

Land Stewardship Committee Meeting Minutes
May 03, 4:00 P.M.
Acton Town Hall

Present: Linda McElroy (chair), Bettina Abe, Bob Guba, Maura Herlihy, Gigi Hopkins, Peggy Liversidge, Nan Millett, Cyril Murphy, Ann Shubert (minute taker), Tom Tidman

Meeting Minutes: The April minutes were approved with no changes.

Parcel Needs and News: Bob drew up plans for the viewing deck at Robbins Mill Pond. Tom said that Steve Marsh is going to build the deck. Tom has been in touch with the developer of the land, as the land has not officially been transferred to the town. Tom has also filed a wetlands permit. Bob is going to go with Bill Klauer to determine where the trail from Robbins Mill to Nashoba Brook land will cross Boy Scout land.

Bob mowed over the knotweed at the canoe landing. He would like someone to go there every few weeks to keep the knotweed down. There is no knotweed coming up under the tarp. Bettina Abe said her family would be willing to help battle the knotweed. Or Linda could contact Mike Brown to do the job as part of his community service obligation. Linda said a picnic table at the canoe launch site would be nice.

Bob would like all stewards to watch for new short-cut trails being made across switchbacks. Such trails need to be discouraged immediately in order to avoid the resultant erosion.

Gigi has been refreshing blazes at Wetherbee. She would like to get a mapbox near the parking area at Wetherbee. Bob said he would put a map on a board near the parking area.

Bettina said that Acton Arboretum Day will be on May 21 from 10-4. She is sending invitations to Jim and Gigi to help provide information and/or give tours. She wondered if anyone else would like to help. Possibly Gigi and Nan will staff a bluebird table.

Linda said that any inaccuracies noticed on the Town maps should be reported to the Engineering Dept.

Riverway Award: The Friends of the Acton Arboretum sent their congratulations to the Land Stewardship Committee on their being awarded the League of Women Voters Riverway award. Linda said the Friends also need congratulations for the wonderful job they are doing at the Arboretum. Five people have been invited to attend the Award reception. The five will be Linda, Bob, Jim, Laurie, and a yet to be determined person.

Stone Chamber: There was discussion of the accesses to the stone chamber. A sign may be affixed at the trailhead at the Milldam cul-de-sac once the restoration is completed as the site should be obvious to the public. This was part of the agreement when funds were given by the CPC for the restoration.

Linda has received offers of help with the stone chamber project from people outside of the Land Stewardship Committee. Cribbing, to brace up the chamber interior, will be done on May 15 or 16. Dirt may have to be moved at this time. Photos and notes will be taken. Tom mentioned that it is important to keep track of all volunteer hours and the duties performed. Linda will keep track of that information. Volunteers should report to Linda their hours performed and the tasks they did. The 'Beacon' and Sally Heaney at the 'Globe' have/will be notified of the project in order to promote news articles about the project.

Eagle Scout, Wills Hole: Nick Peterson would like to do his Eagle Scout project at Wills Hole. His original plan was to build and place three benches near the educational panels at Wills Hole. The Committee liked the idea of benches being placed at Wills Hole, but preferred that the three benches be placed in various areas of the property rather than all together. It was felt that placing the benches together might encourage parties and vandalism. Linda told Nick that Bob was our engineer and that he should show Bob details of his plans before executing them. Bob and Maura will assist Nick in the positioning of the benches.

Other Eagle Scout Projects: Tom Van Langdon will make an extension of the boardwalk at Nagog Hill Conservation area as his Eagle Scout project. Mike Hatfield will clear the trail to the viewing deck at Robbins Mill Pond as his Eagle Scout project.

Golf Course Follow-Up: Tom called Lou Bettancourt and discussed the dumping of grass and debris onto Nagog Conservation property. Lou assured Tom it would not happen again.

Stone Piles Talk: Bob said better audio amplification is needed for future talks. The origin/meaning of the piles is not known. However, recently the Narragansetts, a local Indian tribe represented by Doug Harris who have always maintained silence about the origin and purpose of the stone structures found in our area, decided to acknowledge that these structures are of sacred importance to their people. This acknowledgement has been made "official" in a document which Peter Waksman referenced at the end of his talk. Unfortunately, the tribe still is pledged to secrecy concerning any details as to their origin or purpose. Nan suggested that there be a page on the stone piles on our website with a link to Peter Waksman's site.

Linda stated that Dave Cochrane will be unable to attend the LSCom meetings, probably until September, due to teaching obligations. However, he still wants to be involved with the Heath Hen to Stow connector and the Morrison Farm project.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:30.

The next meeting will be at 4:00 on June 7.