

**LAND STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
JUNE 4, 2003, 4:00 P.M.
ACTON TOWN HALL**

Present: Bob Guba, Gigi Hopkins, Peggy Liversidge, Nan Millett, Cyril Murphy, Ann Shubert, Jim Snyder-Grant (chair), Tom Tidman, Laurie Ullmann, Paul Wasserboehr

* Guidebook: Tom brought in a copy of the guidebook's two large signature sheets, which have 16 pages printed on each side, and the smaller sheet with the front and back covers. These represent the final proof before the printing and binding are done, so we are very close to having the final product in hand.

When the booklets arrive, Nan will distribute copies to the sponsors and Linda will distribute the remainder of the complimentary copies, as discussed at last month's meeting. Nan said that she will also take some to the West Acton Market, whose owner, Skip Kennedy, has said he will sell them for us (and turn the entire proceeds over to us); she may also try to arrange for one or two other outlets. The artwork and two or three CD copies of the booklet will need to be obtained from Lynn and the latter stored in separate locations.

* Kiosk installations: Bob, Jim, and Andy installed the last kiosk built by the high school students at Guggins Brook last weekend. In addition, Bob, with help from Rich and Laurie, has constructed five more kiosks, which now need to be installed. Bob sent an e-mail request for volunteers for Saturday, June 7, but suggested that the stewards of the properties where they are to be installed—Bulette, Jenks, Stoneymeade, Wetherbee, and Wills Hole—could begin digging the post holes on their own (each hole needs to be 12 in. in diameter and 28 in. deep, and the two holes should be 52 in. apart).

* Volunteers: Next week Jim will be sending information about LSC tasks to a meeting for high school students who are looking for volunteer opportunities for the summer. More wood-chip spreading at Guggins Brook and Grassy Pond, trash removal at Bulette, tree and trash removal at Pratt's Brook, helping with the Norway maple project at the Arboretum, fire-ring cleanup/repair at Camp Acton, and kiosk post-hole digging were possibilities suggested for Jim's list.

Jim also noted that his attempts thus far to involve adult volunteers hasn't been successful. He has sent several announcements of specific work opportunities to the small number of people on his list, but so far no non-LSCom workers have shown up. He is wondering if establishing either a regular time (e.g., first Saturday of the month) or a specific lists of dates (perhaps a mix of weekdays and weekends) might make it easier for people to plan ahead. It was also suggested that he might ask those on the list to suggest times that would work for them and if they know of others who might be interested in being on the list.

* Vernal pool update: Gigi has taken photos and made tape recordings at vernal pools at the Arboretum and Wetherbee, as well as on Water Department land (former Conant land near the main Post Office) and on the Morrison property; she will submit the information after completing the maps and forms for these sites. She was not able to do the pools at Jenks or Grassy Pond this year. She also reported that she has given Rich most of what he needs to add vernal pool certification information to our website.

* Arboretum bog boardwalk repair: Jim's understanding last month was that the Friends of the Acton Arboretum were requesting advice and expertise, but not workers, for repairs or rebuilding of the boardwalk in the Highland/Bog Loop, but it now appears that they will need help doing the work as well. Tom said he thinks that enough volunteers could be found if a work day were properly publicized, but Jim indicated that he hopes the FAA will do this organizing. Tom suggested that he and Bob walk the area to see what needs to be done and said that he thinks the work could be done in the fall.

* Biodiversity Day: Jim reported that ACT and the Conservation Commission will be sponsoring a survey of flora and fauna at Nagog Hill on June 8.

* Norway maple control project: Jim estimates that he has done about one-third of the pulling and weed-wrenching of Norway maple seedlings and saplings in the Arboretum test plot. Next Thursday a group of approximately 50 fifth graders will count and measure the diameters of both the tagged Norway maples and the non-Norway maples in the

plot. The larger Norway maples will eventually be either cut down or gashed near the base prior to herbicide application.

* Project list update: The following items were suggested for addition to our list of projects. In some cases a priority number (1 to 3, with 1 being the highest priority) and/or a date when the item might be undertaken were offered.

Grassy Pond:

* Continue repair of Newtown Rd. boardwalk (ongoing and gradual unless we get enough money to do it more quickly)

Great Hill:

- * Improve trail and build boardwalk over wet area leading to Concord Family and Youth Services building on Rt. 111 (Paul has obtained permission from CFYS) (priority 2; 2004)
- * Install a number of benches along yellow trail and at hill's summit (priority 3)
- * Enlarge/improve Piper Rd. parking lot (priority 3; 2005)

Guggins Brook:

* Devise plan for dealing with muddy conditions along blue loop

Nagog Hill:

* Reroute portion of yellow trail near new golf course

Nashoba Brook:

- * Repair sluiceway crossing at pencil factory site (priority 1; fall 2003 if funds available)
- * Build bridge over dam at pencil factory site to connect with future rail trail; coordinate with rail trail project and perhaps arrange to use one of the bridges that are proposed for that project (priority 3)
- * Repair small bridge over sluiceway at Wheeler Lane entrance (priority 3)
- * Remove or clean up small red building at Wheeler Lane entrance (building has no historical significance) (priority 3)
- * Control erosion and stabilize "potato chamber" if Linda finds that this is not a concern to preservationists

Spring Hill:

* Put up sign where Jay Lane access trail leaves main trail, giving destination and mileage (priority 2; winter 2003-04)

Stoneymeade:

* Explore possibility of cutting new trail linked to Pope Rd. (priority 3; explore possibility in 2003 but cut trail, if decided on, in 2004)

Wetherbee:

- * Put up "authorized vehicles only" sign (as soon as town crew makes sign)
- * Resolve abutter violation issues

Townwide:

- * Add invasives control project (mapping, prioritizing work, educational outreach)
- * To current item concerning forest and barrens management plans, add field/meadow management plan (including issue of elm trees being planted in these areas)

* Next meeting: The next meeting will be held in September.