

Bi Town Trail Committee Meeting Minutes

3/9/17

We attended the Wilmington Trails Committee meeting to understand what their group does, to share ideas and see if there is any work we should do together. There was a strong turn out and good dialogue. These are their minutes:

Wilmington Trails Committee

Minutes for March 9, 2017

Present: John Greene, *chair*; Crista Gannon, *vice chair*; Ann Ottaviano, *secretary*; Jake White, Joe Arnold, Gary Henry, Spencer Crispe, Bob Fisher, *alternate* Tim Hunt, John Gannon *ex officio* and *guests* Andy McLean, Benny McGinnis, Jamie Storrs, Kelly Pawlak and Elia Hamilton.

Introduction of Guests: Our guests are members of the Bi- Town Committee and representatives from Peak Resorts and Mount Snow.

Approve Minutes: We did not have a quorum last month, consequently there are no minutes.

Election of Officers: Crista Gannon moved that John Greene remain as president, Gary Henry seconded, all approved. John Greene made the motion that Crista Gannon continue to be our vice chair, Ann Ottaviano seconded, all approved. John Greene moved that Ann Ottaviano continue to be secretary, Crista Gannon seconded, all approved.

Discussion of Valley-wide Trails Synergy: We brought the Bi-Town group up to date on our Valley Trail work, issues with obtaining permits for working on sections of said trail and our ongoing problems with the Wetlands Committee and Act 250. Kelly Pawlak described to us many of Bi-Town's objectives such as trail maintenance, parking, identifying the core, marketing and trying to find a way to expedite permits. They have been able to work well with the National Forest Service on some of their trails. It was determined that both committees need to have a discussion with snowmobile clubs.

Ideas and Plans for National Trails Day: June 3rd is National Trail day. We discussed last year's events and will come up with a plan for this year at our April meeting.

Update on Valley Trail: John Gannon stated that we should speak to our attorney about "municipal exemptions" for our trail work instead of getting involved with the Act 250 process. Jake White explained that the more detailed information we give certain agencies about the products we use for trail work the faster the permit process.

Update on Other Trails: John Greene discussed working on an old snowmobile trail from Forbush Road up Haystack. Work should proceed this spring.

Plan for Trail Maintenance 2017: All trail maintenance will be planned at April meeting.

Next Meeting: Thursday, April 13, 2017 at 6p.m. in the Town Meeting Room.

Respectfully submitted,
Ann Ottaviano
Recording secretary

In addition to Ann's minutes, I will add some of my notes:

PERMITTING

Municipality under 10 acres Act 250 exemption. Still need ANR permits, for instance, wetlands.

VT Trails system gets Act 250 exemption – John Gannon said he would look into it.

If you charge a trail fee, it triggers Act 250.

VALLEY TRAIL

- Status – we cannot “improve” trail until we get permits.
- Kelly will talk to GMP to see if they can fix their section of the trail

RIDGE TRAIL

- Andy McLean shared that he is making progress with the USFS to establish a trail head on Handle Rd with a parking area. This area will be built with funds from Dover 1%. Great work Andy – it has taken a long time.
- This will give access to trails that can lead to Ridge trail, a trail that many feel should be maintained. Much discussion about the “swampy area” that will need a creative work around. No solid plan on Ridge trail maintenance but Mike Purcell is the person who has been championing this with the USFS.

CROSS TOWN

Mount Snow will be improving existing trails on Crosstown.

SNOWMOBILE TRAILS

Benny McGinnis shared his experience in Tahoe and how they improved snowmobile trails. Overall, there was a sentiment that many of the snowmobile trails in this region are too wet in the summer.

LEGISLATURE

Andy McLean asked John Gannon if he and Laura Sabilia could collaborate and propose a bill that would give an Act 250 exemption for trail builds that follow a set of standards. Elia Hamilton added that VT Youth Conservation Corp has standards – probably better than asking State to set standards. John said possibly next session on a bill proposal. John shared that he would like to have a Kingdom Trails like experience in our area.

BITOWN TRAIL COMMITTEE

There was a lot of shared discussion and information about the best way for this trail committee to go. Under a municipality, like the Wilmington Trails Committee? A 501c3? A Chapter of VMBA? Tim Hunt reports that Ascutney is all three of the above. Bob Fisher felt a town committee was the best way to go. 1% money in Dover and Wilmington could help with 501c3. Need to keep in mind the need for insurance. Andy McLean shared that Dover has a Conservation Committee and possibly we could fall under that – we would need to talk to the Dover Selectboard.

Next Meeting: Wed, April 12th at 6 p.m. in the Dover Town Office meeting room, upstairs.

Respectfully submitted,
Kelly Pawlak