

## Coach House to Host Benefit for Friends of Northern Rail Trail

### Thursday's Child Dinner on April 5

#### Press release

Don't miss the next Friends of the Northern Rail Trail-Merrimack County (FNRT-MC) event coming up in April. It's twelfth annual Thursday's Child fundraising dinner scheduled one night only, Thursday, April 5 at The Coach House Restaurant at the New London Inn in New London, N.H.

The Coach House will offer the restaurant's regular menu, which is varied and outstanding, in both its tavern and dining room. There is no set time or set menu. You decide when you want to have dinner and with whom. Just make early reservations, sit back and enjoy.

"The atmosphere promises to be festive as the dinner crowd tends to be made up of exuberant trail supporters," observes Lindy Heim of Wilmot, FNRT-MC co-president. Coach House has generously continued a tradition of allowing

a portion of the night's profit to benefit local non-profits—in this case, FNRT-MC, which will use this year's proceeds for trail maintenance and amenities.

Reservations can be made by calling the New London Inn at 603-526-2791. Dinner may be enjoyed as early as 5 PM in the Tavern (reservations not necessary) or 5:30 PM in the main dining room.

Besides participating in the April 5th dinner, which is the FNRT-MC's sole annual fundraising dinner event, another way to help the rail trail effort is to become a member, Heim points out. "In return for your membership dues, you'll get email updates on the rail trail, FNRT-MC meetings, and events." Membership categories start at \$15 and can be processed securely online.

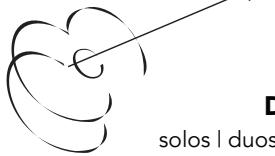
For more information about past and future rail trail activities, printable trail maps, membership and giving opportunities go to [www.fnrt.org](http://www.fnrt.org) or visit us on Facebook.



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## Friends of Northern Rail Trail March Meeting Notes

**March 21, 2018**

#### Draft Minutes of Meeting

Meeting held at the Andover Hub, Andover.

**Board Attendees:** Alex Bernhard, Steve Darling, George Heaton, Myra Mayman, Jack Shields

**Welcome Guests:** Patrice and Steve Rasche (Canterbury); Doreen and John Brandolini (Sunapee); Ed Weaver (Wilmot)

#### Business Matters:

1. Minutes of October and November 2017 meetings, accepted unanimously.

2. Treasurer's Report, accepted unanimously. Two major aspects were presented, discussed and approved: the current financial situation; and a budget for 2018. In addition, a new contribution pathway—Amazon Smile—was presented. (See below.)

The budgeting process adopted by FNRT-MC is based on yearly projections of projects of various types, all undertaken for the maintenance and improvement of the Trail. For specific line-items—repairs, technology, mowing, insurance, etc.—the budget gives spending authority to the officer in charge of the project. If as work progresses, the project appears to exceed the budgeted amount, the officer in charge then approaches the Board for new authority.

With approximately \$30,000 in current assets, and income projections of approximately \$27,000 for 2018, the Board concluded—consistent with our mission to maintain and improve the Trail—that a substantial portion of these funds should be expended; and reserve amount also maintained. Specific plans for these expenditures are discussed below.

3. Technology report. The website continues to be kept current through the efforts of Volunteer Manager Cathy Liske. Contacts with new potential sponsors are being pursued.

As a "To-Do" item, Cathe will be asked to work with Heather Turner to make the PayPal contribution option easier and more user-friendly.

In addition, minutes of Board will be posted currently to the website.

#### Trail Maintenance Projects:

1. Maintenance. Board member

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Chris Norris continues oversight of the always-necessary maintenance work to keep the Trail in good shape. Currently, several bridges require new railings and/or surface work; approximately 50 culverts need to be assessed for cleaning; and ditching and surfacing may be needed at various sites. Chris is now in the process of inventorying such projects and making arrangements with contractors to accomplish them.

In order to move forward as quickly and smoothly as possible, the Board authorized an overall expenditure of up to \$35,000 to be so used. Chris will target these funds to projects with highest priority, and make contractual arrangements. The Board much appreciates these efforts—which are vital to the Trail—and looks forward to a report on progress.

Alex Bernhard will convey the Board's decision and discuss plans further with Chris Norris. ("To-Do")

2. Mowing. With last year's experience in mind, a "To-Do" for Peter Southworth is to solicit mowing bids for 2018, within the dollar limitation specified in the budget.

Jack Shields brought up the need to clear leaf build-up from Trail surfaces, and the use of special equipment for this purpose. Jack will confer further on this with Peter. ("To-Do")

George Heaton brought up the issue of encroaching overgrowth on portions of the Trail. Trailmasters will be alerted to this as part of their perennial clearing/cleaning efforts. ("To Do")

#### Reports on Regional Developments:

1. Rail Trail Connection to Concord. Having attended a large February 12 meeting in Concord on this issue, Jack Shields reported on the continuing efforts to obtain an approximately 6-mile stretch of rail right-of-way now owned by PanAm for an extension of the Northern Rail Trail, that now ends in Boscawen, into the center of Concord. These efforts involve several private and governmental organizations, and while still in the formative stage, they present promising avenues.

The Board agreed that Jack should be our representative in this continuing effort, and that we would offer counsel and assistance based on our experience with funding, construction and maintenance of the Trail.

2. Canaan Flood Mitigation. Patrice and Steve Rasche reported on a meeting at NH DOT in Concord to address perennial spring flooding in Canaan Town center. Since the elevated rail bed of the Trail appears to contribute to flooding propensity (as it has since construction in the mid-19th century), the possible curatives of lowering the Trail, and/or constructing culverts were discussed. Representatives from the NH Bureau of Rail and Transit and the NH Division of Historical Resources raised concerns about any such changes. Funding possibilities from the Federal Emergency See Trail on page 32