



CONNECTICUT EQUINE ADVISORY COUNCIL

P.O. Box 57 Durham, CT 06422-0057 13th

Meeting Notes for Thursday, September 20, 2018

Call to Order: The meeting was held at CFPA Library -16 Meriden Rd., Rockfall

The meeting called to order at 6:41 by Fred Mastele

Attendance: Fred Mastele, Diane Ciano, Ruth (by teleconference phone),

Laurie Giannotti (DEEP) and Eric Hammerling (CFPA)

Guest: Gary Rutkauskas

Excused: David Frazzinelli, Meg Sautter

Review Meeting Minutes: The meeting minutes of June 21, 2018 were reviewed. Motion to accept

By Fred. 2nd Ruth. They were approved unanimously.

State Park & Forest updates

Natchaug SF: No report

Goodwin State Forest: - No report

Pachaug State Forest: Eric reported that over 400 trees were cut down. DEEP taking inventory with hand held devise for locating of hazard tree due to Gypsy Moth, Ash Borer and drought. DEEP is focusing on where most visitors are using such as picnic areas.

Machimoodus/Sunrise State Park: No report

Salmon River State Forest: No report

Larkin Bridle Trail: Laurie reported on the Larkin Trail at Hawley Road reconstruction project regarding the grading, drainage, gate and signage. There are now 3 parking spots on each side of the road.

Other trail reports:

Airline Trail: Laurie reported on a letter of concern Pomfret Horse and Trail Association (4/4/18) concerning the road crossings to be constructed along the Airline Trail from Pomfret to Putnam. With their input, the Trails & Greenways Program submitted comments to the town" Please investigate options for non-slip bridge surface materials. We have an active equestrian user community and although we expect horses to be walked across the bridges, a non-slip surface will insure safety for all. USDA recommends cleats, rubber matting or a rough surface."

Other concerns about the design and construction of the trail improvements were regarding bridges and culverts with the new road crossings and maintaining access to the trails at the Holmes Road crossing (*Slope will be at grade - approximately 4% and accommodates ADA.*) At the Needles Eye Road bridge (the abutments still exist and will be utilized) and the current ramp will remain and allow users to continue to enter from the road. Laurie also noted that the bridges will incorporate two, 10 foot width with 2 foot shoulders, essentially 14 foot wide lanes. The railings will exceed 54 inches as they will incorporate a 10 foot chain link fence.

Legislative Discussion

Discussion was on the "Resolution Proposing an Amendment to the State Constitution to Protect Real Property Held or Controlled by the State." Eric has headed a new organization that is a 501(c)(4). "Referendum Committee" - Protect CT Public Lands Coalition, Inc. He is the Treasurer and working to raise money and awareness to help spread the word about the vote on this in November. They have come up with "Palm Cards" and have been asking people to hand these out and to spread the word to all including organizations. There was a public opinion poll to have citizens read conducted on the ballot question. After reading 52% were in favor and 22% were not. After explaining what the bill was for the survey had increased to 68%, and then with additional information about the value of protecting public lands, support for the ballot question went to 83% in favor of voting yes for the amendment.

Laurie is helping with budgeting. Money is now coming in to hire workers for next year. Eric reports that some language in the Passport to Parks authorization allows the General Assembly to consider \$2.6 million in year 1 and \$5 million in year 2 of the Passport funds be considered "surplus." CFPA will be working in 2019 to get the Passport to Parks funding to go to Parks and not "surplus" (a.k.a., the General Fund bill lets any "excess" be swept away and we should work to get that language).

Discussion on Legislation on E Bikes - HB 5313. The bill which passed in 2018 only allows municipalities (and not the state) to regulate E Bikes. This needs to be remedied so that the state can also regulate. Looking to amend this bill to extend exclusion to the state to post. As of now, only municipalities can post no E Bikes. Fortunately, E Bikes were not permitted in the bill for use on "unimproved surfaces," but that was attempted.

The original bill that CFPA and others testified against was H.B. 5485. This bill died in the Transportation Committee, but in HB 5313, the General Assembly did a "strike all amendment" which took out the former language of this bill (originally written to make "technical corrections" to the DVM statutes) and replaced it with the E-Bike bill. Very sneaky!

Old Business:

West Rock Ridge State Park: *Follow up from June* - Ruth has not contacted DEEP Supervisor her yet regarding parking for horse trailers and where.

Airline Trail - Portland: *Follow up from June* was the discussion on the Portland Connector and concern was brought up by Fred. Laurie said that the town owns the easement and will give the contact information for the committee working on it. Tabled to next meeting.

Bond Commission: As discussed at previous meetings - the update is that 3 million dollars was allocated for the National Recreation Trails Program (RTP). The Grant Round was opened and the last day of submission is October 31, 2018.

National Recreational Trails Program: DEEP may decide to go back in the program but it is a long process to get a decision on this.

New Business:

CT GREENWAYS SYMPOSIUM - Laurie reported that the Symposium will take place on Thursday, October 25th at the Goodwin College. The theme will be "Trails Connecting Communities and People." There will be a speaker from Kingdom Trails (VT). The CT Horse Council will speak on Trail Etiquette.

Statewide Council of Governments (COG) is considering doing a statewide trail map. The Northwest COG did one with federal money that includes horse trails.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn the meeting by Eric, seconded by Fred, at 7:30 pm.

Next meeting: Thursday, December 13, 2018