

**WELLESLEY TRAILS COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
March 7, 2023**

Attendees: Jay Prosnitz, Denny Nackoney, Steve Park, Rick Mongeau, Joan Gaughan, Laura Robert (NRC Liaison)  
Absent: Diane Hall, John Schuler, Ekaterina Zemlyakova, Bob Brown  
Guests: John Maccini  
Location: Warren Building, Children's Room

The meeting was called to order at 7:10 PM.

A motion to approve the meeting minutes for January 24, 2022, was made and seconded. The minutes were approved 5-0, with one abstention (Joan was not present at the last meeting).

NRC Update: Laura reported that the NRC continues to review its policies (handbook) and in particular the section relating to deposition of Article 97 land and the Public Lands Preservation Act signed into law November 2022. The board is discussing longstanding NRC policy that requires the following for disposition of land or change in use: Unanimous vote of NRC, 2/3 approval of Town Meeting, and 2:1 ratio as it pertains to disposition and acquisition (trades).

Centennial Reservation Meadow update: Steve reported that the DPW had looked at remediating the "S" curve trail at Centennial Reservation that is on NRC controlled land and recommended that perhaps a split rail fence should define the trail at the curves and that 1/2" gravel be brought in to sustain trail and help eliminate the mud. Discussion of this proposal followed. The general feeling was that the committee did not want to proceed with the DPW mitigation plan. Instead, Denny presented a plan with a map of a new trail that would avoid the lower "S" curve and loop into the woods. A motion was made by Joan and seconded by Rick. Motion: The committee will recommend to the NRC that a new trail be constructed on NRC controlled land into the woods adjacent to the meadow and the old trail be closed. Cricket Vlass with the DPW will assess the best remediation of the area where the old trail was and do any restoration that she sees fit. New trail cutting would be done by Trails Committee members. This motion was approved 6-0.

Joan brought up the Planning Department's proposal to move Article #42 at Town Meeting that has now been removed from the warrant. This Article would have changed the zoning of the 14.5 acres owned by the Sisters of Charity. This land abuts Centennial Reservation. After some discussion of this Joan made a motion, and Denny seconded it. Motion: The Trails Committee recommends to the NRC that they pursue having a dialogue with the Sisters of Charity, to have a protective buffer of land around their property that would be preserved in perpetuity in a CR (Conservation Restriction). This would ideally be done before any zoning changes would take place. The motion carried unanimously, 6-0.

Attire update: The committee discussed purchasing vests but the majority felt that they were too expensive and that many of us had jackets. We have enough hats. Diane will reach out to members via e mail to see what members need; ie, shirts, jackets.

Mobility Committee update: Joan reported that the Rt. 16 sidewalk near South Natick line was on a timely track to be done and money has been allocated in DPW budget.

Safety on the Brook Path - Biker Signage: Steve reported that signage for bikers on the Brook Path was discussed at the last Mobility meeting. The committee discussed whether safety needed to be addressed, and whether signage targeted just at bicyclists was appropriate or would be helpful. Using laminated signs as a trial was discussed as well as discussion regarding the color, size, numbers and location of the signage. Jay and Rick

felt the signs would be useful if placed in 2 directions at Cottage St, Grove St., State St, Abbott Rd and Wellesley Ave. Some Committee members felt that signs should first be tested at a 2-3 locations around Grove St and the Hunnewell School. Others felt that signage should not be limited and “close calls” occur on the entire length of the trail. No consensus was reached. A different sign was review and discussed that could be used at the entrances to the two narrow bridges suggesting riders get off their bikes or use caution. No consensus was reached on these issues. It was decided to discuss this further at the next Trails Committee Meeting in April when other members of the Committee would be present. Chief Pilecki would also be asked to include correct biker conduct along this path when he does his Spring visits to the schools to discuss bike safety. Jay will also discuss this with Officer Showstead and at the next Mobility Committee Meeting.”

Spring Walks: Denny will be putting up signage re the Spring Walks at the map houses. It will also be in the Swellesley Report, on the web site and in the NRC Newsletter.

Jay reported that Cricket and the DPW have been adding stone dust where needed on the Brook Path.

Denny reported that the work was completed at the Memorial Grove, and it will be reevaluated in the spring to see if any further work is needed.

Lisa Moore will be working on ways to try to engage people in our natural habitat in town. She is researching efficient ways to track and reward resident engagement on trails.

The next meeting will be on Thursday, April 13, at 7:00 pm at the Children’s Room at the Warren Building. Town Meeting in April prevented a Tuesday meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:59 PM.

Meeting handouts are available from the NRC office.

Submitted by,  
Joan Gaughan  
Wellesley Trails Committee