

grows a mile longer thanks to Portsmouth

Zane Wolfgang Newport Daily News

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Portsmouth's decision to approve a 10-year easement for a trail along the edge of the historic Glen Farm Stables property is going to add a full mile to the Sakonnet Greenway Trail, which at 10 miles is already the longest contiguous nature trail on Aquidneck Island.

The Town Council unanimously approved the proposal by Aquidneck Land Trust to build a 0.6-mile trail through the historic Glen Farm property connecting the Sakonnet Greenway's northern trailhead near the polo field on Linden Lane in Portsmouth to the newly opened Glen Pasture trail, a 0.4-mile loop around the horse paddocks on Glen Farm Road across from Glen Park.

The ALT's proposal highlighted the popularity of the Sakonnet Greenway Trails among Portsmouth and Aquidneck Island residents, and also noted the additional mile of trails in Portsmouth would connect trail users to Glen Park, pointing out that once the connector trail is open, "a resident could walk off-road from Newport Vineyards all the way to Glen Manor House."

Aquidneck Land Trust trails see up to 60,000 visitors every year

The ALT has used infrared counters to track trail usage since March 2020 and conservatively estimates the trail network, which is free to the public and open year-round from dawn till dusk, sees approximately 50,000-60,000 trail visitors per year on its 13 miles of trails (Sakonnet Greenway Trail, the Gewirz Trail at Spruce Acres, Oakland Forest, Little Creek Preserve and Town Pond).

"The Glen Pasture Loop trail adds to an already fabulous trail system available to Aquidneck Islanders through Aquidneck Land Trust," said Brian Gallagher, executive director of Aquidneck Land Trust. "The 0.4-mile loop around the horse paddocks has a scenic view of historic Glen Farm Stables, allowing the community to connect not only with the land, but the history surrounding it."

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Lean Kossak, the marketing and engagement director at Aquidneck Land Trust, explained to The Daily News the loop trail on Glen Farm Road is now open, but the connector trail needs some time, saying, “We’re hoping in the fall it will be open. We need to do some updates on it.”

She said there would be a ribbon-cutting for the Glen Pasture Loop Trail with Town Council members and ALT donors on June 29 at 5:30 p.m., and key next steps after receiving Town Council approval to fully connect the Glen Pasture loop to the Sakonnet Greenway are to draft the easement with the town solicitor and come back to the council, do a survey of the land and build a bridge for the connector trail to cross the Mintwater Brook.

New trails come at no cost to the town of Portsmouth

Just before the unanimous vote to approve, Town Council President Kevin Aguiar stated, “I think this is a win-win for the town. It’s a great opportunity for us to partner with the land trust and extend our trail network, and the best part of this is that it’s not costing the town anything.”

Green energy: Portsmouth residents are voicing their opposition to windfarm cables. Here's why.

The ALT proposal for the connector trail across town property specified, “Any trail improvements would be financed via grants and donations from local foundations, businesses and individuals at no cost to the town.”

It also specified maintenance, including trail mowing, would not be the responsibility of the town and would be completed by ALT via staff or contractor, and stated other than time spent on review of the easement and the project overall, the town should have no hard costs.