

**LAND STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING  
NOVEMBER 2, 2005, 4:00 P.M.  
ACTON TOWN HALL**

Present: Joan Cirillo, Bob Guba, Maura Herlihy, Gigi Hopkins, Philip Keyes, Peggy Liversidge (minute-taker), Nan Millett, Cyril Murphy, Rich Rhode, Ann Shubert, Jim Snyder-Grant (chair), Paul Wasserboehr

Minutes approval: The minutes of the October 5 meeting were approved.

Stonemyeade boundary: Nan would like to speak with the owners of the house along Stonemyeade's northern boundary who have been disposing of yard debris on what we believe is conservation land. Jim noted that Tom has spoken with the owners about the matter and that they said they will be having the boundary line surveyed, but this has not yet been done. Jim suggested that Nan check in with Tom before proceeding.

Grassy Pond boardwalk update: Bob reported that \$1,250 has been spent this year on the Grassy Pond boardwalk, with \$1,250 remaining in the Committee's 2006 budget. With help from Laurie, Rich, Dave, Andy, and Jim (as well as the junior high students who hauled out the old wood), a 140-foot section has been completed this season. Before finishing up for the winter Bob and Rich put a short, 3-ft. wide ramp, made from spruce boards with several lath strips to prevent slipping, to bridge the old and new sections (since the new section is higher), and he revised the signs at both ends of the boardwalk about slippery footing.

Kiosk repairs: Bob reported that he has begun repairing the legs of the Heath Hen kiosk (which toppled due to rotten wood) using a splint of pressure-treated wood. He asked stewards to check around the base of older kiosks and report any signs of rot. He found that the kiosk cap also has rotted and needs to be replaced, and some repair is needed to the vandalized map box mounted on the Heath Hen Meadow sign at the bridge to the Mt. Hope Cemetery woods. He also stated that some repairs are needed to the Nagog Hill kiosk map box and that he will make a map box for the entrance to Nagog Hill opposite the Grassy Pond parking lot.

Boardwalk wood for Guggins: Jim reported that the homeowner in Boxborough who allowed access through his yard this past summer for carrying boardwalk sections into Guggins has notified Jim that he has dismantled his deck and is willing to donate the wood for us to construct additional boardwalk sections. In response to Jim's recent e-mail looking for volunteers to saw the planks, Andy responded that he could do some work on the weekends; others are welcome to join him. Bob suggested that if the planks are 2x8s, they could be ripped and nailed together to make 4x4s that could be used for stringers.

Blazing: Jim made the suggestion that one or more additional blazers or blazing crews volunteer to help Cyril, and Cyril suggested the jobs might be divided by paint color. Gigi and Nan said they would work as a team and agreed to take the blue paint; Paul also volunteered and will take red; Cyril will take yellow.

Trails currently needing blazing/reblazing are at Spring Hill (where Cyril is currently working); Town Forest/Wills Hole (where there are some unblazed blue and yellow segments); Bulette (where some blazes need to be added closer to trail junctions); and Jenks (where all the blazes need to be redone, since someone has recently painted over them with brown paint—Gigi will check with Bill Kalms to see if he has any idea who might have done this).

It was also noted that colored arrows are needed in some locations, and it was requested that the information on blazing technique that was distributed in the past be made available again. Bob said he has this.

New parcel needs: *Nagog Hill:* Joan reported that a large entanglement of bittersweet and thorny rose bushes wrapped around dead tree limbs fell onto the yellow trail where it intersects the red trail leading to the exit opposite Grassy Pond. She has done some clearing but would appreciate additional help. Bob said he would take a look at it and at least offer a suggestion about how to proceed. *Heath Hen:* Dave

has indicated that he needs some brushing out to be done. *Spring Hill*: Paul has agreed to do some brushing out for Philip.

Rail trail update: Jim reported that there was a good turnout for the rail trail work day on October 22 and that the portion of trail cleared extended from behind Pedal Power to just short of Concord Road.

Wills Hole/Town Forest gates: It was reported that the chain blocking the Quarry Road entrance to the Town Forest had once again been broken and that it has been repaired again. Jim stated that, however, that according to Tom, heavy metal gates are now available at the cemetery office and that Dave Lee needs to be asked to install them. Bob said that he expects Dave Lee will be able to do this after fall leaf removal has been completed.

Wetherbee wastewater use and agricultural lease: Jim reported that the next public comment meeting about Acton's Comprehensive Water Resources Management Plan draft is on December 8. This draft includes the possibility of using the Wetherbee field as a leachfield for treated wastewater from East Acton. After talking with a pro bono lawyer, the ACT plans to comment on the leachfield aspect of the draft at the December meeting,

Land protection ideas: Jim reminded stewards that if they know of any open space in town that might be acquired for permanent protection, they should contact the Open Space Committee (e-mail: [osc@acton-ma.gov](mailto:osc@acton-ma.gov); Andy Magee is one member). Bob noted that there is a piece of land along Fort Pond Brook, near Jones Field at Martin Street, whose owner hasn't paid taxes for a while, and that it would be a good spot for a canoe launch; he has notified the Open Space Committee of this. Gigi mentioned a meadow abutting the Wetherbee land.

Community farm presentation: Gigi reported that Lynda Simkins gave an excellent talk about the Natick Community Organic Farm on October 26, but turnout was, unfortunately, fairly low (about 25). However, there were at least several attendees who were clearly very enthusiastic about the idea of a community farm in Acton. At today's meeting Gigi distributed trail maps she had just prepared of the Morrison Farm land and mentioned that a walk of the land is scheduled for Saturday morning, November 5, under the auspices of the Morrison Farm Reuse Committee.

Geocaching: Relative to the recent e-mail request from a Chelmsford resident about using Acton conservation land for geocaching, Jim reported that Philip has found considerable information from municipalities about this activity and suggested that someone volunteer to read through and summarize it. No one volunteered, so Jim said he thought he might be able to find someone off the committee who is potentially interested in the activity and would be willing to do some reading about it.

Update on CPA invasives proposal: Jim reported that Bill Brumback, the NEWFS conservation director and an Acton resident, had wanted to submit a proposal to use CPA funds for targeted invasives removal, but it turns out that it is too late for this year's cycle. Jim observed, however, that the real problem in moving forward with invasives projects is public interest and participation more than a lack of funds.

Next meeting: The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 7, at 4:00.