

**Land Stewardship Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**April 20, 2010, 4:00 PM**  
**Acton Town Hall**

Present: Bettina Abe, Tom Arnold, Joan Cirillo, Philip Keyes, Peggy Liversidge (minute-taker), Nan Towle Millett, Rich Rhode, Heidi Sikina, Jim Snyder-Grant, Tom Tidman

Meeting minutes: The March minutes were approved.

Tick information signs: Tom A. brought to the meeting some plastic-laminated tick-information signs that he obtained from the Town's Board of Health office. The signs should be put on parcel kiosks. Jim stated that he will bring some Tick Twister removal devices to next month's meeting and that he will try to find some information about ticks and Lyme disease to put on our website.

Events calendar: Tom A. brought a listing of the current ideas presently proposed for this year's events. The first events are to be a wildflower walk that Nan has agreed to lead (probably around May 20, though the exact date has yet to be set) and a bird inventory that it is hoped Andy Magee will lead, also in May; Tom A. will contact Andy about this.

One date to note is June 26, when there will be a volunteer appreciation party. It was agreed that this will be held at Morrison Farm and that it will also serve as a time to recognize the contributions to the committee of Rich Rhode, who will be moving away from Acton at some point in the coming months.

There was some discussion of the idea of having a day, perhaps in August, that would focus on dog-walking on conservation lands. Joan suggested inviting Sally Eldred, owner of Acton Critter Sitters, to perhaps offer some tips to dog owners.

The photo contest for pictures taken on Acton conservation lands has already been advertised with a notice in the *Beacon*. November 1 is the submission deadline, photos will be judged by Tom T. and Philip, and the winning pictures will be displayed online.

In addition to the above, the events listing presently includes garlic mustard picking (with recipes) during May, a lecture for the fall that Philip has agreed to organize (one possible topic is the coyote-wolf hybrid known as the coywolf), and a walk by Tom T., perhaps in December.

Advertising possibilities mentioned were the volunteer email list, other email lists of like-minded groups, our website, the *Beacon*, notices on kiosks, and notices on Acton Community Access TV.

Parcel notes: (1) Jim plans to meet with Andy Gatesman about a problem with water channeling down the *Bulette* access trail.

(2) Rich reported on a wet area along the loop trail at *Camp Acton* that might need a 20- to 30-foot boardwalk and suggested that this be put on the Eagle Scout project list. He also said he would put up a kiosk notice at Camp Acton to advertise the need for a new steward for the property.

(3) Joan noted that the Rt. 27 parking lot at *Great Hill* is muddy and rutted and wondered if it could be improved. Tom T. said he would take a look at it.

(4) Jim reported that, with the help of some teenaged neighbors, he leveled a boardwalk at *Guggins* that was tilting.

(5) Jim reported that Idylwilde Farm is dealing with deer problems by putting up fencing around its fields, and this has recently been done along the end of the field crossed by the trail connecting *Jenks* and *Guggins*. Jim has been in touch with Tom Napoli at the farm about this situation and has received permission to cut a new trail in the wooded area outside the fence, just behind the field. Jim has already flagged a trail and asked Philip to check it before it is cut. Mr. Napoli has also given permission for the new trail to be blazed.

(6) Peggy reported that she and Bettina are going to begin this year's blazing at *Nashoba Brook* and try to get at least the three contiguous properties (*NB-Spring Hill-Camp Acton*) reblazed this season.

(7) Philip stated that he is considering rerouting a short segment of the *Spring Hill* loop trail, near the Briar Hill Road access, to avoid a wet stretch.

(8) Joan reported that she has looked for the two uncovered wells at *Wetherbee* but has been able to find only one (along with an old car and an old stove). As mentioned at last month's meeting, Bob will see that these well holes get covered.

Quail Ridge easement trail: Philip stated that he is uncertain whether the portion of the trail that has been cut is within the trail easement. Jim will check on this.

Request re communication about blowdown removal: Philip requested that those on the committee who use chainsaws let others know when blowdown removal requests have been taken care of.

Trail Through Time: Jim reported that Linda McElroy will be calling a workday soon to cut a trail that Philip has flagged to stone piles and a foundation at Nashoba Brook. Contact her if you would like to help, or watch for an email announcing the time. Jim also asked whether there was any objection to placing new TTT metal blazes along some of our trails; it was unanimously agreed that this is OK.

High School Senior Service Day: Linda McElroy will have a crew working at Wheeler Lane, Laurie Ullmann will be supervising a team putting down wood chips along the access trail at Nagog Hill, beside Hybrid Farm, and Jim will lead a crew pulling garlic mustard, also at Nagog Hill.

LSCom membership categories: Jim summarized the present categories of membership on or involvement in the committee as well as a proposed request to the Board of Selectmen about committee membership categories. Presently, in order to deal with the issue of having a quorum present at monthly meetings, we have 9 full members, who are people who regularly attend meetings and who are sworn in for staggered 3-year terms; the rest of our members are associate members, who do not attend meetings regularly and are sworn in for 1-year terms. However, we now also have several active volunteers, a relatively new category originally intended to designate people who have taken on stewardship roles but do not attend meetings and are neither full nor associate members, although in recent months two of this group (Tom Arnold and Heidi Sikina) have become regular meeting participants. To deal with possible liability issues, however, Jim plans to propose to the BOS that these volunteers be sworn in as associate members.

Jim also announced that Bob Guba has notified him that he would like to become an associate member (although he will continue to serve as construction supervisor). And because Rich Rhode, another of our full members, will be leaving the committee in the near future, there will soon be two full memberships to be filled.

Next meeting: The next meeting will be held at 4:00 PM on Wednesday, May 19.