

## Friends of North Andover Trails

May 10, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Notes taken by Tina Klein

### Attendees:

Glen Aspeslagh: [glen@fonat.org](mailto:glen@fonat.org)

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Deb Monte:

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Hobbit:

**Membership:** Jeanne Velde, membership coordinator, reports 19 renewals and 4 new members since the beginning of the year. Discussed coming up with a process to solicit membership renewals multiple times per year.

- ACTION: Glen will look into a service to do monthly membership renewal letters.
- ACTION: Glen to send Tina a copy of the most recent membership letter
- ACTION: Tina to draft next membership renewal letter

**Guidebooks:** Stan reports we are still selling about 20 books per month primarily through Rocky's Ace Hardware, Butcher Boy, and Andover Bookstore

- ACTION: Stan is looking into getting help with layout for a new guidebook (carryover from April)
- ACTION: Maps will need to be updated by Glen

**Master Plan Implementation Committee:** Stan reported – [The master plan](#) is made up of 103 strategies across seven plan 'elements' including: Land Use; Housing; Economic Development; Transportation, Open Space and Recreation; History, Culture and Natural Resources; and Public Facilities and Services. FONAT has been explicitly mentioned in three strategies (59, 60, and 68) in the Open Space and Recreation element, and may want to provide input on two others (65 and 66). The chart below is an excerpt from the Master Plan.

59	Open Space and Recreation	Goal 1	Work closely with <b>FONAT</b> to design and install a wayfinding system for North Andover's publicly- accessible conservation areas. Develop online itineraries, maps, and suggested routes that promote interactions with nature.	Conservation Commission	1-5 years	Budget (\$)
60	Open Space and Recreation	Goal 1	Create an Open Space and Conservation Committee supported by planning staff with education/ outreach as one responsibility. Include membership seats for <b>FONAT</b> and representation from other organizations, as appropriate.	Conservation Commission Select Board	1-5 years	Budget ()

65	Open Space and Recreation	Goal 3	Identify locations and create handicap accessible walking paths in natural areas and create management plans for each conservation area that address access for persons with disabilities.	Dept/ of Public Works	1-5 years	Budget (\$\$)
66	Open Space and Recreation	Goal 3	Develop a trail rating system that rates level of difficulty, accessibility, availability of benches, barriers to wheelchair access, and more. There should also be a clear distinction between walking trails and hiking trails.	Conservation Commission	1-5 years	Budget (\$)
68	Open Space and Recreation	Goal 3	Continue to support the work of the <b>Friends of North Andover Trails</b> , Essex County Greenbelt, Bay Circuit Alliance, Trustees of Reservation, Merrimack Valley Planning Commission, and others create trail connections throughout North Andover and connecting to neighboring communities.	Community and Economic Development	Ongoing	Budget (\$\$)

**May Hike Recap:** Hiked the Glennie Woodlot, across the new bridge and through the northern section of the Town Forest that is now accessible. 21 participants. Took just over an hour. We could consider putting this hike in the rotation during one of the hotter summer months when folks may not want to do a longer walk.

**Reports from the Trails:**

Happily, all three chainsaws are feeling better. Turns out they all needed fresh fuel.

Maintenance Google Sheet: We now have a google sheet with two tabs for tracking outstanding/completed trail maintenance and boardwalk maintenance. Trail reports submitted via the website will be added to the appropriate tab by Glen or Mike. Or, you can update the maintenance log directly. If you have some time and are wondering which trails could use some attention, check out the maintenance log for items not yet completed. Once completed, *please* update the log.

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/11QsaUfftClpRotfzwHeI5FiTAbNAcd2zriHkUVnt-ic/edit?usp=sharing>

MONTHLY TRAIL MAINTENANCE : Saturday trail work days have scheduled and posted to the website.

Discussed switching the May and June locations to do Boston Hill on May 13 ahead of the scheduled June 4<sup>th</sup> walk at Boston Hill. June workday location to be firmed up shortly.

Town Forest, north – Two large pine across the service road accessible from the 12 Carriage Chase driveway, or from Tina’s property. Also a large tree blocking the golf courses maintenance road just beyond the 2-plank bridge (coming from Carriage Chase side) of the gully/outflow.

Cyr Recycling Center – The large tree adjacent to the ramp to the new boardwalk seems to be righting itself. The footing is nearly back down to original position. Some boards were damaged and may need to be replaced.

## Upcoming Events – Volunteers Needed:

**Town-wide Earth Day Cleanup:** Cancelled again due to weather. Likely will not happen this year.

**Sheep Shearing Festival (May 21<sup>st</sup>):** Volunteers needed to sign up for 2-hour shifts between 9am and 4pm to staff the FONAT tent, sell t-shirts, hats and guidebooks, talk to residents about FONAT and the trails we maintain. Joe Lehmann is coordinating volunteers. **ACTION:** need order of hats before the Fall

**Monthly hikes:** planned dates for all remaining 2023 hikes are listed on the website. New leaders and co-leaders needed. Members are encouraged to look at the schedule and get in touch with Glen if there are any hikes you can volunteer to lead or co-lead. These dates are not set in stone and can be adjusted to accommodate leader/co-leader schedules.

**Fall Festival (Sept 23<sup>rd</sup>):** registration open

**National Night Out (Aug):**

**Mazurenko - Scout Trail Improvement Project:** With ConComm approval, we are now ready to begin planning the details of this work. Scope of the project now includes a ~75 ft section of the Reas Pond Trail in addition to the Scout Trail. DPW to provide materials for this additional scope. Mike believes this will take four build/workdays. Steve Foster wants to be part of the project planning. Sleepers will be pre-cut by Mike. Liz suggested enlisting the help of a local sports team (cross-country team, baseball team, etc. Will consider having the materials delivered and staged on the same day.

**BCT:** Mike attended the BCT meeting. Kristin Sykes has moved on. The new BCT Coordinator is Callum. Mike reports there are no plans to work on the North Andover section of the BCT this year. Instead they will focus on signage, and will install one boardwalk on the northern section.

## Future Projects

Ousler Property at Osgood Hill – Noted on maintenance log. 2<sup>nd</sup> boardwalk is needed alongside new boardwalk because this area gets two-traffic during track meets and the current boardwalk does not easily accommodate people passing one another. This second boardwalk can be funded from the same CPA grant that funded the first boardwalk.

Bay Circuit Trail – Couple low areas between Sharpners Pond Road and the powerlines

Glennie trail signage – specifically at the junction with the loop trail

Lake trail signage – on the Stevens to Stevens portion.

Woodchuck Hill – bridge step repair needed on Orange trail. Discussed possibly using a ramp in lieu of a step. Better for snowshoeing, cross country skiing.

Half Mile Hill – straighten/replace kiosk

Middleton rail trail – a boardwalk would be helpful to get down the embankment just off Sharpners Pond Rd

Bay Circuit Trail – low area could use attention

ATV signage and other trail head signage

Boston Hill (and other places) need better signs

Existing meadow and hay field maintenance – very few open meadows continue to exist in North Andover (Carter Hill, Half Mile Hill, Meadowfish Place). Though they are town properties there does not seem to be a schedule for their maintenance, sometimes being mowed by an abutter if/when they'd like to see it mowed. FONAT may think about identifying these locations and recommending a scheduled maintenance schedule to the town so that this unique habitat is not unintentionally lost to forest through lack of upkeep.