

**LAND STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE  
MEETING MINUTES  
MARCH 8, 2005, 7:30 P.M.  
ACTON TOWN HALL**

Present: Charlie Carlson, Dave Cochrane, Peggy Liversidge, Jim Snyder-Grant (chair), Laurie Ullmann

\* Approval of previous month's minutes: The February minutes were approved with no changes.

\* Meeting time: This was the first meeting to be held in the evening, an occasional schedule change that Jim wants to try out to give people who have trouble attending in the afternoon a chance to come to some meetings. Unfortunately, a heavy snowstorm was in progress at meeting time, so attendance was unusually low.

\* Continuation of project planning: We continued this process for the two stewards present whose parcels haven't been discussed yet and got an update on the proposed Heath Hen observation platform site:

\* *Pratt's Brook:* Two items on the list concerned the senior park area (providing a ramp and making the picnic table accessible to wheelchairs; fixing up the flower garden area). Charlie indicated that he is willing to clear out the garden area only if there is some indication that Audubon Hill residents are inclined to use the park and maintain a garden. Whether to make the picnic table somewhat more accessible by adding planking to one end would also depend on interest and need, which presently appears to be low. He will talk with a few residents about possible interest. Charlie also added several projects: (1) more chips need to be added to a portion of the blue trail near the railroad tracks, to supplement ones that were put down in the past; this may be a task for this year's senior service day; (2) on the rocky, wet stretch of the yellow trail where Tenney Brook crosses the trail near the end of the Parker Street access trail (where a Scout boardwalk project was previously planned), Charlie would like to move some of the rocks out of the way with a crowbar and fill in the holes with chips to better define the trail and make a better walking surface; (3) since surveying the blueberry barrens with Bob and Tom, he has been working this winter to clear out more brush and small trees; he is inclined to burn the debris rather than haul it to the edge of the woods.

\* *Nashoba Brook:* On the upland portion of the yellow trail, Laurie has identified a rocky, often wet, but level section, approximately 20 to 30 feet long, that he would like to improve in a way that is similar to Charlie's project at Pratt's Brook. He wants to move some of the rocks in order both to better channel the water and to define the edge of the trail, perhaps supplemented with logs, and fill the trail bed with soil removed to make the channel. Laurie thinks three or four energetic students who are willing to get dirty could work on this task on the senior service day. On the lower part of the loop trail, along the brook's edge, he would like to install a 10- to 12-inch pipe through the beaver dam and see how far this will lower the water before deciding what needs to be done with the section of trail that is presently flooded. Jim noted that after speaking with someone from Mass. Fish and Wildlife, his understanding is that the Board of Health must issue a permit to do this based on an assessment that the flooding is a health or safety problem. Jim will speak with Tom about this to determine how to proceed.

\* *Heath Hen:* Jim, Dave, Rich Rhode, and Bill Shubert have looked at the site presently proposed for the observation platform (at the end of the access trail from the right side of Prescott Street, where the trail turns left behind the houses on Overlook), and Jim briefly mentioned that they think it's probably too close to the houses to be a good site.

\* Whitcomb land update: Jim reported that he, Bob, Linda, and Tom have met with Maureen Bodner, who recently spoke with Peter Whitcomb about ACT's offer to buy his property. Mr. Whitcomb has expressed interest in the offer but still wants two nephews to walk the land since he wants their approval of any deal reached. It is hoped that walking the area will convince them that the land is not suitable for development. After Jim stated that Linda is hoping to pull back from being in charge of intertown efforts, including taking a leading role in the Stow connection should this sale go through, Dave agreed to call the Stow people again to fill them in on the status of our efforts and inquire about theirs.

\* Bay Circuit Trail meeting: Jim stated briefly that he attended the meeting about the Bay Circuit Trail on Feb. 17 and that the organization might be a source of funding for some trail-related work; he will provide more details later.

\* ABRHS senior service day: Jim noted that this year's senior service day is scheduled for Friday, April 29, and said that Ann has offered to coordinate with the high school. Charlie's wood chip project at Pratt's Brook and Laurie's rock-moving project at Nashoba Brook can be added to that list.

\* Next meeting: The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 6, at 4:00 p.m.