

Lancaster Trail & Bike Way Coalition Minutes
Wednesday, January 13, 2016, 6:30 PM
Lancaster Town Hall Auditorium

In attendance: Noreen Piazza, Bill Flynn, Jeanne Blauner, Tim Castner

Minutes

Noreen Piazza circulated the minutes from the November 4th meeting. No changes or corrections were noted.

New – 2016 LTBC Goals and Work Plan

Noreen distributed copies of the LTBC goals and work plan from three years ago when the LTBC was first formed. The team discussed update of the goals and developing a work plan for the next three years using the revised goals as the basis. A model of breaking down the goals into work categories was explored, with the following as a possible example:

- Planning
- Programming
- Promotion
- Funding
- Maintenance

It was agreed that these are the main areas on which the work plan should focus. Noreen offered to prepare a first draft of the 2016-2018 work plan, which she will have ready for the next LTBC in March.

In the Planning area, Tim Castner suggested that we may want to focus on the following activities in 2016:

- Locations for ATV users
- Owner outreach for private land use
- Participation in the Freedom's Way "Walden to Wachusett" events in 2017

Update – 2016 Family Trail Walk Series

The following is a first draft of the 2016 Family Trail Walk Series as formulated by the Recreation Committee:

Winter 2016

January – Dexter Drumlin – snowshoeing and bonfire event

February – Nathaniel Thayer Memorial Park – snowshoeing and park tour event

Spring 2016

March – Lancaster Community Center – Search and Rescue K9 event

April – Warbler Walk event

May – Bolton Flats and Pine Hill walks

Summer 2016

June – Nashua River – Friends of the Nashua River Paddle event

July – Lancaster Garden Club – Garden Tour event

August – Bolton Flats (in Bolton) to Oxbow Wildlife Refuge (in Harvard) walk

Fall 2016

September – Bartlett Pond – dam removal and cold water fishery talk

October – Cook Conservation Area (spooky?) walk

November – Town Forest post-harvest walk

December – TBD

Tim Castner also suggested that a Freedom's Way "Hidden Treasures" event be submitted for a river/glacier/agriculture talk/walk in the Bolton Flats WMA. The Hidden Treasures events take place in May.

Update – 2016 Connecting Communities Events

The following are the first few events for 2016:

- January – Amherst, NH – Joe English Reservation
- February – Clinton – Rauscher Farm
- March – Westminster – Trail Ramble at Muddy Pond

Update – Trail Connection Mapping

Information was provided to MRPC for the production of the following trail connection maps:

- 1) Bolton Flats → Harvard → Oxbow Wildlife Refuge
- 2) Thayer Memorial Forest → Town Forest → Devonshire → Ballard Hill → over Nashua River → Cook CA (Greenbelt)
- 3) Town Forest → Moreira property → Wekepeke Brook → Bartlett Pond
- 4) From Lancaster → Bolton Flats → Bolton Loop Trail (Bolton)

The trail maps should be completed by the end of March.

Update – Adopt-A-Trail Program

Noreen circulated a third draft proposal for an Adopt-A-Trail Program, including a cover letter, program description, maintenance standards, restrictions, a list of suggested volunteers, and a program agreement form. Some further edits were made, and Noreen will prepare the final package to be mailed to an invitation list.

Update – Trails Vision Plan

The Trail Vision Plan public forum was held on 11/10 with over 40 people in attendance. MRPC gave a general presentation on the Trail Vision Plan, followed by break-out sessions that addressed the following questions:

1. What types of recreational activities do you want to see related to trails? Seasonal/holiday events, guided hikes, uses, etc.
2. What are the trails best used for? What types of users or activities?
3. Where do you see or hear of people using trails? What are the most popular trails? Why? What is the general feel of these trails?
4. What aspects of connecting trails to points of interest are important to you? What types of points of interest should be incorporated?
5. How can we maintain the trails?

Responses to the questions were incorporated into the first draft of the plan. A first draft has been received and will be sent out for review to the LTBC.

Update – Complete Streets Study

A first draft of the study should be received by the end of January, which will be sent out to the LTBC for review.

DCR Recreational Trails Grant

We have recently learned that the MA Fish & Wildlife, Division of Boating & Fishing Access, will not be funding the construction of the handicap-accessible parking area and ramp at the Pellechia CA. The design and permitting have been completed by the agency, but the construction funds have been diverted to other state projects. We may be eligible to apply for the construction funds through the DCR Recreational Trails grant program. The grant application deadline is 2/1 and Noreen will prepare an application. A 20% match will be required; in-kind labor can be included.

In addition, we have recently learned that the Lancaster Friends of the Nashua River have decided to take on the Pellechia CA as a project along the Nashua River. They have offered to do some tree

clearing and brush cutting to create a larger, better accessible parking area and path down to the river's edge. We applaud LFNR for their efforts in trying to make the Nashua River more visible and accessible.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 9, 2016, 6:30 PM, at the Lancaster Town Hall.

Happy Trails!