



*Town of Seymour*  
**Beautification Commission (SBC)**  
Thursday, February 19, 2026 7:00 PM

**Regular Meeting Minutes**

Christopher Willis Conference Room  
20 Pine Street 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Seymour, CT 06483

**Members Present:** Stuart Brannen; Nancy Chuca; Jeff Baryla  
**Others:** John McKenzie, Seymour Land Use Department Liaison  
**Members Absent:** Zachary Succow; JoElle Anderson

**1. Call to Order**

*Chairman Stuart Brannen called the meeting to order at 7:03 PM  
All present stood, saluted the flag, and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.*

**2. Roll Call**

*A quorum was established.*

**3. Public Comment**

*None present. The commission also received no written request for comment.*

**4. Approval of Meeting Minutes**

**A. January 15, 2025**

*Motion by N. Chuca to approve the Oct 16, 2025 regular meeting minutes, as presented. Seconded by S. Brannen. There was no discussion. Motion carried 3-0.*

**5. Reports & Correspondence**

**A. Monthly Trail Manager's Report**

*All commissioners reviewed the report. Baryla noted one amendment and correction, removing the previously stated March 14 event. There were no questions or comments.*

**B. Emails/Letters to Commission**

*The commission had received no emails of letters of correspondence.*

**6. Old Business**

**A. Update on Collaboration with Seymour Land Trust**

*The "Field, Forest, and Stream" event this Saturday Feb 21 at 11 AM was moved from the Henry Hamel Environmental Building to the Seymour Library. Allie Miller from the Land Trust helped convert the activity to indoor-only by creating a slide presentation. The next educational event will take place at the Land Trust on Saturday March 28 at 11 AM. There will be no joint event April so the board can focus on its annual Earth Day Hike instead.*

**B. Discussion and possible Action on 2026 To-Do List**

All commissioners reviewed the 2026 To-Do List [**Attached**] and provided feedback, suggestions, and recommendations. Corrections were made and submitted in real-time. *Motion by N. Chucta to accept the 2026 Seymour Trails To-Do List as presented. Seconded by S. Brannen.* There was no further discussion. *Motion carried 3-0.*

**7. New Business**

**A. Approval of Upcoming Event Schedule**

The board discussed the following proposed upcoming events:

Sat Feb 28 at KMF	Sat Mar 7 at PPG		Sat Mar 21 CLCC Conf.
Sat Mar 28 at SLT	Sat Apr 4 at PPG	Sat Apr 11 at KMF	Sat Apr 18 at LL
Sat Apr 25 LL Hike	Sat May 2 PPG	Sat May 9 KMF	Sat May 16 GP

*Motion by J. Baryla to approve the Upcoming Event Schedule as presented.*

*Seconded by N. Chucta.* There was no further discussion. *Motion carried 3-0.*

Chairman Brannen suggested the board approve and finalize the 2026 Earth Day Hike.

*Motion by J. Baryla to add to the agenda "Approval of Annual Earth Day Hike".*

*Seconded by S. Brannen.* There was no discussion. *Motion carried 3-0.*

**8. Approval of Annual Earth Day Hike**

*Motion by J. Baryla to approve hosting the Annual Earth Day Hike at Little Laurel*

*Lime Ridge Park on Saturday April 25 beginning at 9:00 AM. Seconded by S. Brannen.*

There was no further discussion. *Motion carried 3-0.*

**9. Adjournment**

*Motion by N. Chucta. Seconded by S. Brannen.*

*All in favor (3-0). The meeting adjourned at 7:54 PM*

Respectfully Submitted,

*Jeff Baryla*

Secretary/Trail Manager

***Seymour Beautification Commission will next meet on Thurs Mar 19 at 7:00 PM.***

## Attachment – 2026 Seymour Trails To-Do List

### Trail Status & General Maintenance (short-term)

- Boundary markers to be posted at all properties
- Universal signage for all properties. Ask Land Trust what future plans are for their parcels.

### Keith Mitchell Forest (188 & 34. Eagle Landing, Falls Trail, Great Hill Reservoir)

- Continue action plan for controlling invasive plants and replacing them with natives
- Remove large patch of border privet, and reroute trail in this area
- First cleanup of adjacent Land Trust parcel [April 11, 2026]
- Improvements to Falls Trail, connection to Eager Beaver Trail (Rockhouse/Oxford)
- Fix drainage areas highlighted in ERT summary report
- Target barberry patch specified in ERT summary report
- Second cleanup of adjacent Land Trust parcel [July 11, 2026?]
- Target autumn olive patch specified in ERT summary report
- Third/Final cleanup of adjacent Land Trust parcel [Oct 3, 2026?]

