



**South Hadley, MA  
Bike-Walk Committee Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, June 19, 2019; 7:00 PM  
South Hadley Public Library-Trustees Room**

**Attendees:** Mariann Millard (Chair), Nancy Bozek, Larry Dubois, Marilyn Gass, Margaret Jodoin. Larry Dubois joined the meeting at 7:10 PM.

**Absent:** Lucia Foley, Melissa O'Brien, Huguette Supinski

**Guests:** Doris Dubois, Chris Geraghty (Select Board member)

Meeting called to order at 7:00 PM by the Chair.

There being no quorum business matters were deferred. With the arrival of member, Larry Dubois, a quorum was achieved.

**Welcome to Guest**

Mariann introduced Christopher Geraghty, recently elected member of the South Hadley Select Board, and the invited guest for the meeting. Chris gave an update of what the Select Board does. He also indicated that the Board works closely with the Appropriations Committee to establish the next year's town budget. Having previously served on the Appropriations Committee he feels has been an advantage. He went on to compliment the BWC as doing "important work".

**Discussion**

Mariann gave a brief history of the BWC from 2013 to the present: Initially, it was a sub-committee of the town's Sustainability Committee. In 2013 the committee petitioned to become a separate town committee.

-Serves officially as advisory committee to the Select Board and is active in that role.

-Currently 8 members on the BWC, but starting July 2019, it will become a 7-member board with 2 vacancies.

-Highlights include: monthly treks between September-May, primary advocate of development of Leaping Well Nature Trail, River to Range Loop Trail steward, collaborative initiatives with other community groups including S.H. Conservation Commission, MHC, S.H. Senior Center, the Schools, S.H. Tree Committee, S.H. Falls Redevelopment Authority, Canal Park, as well as events with Holyoke such as River Roll & Stroll and this spring's hike at the Ashley Reservoir.

-Biggest concerns for BWC: funding for continued mapping of S.H. trails by the Conservation Commission, Complete Streets plans, ValleyBike Share sites.

-BWC Treks are popular in S.H. averaging 30 people. Highest number of participants at one event: Maple Syrup trek in 2016 was 100, and 60 in 2019.

-October 2019 collaborative trek: BWC/Council on Aging's "Go4Life Stroll" at the one-mile River to Range Loop Trail.

Mariann stated the BWC looks forward to continuing support of its initiatives by the Select Board and Town Manager, Mike Sullivan. She also noted that BWC:

-would welcome ideas from the Select Board

- values the excellent support from Anne Capra and the SH Conservation Commission through mapping initiatives and trail development & maintenance
- helps implement initiatives to support SH recreation, health and economy
- would encourage Select Board assistance to create a public brochure of SH trail maps
- is aware that residents and neighboring communities need more information about South Hadley
- encourages the revitalization of the SH Chamber of Commerce

Additional Comments from Committee Members:

- health of our young people/concern about opioid use
- walkability to food markets/Valley Share bikes not conducive for marketing
- concern about traffic patterns at BigY gas station/Newton and Lyman area
- pedestrian problems/lighting needs as Rt. 116/College Street passes MHC campus

Question from Chris Geraghty:

- Are there good models for recreational opportunities?

Reply by BWC members:

- Good examples include Northampton and the initiatives of Wayne Feiden, and Sunderland's "Green Way"
- Mariann and other committee members have attended MA Trail conferences etc.
- BWC uses Town website to announce its Treks and promote other news re: walking and biking
- South Hadley: Town's Master Plan currently has no network or holistic approach to recreation
- Promotion of Buttery Brook is by the Recreation Committee
- The Ledges not used fully for other passive recreational purposes other than golf

Mariann thanked Chris Geraghty for coming and spending an hour of time with the Committee

### **Business Meeting continued:**

A quorum being achieved, the Chair noted that Huguette Supinski's name was not listed as absent in the May 15, 2019 minutes. A motion was made by Margaret Jodoin, and seconded by Larry Dubois to accept the minutes of May 15, 2019 as corrected. The motion passed unanimously.

### **Treks:**

September 22nd Site: MHC campus. Work in progress. Environmental focus. Cathy Corson, Head of MHC Miller-Worley Center has been contacted.

October 20th "Go4Life Stroll" Site: River to Range Loop Trail: Work in Progress

- wing raptor talk is not booked yet; may be problematic for availability.
- flora and fauna talk is needed.
- Leo LaBonte said yes to repeat his CT River history talk
- MHC has been contacted for parking in the area of its Boat House
- Leslie Hennessey, Senior Center Director, will contact Tai Chi or yoga person.
- Lucia Foley will do a flyer.
- SH Lions will not be contacted, due to their inability to participate last year.
- Sarah Tetrault's eighth grade Middle School class will be contacted.
- SH young people with bikes will be encouraged to participate.
- Larry suggested asking the SHHS Track Team to escort seniors during the "Go4Life Stroll".

Marilyn volunteered to contact a faculty member in the Ornithology or Botany Depts., or the Director of the Arboretum at MHC for a speaker on trail flora and fauna for the "Go4Life Stroll".

The Committee voiced continuing interest in involving SH students in BWC initiatives such as the "Go4Life Stroll", a scavenger hunt at Black-Stevens site adjacent to SHHS, and future projects and treks at Leaping Well Nature Trail near the Mosier and Middle Schools.

Marilyn suggested that Berkshire Music School might be a possible site for a future trek.

**Town and Community Updates & Events:**

In its role as the primary trail steward, a request was made for the BWC to help at the River to Range Loop Trail on several dates. June 9<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup>: Nancy, Margaret and Marilyn volunteered to help. The next work day will be June 21<sup>st</sup>, 8-10 A.M. Anne Capra is forming a Volunteer Conservation Corps. BWC members should email her if interested in being contacted. Volunteer jobs include weed pulling, trimming plantings, spreading mulch, etc.

Mariann will ask Anne Capra, ConCom, for an update on paving and parking area signage at Leaping Well Nature Trail.

Mariann announced that MassDOT has asked for public comments for 10 days concerning its repaving and street improvement project on Rt. 116. A public hearing was held just before the BWC meeting which several BWC members attended.

Regarding the development of the Newton-Lyman Smart Growth District, based on the June 19, 2019 Planning Board meeting, a public meeting hosted by the three developers and the architects of the proposed housing on this site will be held from 6-8 PM at the SH Library on June 26, 2019.

**New & Other Business:**

Mariann announced that a Lyme Disease identification service is available through UMASS using a dead or alive tick that has bitten someone.

The next meeting of the BWC will be held on July 17, 2019 at 7 P.M. Margaret Jodoin will serve as clerk.

There being no further business, Margaret moved that the meeting be adjourned. Larry seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously and the Chair adjourned the meeting at 8:45 P.M.

*Respectfully submitted by Marilyn Gass*