



TOWN OF ELLINGTON

Ad Hoc Ellington Trails Committee

55 MAIN STREET – PO BOX 187
ELLINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06029-0187

CHERI MURPHY
RECORDING SECRETARY

LAUREN DESROCHER
CHAIRMAN

RACHEL DEARBORN
VICE CHAIRMAN

VALERIE AMSEL
PAM MCCORMICK
ERIN STAVENS
LOIS TIMMS-FERRARA
CYNTHIA VAN ZELM
LINDA ANDERSON
JUDI MANFRE

AD HOC ELLINGTON
TRAILS COMMITTEE
Meeting Minutes
March 6, 2019
Town Hall Meeting Hall

MEMBERS PRESENT: Lauren Desrocher, Erin Stavens, Cheri Murphy, Linda Anderson, Valerie Amsel, Pam McCormick, Rachel Dearborn

MEMBERS ABSENT: Cynthia van Zelm, Judi Manfre, Lois Timms-Ferrara

OTHERS PRESENT: Bruce Dinnie, Lori Spielman, Julia Connor, Chris Squires, Joanne Tedford

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Lauren Desrocher called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

II. CITIZENS FORUM:

Chris Squires, founding board member of East Coast Greenway Alliance, was present. He is a bicycle advocate and was wondering where the Town is at in terms of adding multi-use/bike paths, including. Chairman Desrocher stated that the Committee's focus right now is with Town-owned land. Lori Spielman expressed that she would love to widen the Hockanum Trail for biking; Rachel Dearborn added that the trail is currently too narrow and there are a lot of roots. Multi-use trails would have to be wheelchair accessible and meet ADA standards. The Committee agreed that bicycle paths would be really well received in Town; however, many of the current trails are on some private land. According to Mr. Squires, the state is handing out grant money and the Trails Committee can apply to the state through DEEP. Chairman Desrocher stated it may not be on the Committee's radar for 2019, but that this would be looked into in the future. Bike Walk Connecticut and the Connecticut Bicycle Coalition are two groups that Mr. Squires mentioned. The State also has a mandatory biking advisory. Mr. Squires provided the Committee with his contact information and offered additional advice and assistance.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A few modifications were made to the February minutes, under Confirmation of Outstanding Subcommittee Assignments, prior to approval

MOVED (ANDERSON), SECONDED (STAVENS) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 6, 2019 MEETING MINUTES AS AMENDED.

IV. OLD BUSINESS

A. Confirmation of Outstanding Subcommittee Assignments

Maintenance: Valerie Amsel (Chair), Pam McCormick, Judi Manfre, Linda Anderson

Planning and Development: Rachel Dearborn (Chair), Cheri Murphy, Lauren Desrocher

Trail of Treats: Linda Anderson (Chair), Cheri Murphy, Cynthia van Zelm, Valerie Amsel, Judi Manfre, Erin Stavens

Community Outreach and Publicity: Cynthia van Zelm (Chair), Linda Anderson, Erin Stavens

B. Confirmation of Spring Event Dates

Depending on weather and how much the snow is on the ground, the Committee is planning a hike at Batz Property on Saturday, March 23rd at 8:00 am.

The Earth Day event is Saturday, April 27th from 10:00 am-2:00 pm. Ms. Anderson is available to staff the table. Ms. Amsel and Chairman Desrocher will take shifts as well. The Committee wants to put a flyer together for this event, as well as look into purchasing a table so they do not have to keep borrowing one for events such as these.

Miss Stavens knows a group that would like to do a cleanup on Earth Day. She will get in touch with them and suggest the Metcalf Property. It will mostly be cleaning up the leaves at the entrance and overgrowth. Miss Stavens may be there to help them as well.

The Bird Walk is still on for Sunday, May 5th. The host of the bird walk is going to attend the next meeting. Ms. van Zelm sent her an email to have her pick the trail beforehand so a flyer can be made.

Susan Phillips, Hall Memorial Library (HML) Director, would be willing to set up a table at the library to help promote Trail Events, such as the Wildflower Tree ID Hike, Moonlight Hike etc. HML is also willing to co-sponsor a hike, picking up any related cost as co-sponsor with the Trails Committee.

Chris from the CT Astrology Society is still planning on the August 15th hike. The Trails Committee is planning to do pre-registration. The location is being changed from Batz to Windermere. A flat surface is needed for the telescopes, and it will need to be mowed. Chris would like to know how many telescopes will be needed; binoculars can also be used.

Trails day is all set for June at Kimball Forest. Postcards will be mailed to the immediate neighbors on Hopkins Road to make them aware of this event; Ms. Dearborn has the addresses.

