

**Conservation Committee Meeting Minutes
Cape Elizabeth Town Hall
7:00 p.m., Tuesday, October 10, 2023**

Present: Corinne Ketcham, Chair, Michelle Boyer, Matt Craig, Emily Helliesen Day, Bruce Moore, Richard Sullivan

Staff: Maureen O'Meara, Town Planner

1. Call to Order. Chair Ketcham called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
2. Public Comment. No one wanted to speak on items not on the agenda.
3. Minutes. Chair Ketcham made a motion, seconded by Ms. Day to approve the minutes and the motion passed (6-0).
4. Greenbelt Management.

Machine Built Trails RFP. Ms. O'Meara summarized that the Conservation Committee had reissued an RFP for machine built trails at Cross Hill. Sanctuary Trail Works has submitted a proposal and Chris Cyr is here tonight. The committee may want to consider having a site walk with Mr. Cyr to confirm the work to be done.

Chris Cyr, Sanctuary Trail Works, introduced himself. He is currently working on trails in Gorham, spent 6-7 years as a trail volunteer, mostly using hand tools and NEMBA equipment. He is now a professional trail builder, working now in Windham, and would use a John Deere excavator, with a 34" to 52" blade.

Mr. Moore asked if he's building new trails in Windham? Mr. Cyr is building 5 miles of trails, individual trails ranging from ½ to ¾ mile long. He is using a landscape architect prepared plan and then doing design/build in the field, guided by GPS and flagging route.

Mr. Sullivan how civilized will the machine built trail be and how much disturbance? Mr. Cyr said roots, stumps and rocks will come out of the existing trail. The tread will last, similar to the Meadow Loop at Winnick Woods. He doesn't remove all roots and will work around mature trees.

Chair Ketcham confirmed that the idea is a walkable surface for all users. Mr. Cyr noted the proposal includes narrow corridors, 50' wide, but he does have some rerouting in his proposal. Since the trail is there, he will focus on the tread, rocks and roots. Within 1-2 years, it will look natural.

Mr. Sullivan asked about roots removal. Mr. Cyr said he uses ax, saw and the machine.

Mr. Craig asked about durability and water flow. Mr. Cyr plans for water issues as part of the trail layout. He has walked the route twice, taken 50 pictures and notes. Turnpiking can be done to slow down water and avoid channeling on the trail. Your proposal said no biking features, however he would bank some turns to control water.

Ms. Day confirmed that the Winnick Woods trail machine built trail is the goal. Mr. Cyr said banking can control speed and erosion by avoiding hard braking and still have a walkable slope.

Mr. Day confirmed that we need bridges. Mr. Cyr recommended performing the trail rehab work first, then rebuild the bridges. The trail should be closed during work and there is some possibility less boardwalk will be needed.

Chair Ketcham asked about timing for a site walk? The committee agreed to a site walk on Wednesday, November 1st, beginning at 9:30 am, to meet on Cross Hill Rd where it intersects with the powerline.

Greenbelt Map update. The Conservation Committee reviewed the proposed updates to the greenbelt trails map. Draft maps have been shared with CELT and Jay Cox. The Winnick Woods/Cross Hill and Gull Crest updates were noted and the small red extension at Winnick Woods will be deleted. The CELT easement at Maxwell Farms will be added. A dotted line showing the Riverside cemetery road that links the Pollack Brook Trail to the Spurwink River will be added. CELT trails on private property will be deleted (Shore Acres). A trail at Robinson Woods will be added and all CELT trails will be shown in red. Runaway Farms preserve will be shown as CELT owned. With these updates, Mr. Moore made a motion, seconded by Chair Ketcham, to approve the updated map and the motion passed 6-0.

MCC 2024 application. Ms. O'Meara summarized the application submitted for the remaining trail improvements in Winnick Woods and the timeline.

Greenbelt Gazette. The committee would like included an announcement about the map update, a notice that folks are taking boats at Great Pond for a "joyride" and failing to replace them on the racks, and a reminder that no motorized vehicles are allowed on town trails.

The committee had some discussion about increased used of electric bikes, which can expand accessibility for trail users. Use of motorized vehicles on town trails may also conflict with existing easement prohibitions. The committee would like to learn more about electric bikes.

5. Planning Board Review. There are no items on the October 16th Planning Board meeting that require committee action.

6. Next Meeting. The next meeting of the committee will be November 14, 2023, with the site walk scheduled for November 1st. The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.