



# Town of Merrimack, New Hampshire

Community Development Department  
6 Baboosic Lake Road  
Town Hall - Lower level - East Wing  
Planning - Zoning - Economic Development - Conservation

603 424-3531  
Fax 603 424-1408  
[www.merrimacknh.gov](http://www.merrimacknh.gov)

## **HORSE HILL NATURE PRESERVE SUBCOMMITTEE OF MERRIMACK CONSERVATION COMMISSION MAY 30, 2023 MEETING MINUTES**

**Call to order:** Meeting was called to order at 7:06pm

**Members present:**

Marc Gagnon (chair),  
Tim Adams (alternate),  
Ellen Kolb (MCC representative),  
Paul Lavoie  
Christine Nazaka arrived during the meeting, after the evening's first vote.

**Member absent:**

Lynne Wenz

---

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Ellen moved that the minutes of the February 7, 2023 meeting be approved with the amendment of "MCC representative" for "ex-officio MCC" in the list of members present; Tim seconded; approved 4-0-0.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

- **Recap of winter activities:** Twister Trail got some work in December 2022. Marc made some map holder for kiosks, using Lexan leftover from an earlier kiosk project; he added the QR code for maps to each holder. Marc has begun re-setting junction posts where needed; he has finished 3, with three left to go; he added a directional sign to Amherst Road at one junction. Newly-made trail signs have been mounted. Supplies are on hand for painting junction posts during the coming season. Paul noted that there is still no sign on the unofficial "Horseplay" trail near East Side and Horse Hill trails. That name is not used by the town but has been used on some online trail sites. We await NRPC's imagery to ensure this trail is on any map that's being developed. The Spaulding Foundation got a major cleanup thanks to a recent workday with 4 subcommittee members (Marc, Christine, Paul, Tim) along with Marc's wife and Christine's daughter.
- **Beavers, and guidance from MCC:** The problem noted by the subcommittee at its last meeting has receded for now but is likely to recur, affecting the bridge near junction post 18. Marc has cut back brush around the area, but beavers were active on both sides of the bridge. If they keep raising their dam, the area will flood again. Ellen read parts of the

Town's beaver management plan to the subcommittee. Subcommittee members will monitor the beaver dam and ensure that it doesn't get higher.

- **Loop Trail at Post 9:** kiosk work at that location has been completed.
- **Loop Trail north from Palmieri Drive:** Paul has cleaned out a lot of trenching in the area. Keeping drainage open is important. He'll keep an eye on the area.

The access road/driveway to the Watanic entrance to Horse Hill has not yet been graded despite repeated requests to MCC and DPW. The conditions are deteriorating. Marc has spoken to Mike Boisvert as MCC liaison to DPW. Ellen will mention this again to MCC. Kiosk refresh and wildlife viewing areas: these items were proposed by Lynne Wenz, and in her absence the subcommittee deferred consideration until the next meeting.

- **Mountain bike connector trail:** Paul reported that NEMBA would like to re-open an old snowmobile trail on the northern side of HHNP, with a loop and connections to Outer Ledges and Twister trails. Estimated distance is 0.75 mile. This would help get mountain bikes off the Loop Trail. A double-track on the old snowmobile trail would be good; can we re-open that trail? All users would like to avoid wet spots, and that would affect precise location of any new trail(s). Consensus of subcommittee is to bring this to MCC. Paul would be glad to make presentation. Ellen will ask that it be placed on an MCC agenda in June.
- **Confirm remaining meeting dates for 2023:** subcommittee consensus is to meet on September 5 (**rescheduled from September 12**) and November 28.

### NEW BUSINESS

- **Not on agenda, but came up in discussion of other items:** Ellen will check with Community Development to see if Eversource has notified the down of any scheduled mowing/trimming in HHNP, particularly anything affecting Long Pond View Trail.
- **Mountain bike connector trail:** discussed in Old Business.
- **MCC update:** Ellen reported on the Fields Farm property that the boundaries are now confirmed. An expected transfer of property from the adjacent Windy Hollow development did not materialize. We can now look ahead to development; Ellen said that a parking lot needs to be a priority. Marc noted that a master plan for Fields Farm will be a long process. Ellen reported on MCC's recent votes on subcommittee memberships and noted that two Sklar appointments were not accepted; she added that no social media posts about Sklar had been authorized by the Town or MCC.
- **E-bike discussion:** Paul and NEMBA members asked for clarity on permitted e-bikes on conservation properties. Ellen read aloud from Town Code chapter 111 as amended in June 2022, which bars class 2 and class 3 e-bikes from conservation properties but is silent on class 1, thus leaving the use of class 1 bikes legal.

Regarding signage that addresses e-bike use, there are signs at the Naticook Road and Watanic entrances (but none at Amherst Road) saying “no motorized vehicles.” Marc said that the Town should provide any needed signs regarding e-bike use. Ellen will check with Community Development to see if any standard language for such signs is in use elsewhere in the state.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned 8:04 p.m. on a motion by Tim, seconded by Christine.