### Little Laurel (36 Tibbets Rd. Perimeter Loop, Cave Trail, and paper street)

- Per CT DEEP, close all access points but one to motorized vehicles (gates, boulders, etc.)
- Per CT DEEP, notify nearby residents of ATV laws and ask them to report any violators
- Install trail cams and monitor/post illegal activity (suggested by Shelton Trails Committee)
- Decommission all unsanctioned and illegal trails, especially near vernal pools
- Fix/Address drainage issues; Restore habitat between the two large vernal pools
- Finalize and re-blaze entire perimeter loop trail using one standard color
- Promote only official trails (produce map & upload to NVCOG/CTtrailfinder.com)

### Fountain Lake North (131 Davis Rd i.e., North Loop Trail)

- Restore spur trail/trailhead (created by Boy Scouts circa 2015, but neglected & overgrown)
- Look into native shrubs that can be hedge/privacy rows. Acquire and plant in key areas.

### Fountain Lake South (899 Fountain Lake Rd i.e. South Loop, Lemay's Pond)

- Meet with Cities of Derby & Ansonia to discuss ATVs (perhaps joint citizens' focus group?)

### Paramount Garden (21/22 Paramount Drive)

- Continue mapping/identifying invasive plants on property. Create a list of native alternatives
- Meet with Scouts and Culture & Arts Commission to share ideas & proposals [mid-2026]
- Preliminary design and layout of native/pollinator garden [late 2026 into early 2027]

### Gary Park (18 Osprey)

- Meet with Scouts to discuss preferred native plants & interpretive trail suggestions
- Survey and flag narrow connection to Osprey (part of Open Space & Greenways Plan)
- Preliminary design and layout of interpretive trail

### Seymour Dog Park (10 Moss/1 Colony)

- Invasive plant management around parking area and pond. Schedule work parties.
- Conduct site visit and come up with potential locations and designs for Rainbow Bridge.

## Chainsaw Work

**Volunteers are NOT to perform cutting or operating of chainsaws!**

**Frank Gabianelli at DPW must be notified prior to any work.**

### **Keith Mitchell Forest**

- Minor blowdowns on Falls Trail leftover from the Aug 2024 storm and flood event
- Minor blowdowns along old Woods Road in newly acquired parcel (proposed new trail)

### **Little Laurel**

- OK

### **Fountain Lake North**

- OK

### **Fountain Lake South**

- Low-hanging leaners on South Loop Trail (wait for City of Derby)
- Clear any blowdowns that impede ADA access on Lake Loop Trail

### **Paramount Garden (21/22 Paramount Drive)**

- A few blowdowns (not a major priority)
- Girdle and/or fell all Norway Maples (long term plan, very low priority)

### **Gary Park (18 Osprey)**

- OK

### **Dog Park (10 Moss/1 Colony)**

- OK

### **Rolling Hills (25 Maple Ridge)**

- OK

## 2026 Seasonal Checklist

### Winter (December thru February):

- Brush overgrowth - can do when frozen
  - Little Laurel along paper road
  - Keith Mitchell around parking area and along trail
  - Keith Mitchell focus areas outlined in final ERT summary
  - Japanese Barberry areas (Paramount, Keith Mitchell, Rolling Hills, etc.)
- Drainage – when not frozen
  - Problem wet spots
  - Unclog berms, culverts, and/or pipes
  - Inventory/Report where more drainage is needed
- Bridge & Kiosk repairs – weather dependent

### Spring (March thru May):

- Prepare for annual Earth Day hike [April 25, 2026]
- Inspect structures and blazes
- Observe wet areas after rainfall
- Clean out drainage berms/ditches
- Install new drainage pipes/culverts wherever needed
- Begin brush cutting
- Any projects that could use a lot of volunteers (SHS students, Scouts, retirees, etc.)

