

WELLESLEY TRAILS COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
January 19, 2022

Attendees: Steve Park, Denny Nackoney, Eric Sofen, Joan Gaughan, Laura Robert (NRC Liaison), Jay Prosnitz, Bob Brown, John Schuler, Ekaterina Zemlyakova
Absent: Diane Hall
Location: Zoom

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 pm.

A motion to approve the meeting minutes for December 16, 2021 was made by Joan, seconded by Jay. Minutes were approved unanimously.

NRC Liaison

Laura reported briefly on NRC work of interest to the Trails committee:

- NRC is finalizing the Open Space Plan. Steve and Denny reviewed the trail section of the Open Space Plan and provided suggestions.
- The gate to Centennial parking lot was closed this past Sunday-Monday because of ice on the access road that led to two cars getting stuck. Police and DPW managed the situation.

Spring Trail Walks

We continue to hold off on publishing advertising for the walks until we see what the COVID-19 situation is like in spring. We can make the advertising decision up to 6 weeks before the first walk. Details have been shared with the Rec Department and the Wonderful Weekend celebrations committee.

New 5-Year Plan

Committee members have reviewed the draft. Steve has made changes based on feedback and sent it back to the committee. With no further feedback, Steve will finish it up and distribute it to other town committees.

Centennial upper meadow fencing

The rope fencing at the upper meadow was systematically cut between each stake around January 1st. The committee decided to leave the cut rope and we'll deal with it in spring. We will also revisit the meadow restoration and minor excavation work to improve trail drainage in the spring and summer.

Easement request on Crosstown Trail at 1 Kendall Rd

Steve summarized the easement issue that was presented to the Select Board at the January 3th meeting. He reminded us that we don't have any formal role in the easement process, but we can provide our feedback to the Select Board. We discussed the current condition of that section of trail, including its width, surface condition, and historic use including resident parking and informal trail parking.

After discussing several trail improvement options and prioritizing public access, we decided that Eric will draft a statement based on the ideas from the meeting, review it with the committee via email, and then send it to the Select Board.

DPW work on Brook Path puddles

Jay reached out to Cricket regarding low spots on the Brook Path. The DPW has been very responsive adding fresh crushed stone. Jay will follow up in the spring if there are any other problem spots.

Crosstown Trail road-crossing at Forest St

Joan has noticed the volume of users on the Crosstown Trail near her house has increased and suggested the committee work with the Traffic Safety Committee on crossing improvements at Forest Street.

Denny walked us through a diagram of the crossing at Forest Street and possible crosswalk locations and the challenges of finding a location with adequate sightlines. Eric suggested rather than a crosswalk looking at “Trail Crossing” signs or speed-feedback sign. Denny suggested we could do a trail-use count for that location. The trail is busiest at commuter hours and school hours (7-9 am, noon, 2-3 pm).

Steve will reach out to the Traffic Committee to ask them to look at crossing improvements.

Memorial Grove trail repair

Brandon Schmitt contacted NRC about the trail condition at the Memorial Grove trail, which connects from the Brook Path to the Cochituate Aqueduct near Whole Foods. The trail is getting worn and has a lot of exposed roots. NRC asked for our input on solutions.

The committee considered a temporary detour or permanent reroute but felt that neither were great options. The current path follows the obvious walking route so shifting it seems likely to be ineffective. Joan suggested improving the current path with crushed stone. This was considered as part of the major Brook Path project, but there wasn't funding for it at that point. Steve pointed out improving the surface may lead to needing to make it ADA accessible and the steep grade up to the aqueduct will be problematic.

Steve will follow up with Brandon, asking them to try to improve the current path in a simple, low-cost manner.

New Business

No new business.

The next meeting will be via Zoom on Tuesday, February 15th at 7 pm.

The meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Documents available by request: FY21 Project List (1/19/22), Forest Street Crossing diagram. Current 5-Year Project Plan is on the Trails website.

Submitted by,
Eric Sofen
Secretary, Wellesley Trails Committee