

Land Stewardship Committee Meeting Minutes
March 20, 2013
Acton Town Hall

R E C E I V E D
JUL 1 2013

TOWN CLERK, ACTON

Regular (voting) members present: Bettina Abe, Peggy Liversidge (minute-taker), Nan Towle Millett, Ann Shubert, Jim Snyder-Grant (chair), Laurie Ullmann

Associate (nonvoting) members present: Bob Guba, Elan Riesman

Nonmembers present: Joe Will

Meeting minutes: The February minutes were approved.

High school senior service day (April 26): Jim reported that he has received permission to send in the forms for this event late because the deadline was before this meeting. He then outlined projects requesting volunteers: Linda McElroy is requesting two or three crews for Wheeler Lane (where Laurie said he plans to help out); Bettina will use one a crew at the Arboretum; and Jim will use one crew to pull garlic mustard at Great Hill. Jim also noted that an Envirothon group will be pulling garlic mustard at Wheeler Lane on April 26. Nan added that she will be leading a group pulling garlic mustard at the Faulkner Homestead. Jim also wondered if we might get help at Guggins moving back the boardwalk segments that were disrupted by hurricane Sandy and said he will check in with Ed Russell (the Boxborough resident whose property borders the affected area) about whether he would be able to help with this.

Mass. Ave. access to Great Hill: Jim reported that he has met with the Town Counsel, Tom Tidman, and Greg Canfield of the Justice Resource Institute. They have settled on the idea of signing a one-year license agreement that will permit trail access to Great Hill from behind 380 Mass. Ave. and that will renew automatically as long as neither party raises any concerns. The agreement will allow us to blaze and advertise the trail, but we will not advertise parking (although we will be able to use the parking lot if necessary for maintenance purposes). Town Counsel is currently drafting this agreement.

Scoutland crossing: Jim has recently spoken with Bill Klauer, one of the Scoutland trustees, about our hope of cutting a trail across this land between Nashoba Brook and the Robbins Mill Pond land. They discussed the possibilities of the Scouts either selling the land to the Town or reaching an agreement with us similar to the Mass. Ave. access to Great Hill (see above). Mr. Klauer, who is open to the idea of our trail crossing the land, will now speak with his fellow trustees about the options. Laurie raised his concern that if they choose to go with a short-term, automatically renewing agreement such as at Great Hill, this may not be satisfactory to the people from the Bay Circuit Trail, which will also make use of this trail. He noted that the Bay Circuit Trail is now working collaboratively with the Appalachian Mountain Club and The Trustees of Reservations and that these groups may be able to help reach a more permanent agreement.

Trail Through Time: Jim has spoken with Linda McElroy about TTT kiosks/information panels and marking of trails to the Indian stone piles. Currently she is planning to install this summer three information panels (similar to the one at the stone chamber): one at the Wheeler Lane homestead foundation; one on the far side of the Wheeler Lane footbridge at the beginning of the old road to Concord, which goes directly up the hill where the trail turns right; and one at the first stone pile site in the Nashoba Brook parcel. In this last area she is also planning a three-sided information kiosk (similar to the pencil factory kiosk), which will be built by an Eagle Scout.

As to marking the trails that will lead to the stone pile sites, she would like to mark their entrances with the three-circle icons that have been used at either end of the stone pile trail at Spring Hill, and to use minimal blazing and/or wooden arrows on the trails themselves. She suggests using a new color for all signage along the Indian site trails, including the circles in the three-circle icons. Orange and a fairly bright green were suggested, and Peggy and Bettina will look for possibilities. It was noted that the three-circle icons at Spring Hill, which are presently yellow, as well as any blazes along that side trail should be repainted using the new color.

Invasives picking dates: Jim reported that this year's invasives work will focus on garlic mustard pulling at the Arboretum, Wheeler Lane, and Camp Acton. Specific sites and dates during April and May are posted at actoninvasives.org. People who are interested can either sign up to work with a group on one of these dates or work independently.

Jim also noted that several Scout troops are planning a one-day project to work on a large infestation at Camp Acton (near the gas line along the access road).

Committee membership for next year: Following up on last month's meeting, Jim reported that Joe Will still wishes to join the committee, possibly as the Wetherbee steward, but at this point he is still considering whether to become the committee's clerk. Also, Ann would like to stay on as steward of Grassy Pond but to switch from regular member to associate member and to step down from her co-clerk role. Finally, Jim asked whether any stewards are interested in changing the parcels they are responsible for.

Parcel updates: Guggins: Jim would like to see more boardwalk work done in the area along the Boxborough border, and Bettina said she would send him the names of several Eagle Scouts who might be interested. Jim also said that he is beginning to think that the many stumps and logs in this area that he initially considered to be interesting are now just looking trashy and he wonders what to do. He also mentioned that the skidders used by Axe Brothers Tree Service after the hurricane left some large gouges that need to be repaired, and he will ask Tom Tidman to speak with them about it.

Jenks: Bob noted that some brush piles have been burned since last month but there are still a few that need to be burned soon. Bettina will check on this. Bettina also noted that the parking lot work is on the engineering and highway department lists.

Nagog Hill: Bettina noted that the McConnon's new license allows them to have up to 32 horses (though they presently have a few less) and that a quarterly census is required.

Nashoba Brook: Laurie stated his long-term goal that the Nashoba Brook trails be accessible from the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail via a bridge built over the broken dam at the pencil factory site. It was noted that a second possible access point to our trails from the rail trail is from near the stone chamber.

Morrison Farm: Joe Will handed out brochures outlining the Morrison Farm Implementation Plan, which will be discussed and voted on at next month's Town Meeting (April 2-3).

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15.

Next meeting: The next meeting will be held at 4 PM on Wednesday, April 17.

Documents that serve as background for these discussions can be found at <http://doc.acton-ma.gov/dsweb/View/Collection-5259>. They are titled:

- 0 - LSC Agenda for March 20, 2013
- 1 - draft LSC minutes for Feb 20, 2013
- 2 - emails re: Senior Service Day
- 6 - website with information on garlic mustard picking dates, and a signup sheet
- 8 - parcel updates