

Lee Trails Committee Minutes January 12, 2022

Present Members: Martin Thornton, Kent Kasper, Paul McComiskey, Leslie Chinburg, Dennis Regan, Chris Regan

By Cell Phone: Deb Sugerman (Liaison/Chair)

Approval of Minutes of December 1, 2021 Dennis Regan moved to accept the minutes as written. Chris Regan seconded the motion. A vote was taken, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Reports:

Conservation Commission update, Martin Thornton reported:

The Conservation Commission approved the Trails Committee by-laws (attached). Lee Trails Committee Bylaws designate 7 Regular members, with 4 members constituting a quorum, and up to 7 Alternate members. With a quorum present, a vote was taken on the bylaws. Chris Regan moved to accept the bylaws as written. Paul McComiskey seconded. A vote was taken, and the motion was approved unanimously. Officers:

The Trails Committee bylaws established two officer positions. Nominations will be made at the next meeting. Deb Sugerman is interested in serving as the Chair. Martin Thornton is willing to serve as the Secretary.

Terms:

The bylaws establish rolling membership terms of 1, 2 and 3 years. The following terms were assigned to the seven Regular Members of the Committee: Martin Thornton and Paul McComiskey, 1 year; Kent Kasper, Chris Regan, and Dennis Regan 2 years; Leslie Chinburg and Deb Sugerman, 3 years.

Alternate Members, who are not assigned a term, include Ben Lilyestrom, Dan Couture, Dan Mayton, Frank Eitler, Judy Eitler, Lisa Speropolous, Steve Tall and Tom Hooper. Year End Reports

A year-end report needs to be written for each of the 3 trail systems. The report created for the Lee Town Forest by Dennis and Chris Regan was presented as an example. Leslie Chinburg volunteered to complete the report for Maud Jones. Paul McComiskey volunteered to complete the report for Little River Park. The reports should be based on the 2021 calendar year's work, and will utilize the template that can be found on the shared site, under "Reports". This differs from the Town Report, which is written in the fall for the fiscal year period of July through June. The Committee will consider using the fiscal year for next year's Year End report.

Stafford Regional Planning Commission

The Town of Lee is now a member of the Strafford Regional Planning Commission. This will give us access to their map making program at a reduced fee. We will have access to tax, topo and other maps. Kent Kasper reported that we will be able to see their web version, and will have access to professionals who can put maps together while walking the trails. Martin Thornton reported that the Regional Planning Commission's maps will be able to be used when we create our QR codes, kiosks, etc.

Town Budget

Martin Thornton reported that the Town Budget is in flux. The Conservation Commission asked for additional funding for 2023, but we will have to wait until the town vote in March.

Bridges Update

Martin Thornton indicated that we will discuss details on future bridge work at our next

meeting (in addition to what to include on the kiosks, QR codes, list of donors at trailheads, costs, plans and dealing with flooding). He indicated that the 24' bridge at Little River Park is funded through the American Recovery Act. Chris Regan asked if we have grant opportunities for funding the bridge construction. Deb Sugerman said that she would review material to see if there are any grants we can apply for. Dennis Regan thanked everyone for all the work done on the Lee Town Forest bridges, especially the ones completed in December. Kent Kasper stated that the bridges are holding up, and that the way they were built, with up to 1" spaces between the treads, allows the snow to fall through and keeps the bridges more easily passable. New Business

Martin Thornton reported that the Committee needs to present any proposed new trails to the Conservation Commission and the Select Board before starting any work on them. Martin Thornton stated that he will create a PowerPoint on Maud Jones to present to both bodies in January/February. Kent Kasper noted that the objective of a new trail at Maud Jones would be to access the other half of the 75 acres of conserved land. If approved, the Trails Committee would lay it out in late winter, and work on it in the spring. We will need to construct a bridge. Because the bridge will run bank to bank, we will not need a permit.

Leslie Chinburg asked about the parking lot at Maud Jones, which was supposed to be enlarged this past fall. Martin indicated that the plan is for this to be done this coming spring.

We discussed comments made on NeighborLee about multiple use conflicts on the trails – bikers, skiers, hikers, snowshoers, and the need for more information on trail etiquette. Work plans for this winter include writing the narratives for QR codes and kiosks. Narratives should be between 2 paragraphs and 1 page long. Deb Sugerman mentioned that Lisa Speropolous may be interested in doing some writing, and that Amanda Gourgue is a great resource for final edits and design. Deb also asked that each committee member be the lead on one specific narrative, writing a draft and posting it on the shared site for others to review and offer edits. She asked that rough drafts be completed by the following week. The following assignments were taken:

Martin Thornton – one of the following: the Maud Jones Kettle Hole, Esker Trail or Glacial Erratic (a copy of the Glacial Erratic narrative will also be used in the Town Forest)

Deb Sugerman- the Town Forest Dam

Dennis Regan - the cemetery in the Town Forest (Kent Kasper mentioned that the Daughters of the American Revolution, Steve Bullock and Don Quigley may have information on this)

Kent Kasper – the bog in the Town Forest

Paul McComiskey – Early succession in Little River Park

Leslie Chinburg – Trail Etiquette for all trails – kiosk, website, QR codes, "Yield to Pedestrians" signs on trails for bikers

Chris Regan – Emerald Ash Borer in the Town Forest

Other areas to be addressed at a later time include:

Vernal Pools in the Town Forest, on the yellow trail and by the school

The river in Little River Park

Upland Habitat in Little River Park

Kent Kasper reinforced the need to address the tight corner on the northeast section of the yellow trail in the Town Forest, as stated in the Lee Town Forest report. We will look at the possibility of moving the trail or adding steps to make a rounded corner.

Committee members will explore trails over the winter, when it should be easier to see areas that are in need of adjustments. Google Maps, tax maps, and conservation

easement maps should be helpful in determining boundaries.

Dennis Regan spoke about solutions for wet areas, in particular the area near the Mill Pond in the Lee Town Forest. He shared photos of puncheons used on trails in Massachusetts. Martin Thornton said they also use puncheons on the Blue Job Mountain trails.

The next meeting is on January 26th at 7:00 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.