

## FNRT Minutes, August 16, 2017

*Condensed from draft minutes*

**Board Attendees:** Alex Bernhard, Steve Darling, Tom Frantz, George Heaton, Craig Heim, Lindy Heim, Charles Martin, Myra Mayman, Chris Norris, Jack Shields, Peter Southworth, Nita Tomaszewski

**Guests:** Jake Clausen, Becky Hiller, Ed Hiller, Patricia Rasche, Steve Rasche, Prescott Towle

**Special Guest Presentation:** Larry Chase (Andover)

Co-Presidents Lindy Heim and Myra Mayman called the meeting to order at 7 P.M.; adjourned at 8:58.

**Special Presentation:**

As preamble to the meeting, Larry Chase of Andover offered a presentation of the current status and future plans for the Old Town Hall in Andover.

The Old Town Hall has recently been purchased by a group of seven local residents, with the intention of turning its 4000 square feet of usable space into a community center housing multiple and various activities. The purchasers have formed an LLC, with 501(c)(3) status (i.e., non-profit, with tax deductibility).

The current moment is one of planning and soliciting community input about future uses. "Plan New Hampshire" has been enlisted for support, and the planning process is being publicized. Ideas ranging from a senior center, to youth programs, to a model railroad have been suggested.

Given the proximity of the Trail – which passes directly behind the Old Town Hall – the ideas of Trail users are especially welcome. We note the overlap of Board Membership and Old Town Hall owners in the person of Steve Darling, who is both.

**Reports and Routine Business:**

The Minutes of the July meeting were approved without amendment.

The Treasurer's Report, submitted by Steve Darling, was unanimously approved.

The Report showed a gratifying increase in contributions – approximately \$2000 – within the last month, resulting from bike raffle sales, the Thursday's Child dinner, and the Wilmot Chicken Supper. The enthusiasm of Board members and contributors to these efforts is much appreciated.

A renewal of the Trail insurance policy has been received. It is being reviewed in advance of receiving a bill.

Technology Report – Cathy Liske has recently become the new "technology person" for the FNRT-MC web site. She will make changes as needed and provide monthly technology reports to the board. Additionally, she is managing the sponsor page on our Web site, taking care of current sponsors and soliciting new advertisers on our "Lodging and Services near the rail trail" page.

By-Laws Change in the Definition of a Quorum

The definition of a quorum for voting at Board meetings – originally,

more than half of the Board (i.e. 7, given the current 12-person Board) – was brought up for re-consideration in the light of past small Board meetings where a quorum might have been lacking.

After discussion of various alternatives, it was agreed to fix the number of Board Members necessary for a quorum at 5.

Additional discussion focused on the issue of "electronic voting" on Board decisions – i.e. via e-mail, phone, or other means of communication. This will be taken up more fully in the future.

**Current Controversies and Trail Improvement Projects:**

Trail Use Controversy: ATVs. Both current practice and Federal law (for Federally-funded trails meant for non-motorized transportation) prohibit the use of ATVs on trails. In a report from Alex Bernhard, the Board learned of an initiative from the towns of Claremont and Haverhill to change this – in particular, to amend Federal law so as to allow ATV use. Representatives of these towns petitioned the entire New Hampshire Congressional delegation in May, and Senator Shaheen has introduced language in a committee report, suggesting that the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) take economic impact into account when ruling on requests for waivers from the current ATV prohibition.

The Board quickly realized that the use of ATVs on rail-trails – throughout the state and the nation – would seriously harm the physical condition of the trails, and would undoubtedly negatively impact – or even, effectively exclude – many of the current uses. The Board thus encouraged Alex Bernhard to go forward with action to combat the ATV proposals, at various levels: among New Hampshire Senators and Congressmen, with the State DOT, with the FHWA, and at the local level. In particular, the Board approved presentation of a resolution opposing ATV use to the Andover Board of Selectmen on August 21, 2017.

In addition, action on this matter is germinating in the New Hampshire Rail Trail Coalition, and in the national Rails-to-Trails organization.

[N.B. Subsequent to the meeting, and prior to this writing, the Andover Board of Selectmen unanimously approved such a resolution.]

Signage. Ed Hiller continues his work on interpretive signs, and presented current decision-issues to the Board, with the contribution of Becky Hiller.

One consensus emerged for a single sign-type – based on the mock-up brought by Ed – to serve two purposes: an interpretive device for the mileposts; and a "You Are Here" orientation (with particularity for each location). It was further agreed that a size of approximately 18" x 25" would be appropriate; and that colorfast "highway engineering signs" should be used. While the location

See Trail on page 22



The 120th reunion of the Hersey Family was held at the old Hersey Farm in East Andover.

## The Hersey Family Celebrates Their 120th Reunion

Rita Norander

Despite a drizzly day, everyone's spirits were not dampened as they gathered for the 120th Hersey Family Reunion at the Hersey Farm in East Andover, New Hampshire. The farm was the home for over 50 years of Guy & Nannie Hersey, and this year's reunion was hosted by their great granddaughter Lori Hersey and her family. The reunion members are descendants of Gilman & Hannah Hersey who were married in 1826 and settled in Hill. The first reunion was started by their children in 1898, and was held at the "Old Home Place" in Hill. The reunion was begun as a way for the family to stay in touch and to remember their heritage.

A big tent, along with 3 pop up tents, were set up in the south field, close to the open barn door, and they provided protection from the occasional light rain, for the 65 members and 2 guests who had gathered. People arrived from several New England states, as well as from the states of California and Washington. The traditional pot luck dinner was eaten under the tents, as everyone

visited and caught up on family news. Ice cream cones were enjoyed later in the day.

Special thanks was given to Lori Hersey & her family for having us, and to Jim and Jerry Hersey for completing the haying around the house and barn in spite of our showery summer. A group picture was taken in front of the main barn by Matthew Hersey.

The adults enjoyed walking through the house and exploring the barns, while the children had fun running and playing in the open space that the farm provided. The dunk tank was a popular gathering spot, as people lined up in hopes of dunking the brave volunteers who took turns sitting in the hot seat! It was a fun activity to watch even if one didn't participate! The day ended with a slightly damp scavenger hunt, but as one person commented: "The kids don't even realize it is raining!" Unfortunately, Jerry's planned hay ride had to take a rain check!!

Next year's reunion will once again be held at the home of Helen Duchesne on Newfound Lake on August 4, 2018.



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