

Land Stewardship Committee Meeting Minutes
May 19, 2010, 4:00 PM
Acton Town Hall

Present: Bettina Abe, Tom Arnold, Joan Cirillo, Bob Guba, Philip Keyes, Peggy Liversidge (minute-taker), Heidi Sikina, Jim Snyder-Grant, Tom Tidman
Guest: Janet Adachi

Meeting minutes: The April minutes were approved.

Kiosk posters about photo contest: Tom A. reported that Doug Halley will laminate photo contest posters that Philip has offered to create, making them suitable for posting on kiosks.

Our Board of Selectman liaison: Janet Adachi, our new Board of Selectman liaison, attended today's meeting. Her immediate liaison functions will be signing off on and presenting our membership list to the BOS and working with the charter subcommittee to finalize our committee charter.

Committee membership list: Jim presented the proposed committee membership list as of 7/1/10. It consists of a full committee size of 18 members, consisting of 9 regular members and 9 associate members (as such terms are generally described in the Board/Committee Handbook of the Town of Acton, MA, available on the Town's website). The regular members, with 3-year staggered terms, would be: Bettina Abe, Joan Cirillo, and Dave Cochrane (new terms to expire 6/30/); Philip Keyes, Peggy Liversidge, and Nan Towle Millett (current terms ending 6/30/11); and Ann Shubert, Jim Snyder-Grant, and Laurie Ullmann (current terms ending 6/30/12). The associate members, with 1-year terms, would be Tom Arnold, Charlie Carlson, Rick Cushman, Andy Gatesman, Bob Guba, Josh Haines, Maura Herlihy, Elizabeth Hickey, and Heidi Sikina. The appointment of Abe, Cirillo, and Cochrane to their new 3-year regular membership terms, the appointment of Ullmann to fill the vacancy created by the anticipated resignation of Richard Rhode as of 6/30/10, and the appointment of the 9 individuals listed as associate members above to their respective 1-year terms will be presented to the Board of Selectmen for their consideration as of 7/1/10.

Map boxes: Bob reported that a Town resident, Bruce Rachman, who is on our volunteer list and is associated with a local Scout troop, has constructed two map boxes that will be affixed to the Morrison Farm and Pacy Land kiosks.

High school summer volunteer fair: Jim reported that a volunteer fair is coming up on Tuesday, June 8, at which Town groups can arrange to have high schoolers do work for them during the summer.

Meadow group: Jim reported that Terra Friedrichs, together with Maya Spies, recently approached Tom Tidman about setting up a small working group to discuss and study meadow management issues, and Tom referred them to Jim. Jim said he is willing to participate in such a group, which he sees as meeting for a limited time to develop expertise about meadow management issues in order to develop a set of recommendations for Tom. Interested stewards are welcome to contact Jim about being a part of this proposed group. The committee discussed the pros and cons of various ways that this group could be set up. Among other issues, questions were raised as to why a mechanism was being considered that would enable individuals with concerns about issues under the purview of the committee to raise issues and make recommendations privately to LSCOM's chairman and/or the Director of Natural Resources rather than at meetings at which a quorum of LSCOM would be present to hear comments and which were otherwise convened in accordance with Massachusetts Open Meeting laws. It was agreed that we would recommend that the group report their recommendations to this committee, which would then pass them along to Tom and others.

Guidebook reprinting: Jim reported that, with only about 80 guidebooks remaining, it is time to start thinking about the next reprinting. He stated that, because the Town ended up paying for the last printing, all of the money that Nan raised for that purpose is now available for a new edition. However, he also noted that he has learned that all of the money that has been collected from sales of the guidebook has mistakenly been put into the Town's General Fund, so the sum of money available for reprinting has not increased any. Peggy said that she has begun a list of changes that Tom T. will need to make to the maps. Philip suggested that a future meeting be dedicated to the revisions that will be needed. It was agreed that each steward should look at the two entries about their parcel (in the guidebook and on the website) and at their parcel map and bring their comments to that meeting or submit them by email. It was also noted that we will need to locate the high-resolution originals of the maps.

“You Are Here” maps: Bob stated that these signs will need to be weather- and light-resistant and the posts or kiosks will have to be sturdy and said that he does not think they would be good for an Eagle Scout project. It was agreed that Philip will come up with a design for a prototype and use the three-parcel map (NB-SH-CA).

Nagog Hill sign: Joan reported that the sign at the junction of the access trail from the Grassy Pond parking lot with the Nagog Hill loop trail is down and she would like it to be put back up. Bob countered that this sign, which contains a combination of wording and arrows, predates the committee and isn't in line with our policy about signage, so he doesn't think it should be put up again. The suggestion was made to replace the old sign with a post with colored arrows. Jim and Bettina agreed to go to the site and consider how we might handle this.

Volunteer appreciation party: The venue of the Conservation Department's volunteer appreciation party, scheduled for June 26, has been changed from Morrison Farm to the New View Common House.

New Guggins-Jenks connecting trail: Jim reported that this trail has been cut and is ready to be blazed. It was decided that the trail should be blazed red, as has been done with the two connecting trails between Nashoba Brook and Spring Hill. There was also discussion of the MBTA's plans to construct a double track and the possibility that they might decide to restrict passage across the track. It was decided that it might be a good idea to de-emphasize the blazes on either side of the railroad right-of-way by removing the blue blaze visible on the Guggins side of the track and the blue arrow and blaze pointing across the track on the Jenks side.

Wheeler Lane caretaker: Jim reported that Linda McElroy wants to designate a Wheeler Lane resident to keep an eye on the Wheeler Lane TTT site and report on any problems. She has suggested Norma Wu, and this was approved. Jim will contact Norma.

Next meeting: The next meeting will be held at 4:00 PM on Wednesday, June 16.