



## Trails Committee

Town of Hinesburg  
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### Meeting Minutes - March 18, 2015

- Approved 4/15/15 -

**Present:** Stewart Pierson, Peter Modley, George Dameron, Jane Sheldon, and Sue Rusten

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

- 1) Minutes – Peter made a motion to approve the minutes of the February meeting and George seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.
- 2) Treasurer’s Report – There has been no change in the funds since last month. The total current balance in all four sub-accounts remains at \$1655.93.
- 3) Russell Trail Bridge – Ray was not present to update us on the bids he was obtaining from three contractors so the discussion was tabled until the April meeting.
- 4) Town Meeting – Our table was very successful. We were able to get several new volunteer names and contact information, and there were several positive comments about our efforts. During the meeting there were no questions from the floor about the scoping study.
- 5) Trail Connection via Sleepy Hollow – Peter reported that Eli Enman and he had spoken briefly recently about our interest in connect Texas Hill Road to Magee Hill Road via woodland trails. This might be done by using an existing Fellowship of the Wheel (FotW) trail from Texas Hill Road to Sleepy Hollow, and a new trail from Sleepy Hollow along a right-of-way easement held by Sleepy Hollow across White family property to another Sleepy Hollow tract that fronts on Magee Hill Road. Peter summarized the status of various segments of this potential trail. The existing FotW trail starts on Texas Hill Road and crosses Brigham family land before it crosses onto Sleepy Hollow land in Huntington. The Bringhamms have already signed a Hinesburg Area Recreation Trails (HART) Landowner Permission Form for hiking and biking use of this trail. After a short stretch in Sleepy Hollow Huntington land the trail crosses back into Hinesburg and transits a short segment of Milbank family land. The exact status of agreements, if any, between the Milbanks and FotW or Sleepy Hollow regarding this transit are not known to us at this time, but the Milbanks have not, to date, signed a HART Landowner Permission Form for hiking and biking use of this trail.

The proposed hiking trail then transits Sleepy Hollow land via existing trails and then crosses White family land via a right-of-way easement held by Sleepy Hollow to another Sleepy Hollow tract that leads out to Magee Hill Road. Eli Enman has walked this segment within the last few years but we do not know how much clearing would be required to make it into a passable trail. The White family has not signed a HART Landowner Permission Form for hiking and biking use, nor do we know whether it would be necessary or desirable for them to do so, given the Sleepy Hollow right-of-way.

Because this proposed trail raises potential questions regarding the legal and insurance implications of routing a HART trail for a segment into Huntington and for another segment along a right-of-way easement, Stewart suggested that he ask Joe Fallon if he would give us some legal advice pro bono, or will check with Trevor to see if there would be a fee for the town's lawyer to get involved. Peter will write up a recap of the issues and provide Stewart with a list of specific questions for whomever we are able to use for legal interpretation.

**6) Spring Trail Maintenance** – Before the next meeting we will try to assess the winter damage and maintenance needs for each HART area. Jane will check Geprags, Peter V and Sue will cover the LaPlatte Headwaters, George and Stew the Russell Trail, and Ray and Lenore the Hinesburg Town Forest.

**7) Trail Closure Signs** – Sue showed us several signs to use when the trails get too muddy for traffic. A detailed explanation of why a trail is closed will be put on each kiosk and a shorter “Trail Closed for Mud Season” sign will be put on trees a few yards into the trail, in case hikers don't stop at the kiosk.

**8) Spring Trail Events** – George has contacted Ann Thomas of the Hinesburg Historical Society about a joint mill walk, perhaps in May, with initial indications that the group is interested. George will follow up with her. National Trails Day is June 6th where we will recruit volunteers for trail maintenance and possibly bridge building. Susan is considering organizing a family scavenger hunt after school lets out, in early summer.

**9) Record Articles** – Lenore is writing the April article, deadline of April 7th, Stewart will write the May article and George the June article.

**10) HTF Trail Maintenance** – Stewart reported that the Town Forest Committee (TFC) has asked that the Trails Committee (TC) take over the maintenance of the HTF trails. Since the FotW maintains all of the ones they use and most of the Eagle Trail, we would only be responsible for a short section plus keeping the signs updated and the kiosk map holders full.

**11)** Safety Zone – Stewart also reported that the TFC asked us to revise the trail maps to include “safety zones,” which are 500 feet radii around houses near hunting area to prohibit hunting close to residences. Peter explained that adding more information to existing maps, which are already dense with information, might make them difficult for hikers to follow. Other alternatives were discussed, such as putting additional maps on the web site for the hunters and leaving the current maps unchanged for hikers. We will put this topic on the agenda for the April meeting to discuss what other ways we can fulfill this request.

**12)** Map Consistency – Stewart is working with Aaron Kimball to come up with just one map for the HTF, since there are several versions available.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:17 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for April 15th.

Respectfully Submitted  
Jane Sheldon, Secretary