



Trails Committee

Town of Hinesburg
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Meeting Minutes – January 27, 2021

- Draft -

Meeting Held via Zoom

Present: Jane Sheldon, Colin Hunt, Oren Guttman, Chic McArthur, Peter Modley, Ray Mainer, Bret Golann, Nick Certo

Regrets: Chris Rivard

Guests: Howard Russell, Bethanne Cellars

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

1. **Minutes** – Jane made a motion to accept the minutes from the December meeting. Colin seconded and the motion passed unanimously.
2. **Budget** – There is still some question as to whether the cost of our Zoom meetings should be taken out of our budget or paid for by the town. Oren will keep in touch with Missy and Joy to resolve the issue. Assuming it comes out of our funds, we have \$876 left in our budget.
3. **Russell Property Development** – Howdy attended to review plans for developing two more lots in the South Farm subdivision. He reviewed a map showing the proposed access road and its proximity to the current path from Buck Hill Road to the Perimeter Trail. The Russell Family is scheduled to submit a plat approval review at the DRB meeting February 2nd and wanted to answer any questions or concerns from the Trails Committee. Jane asked if there could be more parking added to the bottom of the access path. Howdy pointed out that the pond was too close to add any on the road to the east of the current area. He suggested we could try asking Chuck Reiss, who owns the property to the west if some accommodation could be made. Chic offered to liaise with Chuck. Chic offered to have the TC submit a letter of approval to the DRB. Howdy thanked us and said he'd let us know if it was needed. Chic responded by thanking Howdy and the whole family for their generosity over the years in sharing their property.
4. **Hinesburg Center Phase 2** – Peter did not get a response to an email to the developer sent in December regarding our request for easements. This week he mailed a letter to the developer, pointing out the benefit of the town giving him a liability waiver in exchange for an easement. Also, Oren sent a letter to Mitch Cypes stating that the TC believes the development should not

receive final approval unless the easement is granted to the town. Oren attached a copy of Peter's aforementioned letter to the developer, which also informed him that we would be keeping the DRB up-to-date on the easement issue.

5. **Geprags Connector** – Colin will write up a letter to the new owner of the land adjacent to Bucky's Pub and send it around for approval. The letter is to follow up on our attempt to develop a connecting path from Bucky's parking lot to Geprag's Park.
6. **Avenza** – Chic reported that anywhere from 22 to 45 downloads of maps were tallied by Avenza at each of the various trail systems. This is an encouraging number. Chic suggested that we try to get more publicity for this app's availability and will draft a press release.

7. Projects and To-dos

- a. **Ravine Trail** – Chic reported that neither the branches we had placed to close the Ravine trail, nor the sign saying "detour" has stopped hikers from using the old, more dangerous route. He suggested putting up "trail closed" signs at either end and perhaps placing heavier barriers instead of branches. He will ask Lenore for temporary laminated signs and Ray offered to construct permanent ones.
- b. **Baldwin Road** – Ray had kept up mowing the vegetation down through the fall on the Carse section of the easement. Before we can start to work on the extension to Leavensworth we need to talk to the property owner, Thad Halsmer, to update him on our plans. Ray has offered to do so. We have materials to build the bridge needed to cross a brook and hope to start work on the trail and bridge in the spring.
- c. **Connection from Town to Baldwin Road** – Various routes from town were discussed, most focusing on using VAST trails and their crossing points over Patrick Brook. More discussions will follow.
- d. **Russell Trails** -
 - i. The on-going issue of poor drainage on the southeastern portion of the Perimeter Trail was discussed. Many of the previously discussed options would require too much money or too much labor. Chic asked if, rather than water bars that would drain into the pasture below, we could run a trench on the downside of the trail. Brett pointed out the labor intensity, but Oren said he had a friend with an excavator small enough to get into that area, who may be cost effective. Nick said he would be able to get a trailer to move the excavator to the site. Brett then suggested, if that were the case, we could lay down piping and gravel as well. We would need to go before the Select Board to get a one-time allotment to cover the supplies. Oren will check with his friend and we will discuss this option again in February.
 - ii. In another section along the eastern part of the Perimeter, there are also muddy spots, but they may be able to be solved with puncheons.
- e. **Lavigne Hill** – This project will be kept on hold until we can get the VYCC crew back.

- f. **Eagle's Trail** – Colin used the binder supplied by Lenore to review the to-do list she had left for this trail. He reported that he walked the loop and took notes on the few things that still needed done.

- 8. **Record Articles** – Colin submitted the article for this week's issue, Peter offered to write one for the February issue (deadline February 11th) and Jane did so for March.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm. The next meeting will be held on February 17th.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jane Sheldon, Secretary