The Mushroom Walk is still being worked out. Ms. Anderson has not been able to get in touch with the man in charge. Joanne Tedford knows someone but he would need to be paid. If this is a co-sponsored event with HML, they may help with costs. However, the Committee would prefer someone who would not charge.

Trail of Treats is scheduled for Monday, October 28th.

V. NEW BUSINESS

MOVED (DESROCHER), SECONDED (STAVENS) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADD TO THE AGENDA UNDER NEW BUSINESS, ITEM C; INTRODUCTION OF JOANNE TEDFORD, DECIDE TO BE KIND LIAISON.

A. Introduction and Discussion with the Director of Recreation

First Selectman Spielman presented Joanne Tedford with an American flag in honor of former Recreation Director Bob Tedford; the flag was flown over the Capitol. She then proposed that the open Highland area be named "Bob Tedford Park." This area is approximately 50 acres or so off of Bronisz

Road in the development behind Big Y. Off of Stein Road, there is over 200 feet of access; however, it is steep. The views are breathtaking. First Selectman offered to help make some trails and some picnic tables may be added. The Boy Scouts could possibly get involved. Miss Stavens stated that there is a Girl Scout troop that is looking for service hours. There is no timeline to this project as of now. Ellington Highlands is the official name for that land. Ms. Dearborn thinks a large bridge would be needed to get to one of the fields, similar to the new one in Vernon. The bridge would access one third of the property. Another possibility for the property would be adding a disc golf course.

Dustin Huguenin, the new Director of Recreation, was introduced to the Committee. He stated that he is looking forward to working with the Trails Committee on future projects, and offered up the department's assistance with anything they can help with.

B. Appointment of Kimball Forest Steward: Emily Boone

Ms. Boone was unable to attend the meeting; this appointment will be addressed in April.

C. Introduction of Joanne Tedford, Decide to Be Kind Liaison

Mrs. Tedford shared some information from a recent Decide to be Kind meeting. There is a trail in Pennsylvania that is lined with fairy houses. She suggested the Trails Committee host a sort of contest with fairy houses and kindness rocks on one of the trails. Geocaching and letterboxing were also discussed as ways to get people out onto the trails; Shay Drake would be a good contact person for this; Mrs. Tedford stated that she would get in touch with her.

It was noted that the back of the sign at Batz was simple plywood. Maybe a chalkboard paint backing would provide an opportunity to leave notes of kindness for visitors. It should at least be weather-proofed. The kiosk should be better preserved. Chairman Desrocher stated that the Committee members were considering expanding the trails at Batz and perhaps labeling plants and trees.

Mrs. Tedford shared that there are at least four map boxes in storage that could be used for a scavenger hunt. Maps could be laminated and reused. The map boxes could be used for the other trails. There is an trail map that is 95% done and paid for already at the Ellington Printery. All of the trails are on it and it is a 4-fold map that was paid for through a grant. The children's garden and a fruit trail are among the items included; all the Committee would need is a small write-up crediting the grant; otherwise the maps are ready to go. Chairman Desrocher will contact Ellington Printery, check on the details of the grant and make sure that the map is fully up-to-date, and hopefully they can be printed before Earth Day.

Ms. Anderson mentioned hosting a Wildflower and Tree ID event at Batz.

Mrs. Tedford shared that she usually applied for two mini-grants, one of which she focuses towards trails each year. She stated she would be willing to continue pursuing these options for the Committee.

Chairman Desrocher stated that the direction for this year is going to be educational.

Related to the Children's Community Garden, Diane Lasher-Penti, Youth Services Director, is possibly interested in helping. Roy Gurnon, a science teacher at Ellington High School, would also be a good person to ask if we needed additional assistance with this garden.

VI. Sub-Committee Reports

A. Treasurer: There was no report.

B. Planning & Development: Many details will be forthcoming in the next month.

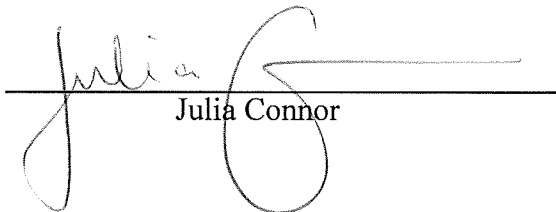
C. Maintenance: There was no report.

- D. Community Outreach: Scout Troop 77 is interested in sponsoring a hike.
- E. Trail of Treats: This sub-committee held its first meeting in February. There are two items that the entire Trails Committee will be voting on following a more detailed discussion and new information that will be presented.

VII. ADJOURNMENT

MOVED (DEARBORN), SECONDED (STAVENS) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE TRAILS COMMITTEE MEETING AT 7:09 PM.

Submitted by

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Julia Connor". The signature is written over a horizontal line. The word "Julia" is written above the line, and "Connor" is written below the line. The signature is positioned to the right of the text "Submitted by".

Julia Connor