### Summer (June thru August):

- Plan a new annual summer event [July 25, 2026?]
- Overgrowth at problem spots
  - Little Laurel (along paper street, and past the pitch pines CCW)
  - Keith Mitchell (border privet, Jap. Barberry, Autumn Olive, Burning Bush)
  - Paramount (Jap. Barberry, Burning Bush, Pachysandra, Autumn Olive, Bittersweet)
  - Fountain Lake North (walk loop and address anything we spot)
  - Gary Park (walk property, check & clear the Osprey spur, post boundary)

### Fall (September thru November):

- Prepare for annual Sunset hike [Oct 24, 2026?]
- Clear drains/berms
- Remove fallen leaves from slippery areas
- Leaf capture bins for making soil/fill?
- Clip back growth
- Inventory & Report downed trees
- Observe how hikers use trail
- Report volunteer time
- Submit annual Trail Report

# Kiosks & Signage

## Kiosks Needed

- Little Laurel (Tibbets Road trailhead)
- Fountain Lake South (replace old 24" x 24" map board signage, near fishing dock)
- Keith Mitchell, Eagle Landing
- Keith Mitchell, Reservoir (after new trail connection and parking is completed)
- Gary Park? (depending on when trail is completed)
- Davis Road? (depending on when trail is completed)

## Trail Signage

- Wayfinding Signs
  - Little Laurel (e.g., This Way to Overlook, 0.75 Miles)
  - Keith Mitchell (e.g., 1.0 Mile to Oxford Town Line)
- Interpretive/Educational Signage
  - Gary Park (e.g., This is a Red Oak tree, QR codes to information, etc.)
  - Fountain Lake (old fashioned road intersection sign "Seymour/Ansonia/Derby")
  - Little Laurel (lime kiln, QR code to history, etc.)

## Other

- Barriers/Guardrails
  - Little Laurel (Tibbets, High Ridge, fence w/ locking gate at Partridge)
  - Keith Mitchell (along top of wall facing Fourmile Brook)
  - North Benham (public ROW, block vehicles from entering)
  - Paramount (bookend the entrance to property and public ROW)
- Bog Bridges
  - Little Laurel (large wet area just past lime kiln)
  - Gary Park (crossing one seasonally wet area to Osprey trailhead)
  - Keith Mitchell (might need one or two connecting to Eager Beaver)
  - Paramount (pending design and completion of garden)
  - Rolling Hills (way down the line, possibly 2027/2028)
- Foot Bridges
  - Spruce Brook (North Benham/Benham public ROW)
  - Fourmile Brook (one crossing in KMF, where Stuart and Jeff surveyed)
  - Fountain Lake North (across the wide un-named stream)
- Benches
  - Gary Park (pending completion of trail)
  - Little Laurel (possibly at the overlook)?
  - Other?

# Future Trail Improvement Projects

## Trail Closures, Reroutes & Major Maintenance (long-term)

### Keith Mitchell Forest

- Extend Falls Trail and connect to Eager Beaver Trail (Oxford)
- Spur trail from reservoir down across Fourmile Brook (through old RWA property)
- Trail option to bring visitors to/from Eagle Landing and the Reservoir

### Little Laurel

- Close all access points to motorized vehicles (gates, boulders, fencing, bollards, etc.)
- Decommission old Red Trail (between Tibbetts and Partridge) [must close access first]
- Decommission old Blue Trail (between old Red Trail & vernal pools) [must close access first]
- Restore large vernal pool breach (contact DEEP) [must close old trails first]
- Bring perimeter trail inland/uphill from stream (away from former Ryan Farm border)
- Close and decommission unsanctioned Orange trail(s)
- Re-blaze entire perimeter loop trail using only one standard color (to be determined)
- Promote full perimeter loop as the official trail (send to NVCOG/CTtrailfinder.com)
- Clear North Benham/Benham public ROW, with footbridge across Spruce Brook
- Clear Middle Benham public ROW to Red Clover Farm, footbridge across Great Hill Brook

### Fountain Lake North

- Clear and re-establish old spur and trailhead made by Scouts, circa 2013-2015
- Check and re-apply blazes (light blue paint) where needed
- Bridges on all unnamed stream crossings (1 large, 2 small)
- Kiosk on Davis Road, once the trail is re-established (Scout project?)

### Fountain Lake South

- Meet with Cities of Derby & Ansonia to discuss ATVs (a joint citizens' focus group?)

### Paramount Garden

- Preliminary design and layout of native/pollinator garden
- Meet with Scouts to share ideas & proposals

### Gary Park

- Meet with Scouts to discuss native plants & interpretive trail
- Survey, flag, and restore spur trail to Osprey (part of Open Space & Greenways Plan)
- Preliminary design and layout of interpretive trail

### Rolling Hills

- Restore part of old Land Trust trail (based on map published in old Trail Guide)
- Signage along golf course (Bethany) to mark Boundary and discourage littering/dumping
- Bogwalks around wetlands OR avoid them entirely?
- New trail loop along paper streets AND/OR through Land Trust property in Beacon Falls?