsheen River Trail Work Day

September 19th: Greenbelt Fundraiser at the Wakeman's:

September 21st: Fall Fest

September 22nd: Boston Hill Hike (Keith to lead)

Next Meeting: Wednesday, September 18th, 6PM 1 Johnson St, (The "Brick Store") 2nd Floor. Parking behind the building.

Helena Minton

9/03/19