

Thompson Trails Committee MINUTES
Monday, August 2, 2021, 7:00 pm

In attendance: Karen Durlach, John Kochinskas, Lucille Langlois, Brian Loffredo, Charlie Obert, David Ostrowski, Paul Provost; LyAnn Graff, TLGV; Monique Dutram; Arthur Couture; Pat Charron; Vern Butler

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. Lucille moderated.

David made a MOTION, seconded by Charlie, to accept minutes of June 14, 2021. All in favor.

Charlie made a MOTION, seconded John, to accept minutes of Special Meeting July 26, 2021. All in favor.

Correspondence:

- Request to present project proposal from Master Gardener Monique Dutram
- Request for Trails Committee members to RSVP & attend August 18 community engagement workshop to be held at the Library to discuss American Rescue Plan Projects for Thompson
- invitation to volunteer for Webster Triathlon August 7-8

Finances: Balance available 6/14/21: \$10,748.14 less funds allocated for t-shirts, mower & keys/locks for Trailer; leaves approx. \$5,000

Changes to Agenda to move Train Wreck site Turntable Discussion forward:

Paul reported THS has negotiated for acquisition of stones still existing in Putnam from the Putnam turntable. He shared a presentation showing area maps of the historic position of Thompson's train station turntable and sample reconstructed turntables.

Vern Butler of Morning Beckons Farm indicated he is amenable to an easement or eventual land purchase of the area needed to reconstruct the railroad turntable, which he will pass by his real estate attorney. He asked for an interim *Letter of Intent* to be drafted so that the stones can be delivered directly to the site, protecting THS and Thompson Trails access as well as all the current rights and access of the Butlers and Morning Beckons Farm.

THS & Trails need a current key to the gate for access to deliver the stones.

Citizen Comments

Arthur Couture offered his appreciation of the Thompson Trails system and the work of the Committee and offered his assistance, both in reporting any trails issues he encounters as a frequent user and to help with trail maintenance.

UCONN Master Gardener Monique Dutram affiliated with the Windham County Extension Office in Brooklyn, CT, presented her plan for developing a learning environment model at the portion of Heritage Park located behind the former Knights of Columbus building in North Grosvenordale. Her plan would be to label plant/tree, specimens and provide some information about each; indicating which plants are native, genus/species, etc beginning with some of the specimens located along the paved path that starts at the Buckley Hill Rd entrance.

Trailer/Mower Status: Trailer delivered; waiting on registration & insurance. Need DPW to designate parking area. Mower ordered at Runnings, 7-10 day delivery predicted. Keys distributed to access tools stored in trailer (John, Paul, Brian, Charlie, Karen & set for DPW). Only John, Brian & DPW will hold keys to trailer hitch lock. Discussion on logo and signage to be displayed on trailer; John will get quotes from Airbrush Shack. *Charlie made a MOTION, seconded by John, to spend up to \$1000 for identifying signs for the Kubota and Trailer. Motion passed with one abstention.*

Keys to the gates are needed for bringing the Kubota to work on the trails. Suggestion to keep a key in the Kubota with the vehicle key.

A work crew will be needed to adjust/install the tie downs inside the trailer to accommodate safe transport.

T Shirts: ordered

Events:

- **RiMaConn Relay Race** Saturday, August 28; Charlie intends to volunteer
- **Oct. 3 Ribbon Cutting:** Train Wreck site park project :“Windows on the Past”
Karen created a sub-Committee to work on the agenda for the day. Paul noted a clean-up crew needed prior to the event for that area.
- **Turkey Trot Nov. 14, 2021:** Brian, Charlie & Karen had a final meeting with Lesley. Charlie completed application for West Thompson Dam. “Save-the Date” cards distributed. Centerville Bank confirmed as Title Sponsor. Hometown Bank still to confirm. Brian brought draft of sponsorship letter for final inputs.
- **Walktober:** Sept. 18-Oct.21. The Oct. 3 Ribbon Cutting is listed. John leading an event.

Trail updates:

- Clean-up crew needed prior to Oct. 3 ribbon cutting at Train Wreck site.
- Plum Road is connected now to the Air Line. Needs some maintenance and wayfinding signage to direct trail users to Route 12. amenities.
- Culvert Trail needs weedwacking
- Sanddam needs both mower work & brushcutter
- Paul updated all kiosks and brush-cut/cleaned up the Mechanicsville parking area before Putnam’s July 7 site walk

Social Media/PR/maps

- Z-fold map available at Library & Town Hall (6000 printed; grant needed for any reprint)
- Paul can share new file for Tri-State marker map flyer
- new Conservation officer has some GIS experience
- continuing to explore other mapping technologies

Trail Census: New newsletter sent recently
Charlie will check counter again soon

Reports from Neighboring Towns

- Lucille shared a newspaper article about a trail that took 20 years to complete a half-mile connection (Sturbridge)
- Paul attended Putnam’s July 7 site walk. Putnam Trails July 27 meeting included report from engineering firm Weston & Sampson on possible routes to connect the Air Line Trail from Putnam to Thompson

Future agenda items:

Grants; Upgrading maps; “Trails Passport” program

Motion & second to adjourn. Meeting adjourned 9:34 p.m.

NEXT BUSINESS MEETING: Monday, October 4, 2021, 7:00 p.m.