

**LAND STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 9, 2002, 4:00 P.M.
ACTON TOWN HALL**

Present: Dave Cochrane, Bob Guba, Gigi Hopkins, Phil Keyes, Peggy Liversidge, Cyril Murphy, Rich Rhode, Tom Tidman, Paul Wasserboehr

- Maps for kiosk boxes: Bob passed around a sheet at the beginning of the meeting for stewards to note the number of map copies they wanted, and Andrea copied them during the meeting. She indicated, however, that it would be preferable for people to e-mail their requests to her a day or two before the meeting. Her e-mail address is amackenzie@town.acton.ma.us.
- Update re maps: Tom is almost ready to have the Nashoba Brook map looked at; a map committee meeting was scheduled for 8:30 a.m. on Friday, January 18.
- Bay Circuit Trail: Cyril reported that Dean Charter has not yet received the trail-marking items from the BCT organization.
- Website: Rich continues to add information to our website as it becomes available and to keep the communication channel open to Mark Hald concerning the Town's website. Rich would welcome more photos for possible inclusion. Phil wondered if we should consider buying a domain name.
- Field guide: Linda, in an e-mail to Dave, said that a friend of hers is trying to create a computer-generated mockup of the trail guide; she hopes to be able to bring this to the next meeting. The idea, as has been mentioned previously, is to be able to produce print copies of the guide at any time and in whatever quantities are needed rather than using a print shop, which would necessitate larger print-runs. There was a consensus that the demand for a print version of the guide will probably be low due to the success of our website, and this was therefore seen as an idea worth pursuing.
- Vernal pool meeting: Phil reported that he has completed arrangements for a presentation (slide show and discussion) about vernal pools by Brian Butler. It is scheduled for Wednesday, February 13, at 7:00 pm at the Acton Public Library conference room. He is about to send invitations, by mail and e-mail, to a list consisting of Acton town officials, representatives of Acton's and contiguous towns' conservation groups, and other interested individuals; he hopes that 25-30 may attend. Refreshments will be served at the end. Phil offered to emcee the event, which he hopes will serve both to educate a core group of interested individuals about the particular subject and to stimulate interaction among people who have demonstrated an interest in conservation in Acton and the surrounding area. He suggested that we not advertise the event to the general public (i.e., in the Beacon).
- Publicity: An article about our website was published in the Dec. 13 Beacon, and Paul is now finishing up one about the Bulette Land that he expects to put in next week's paper. Following a short discussion, he decided that the Merriam School project will probably be his next topic, followed in March by one about vernal pools. Suggestions for future articles were the history of some of the parcels, the potato cave and Indian grinding stone, and Tom's nature walks. Paul also reported that the Beacon has agreed to accept one article per month from us.
- Wetherbee: Following the December meeting, Dave and Bob dug the holes for and installed a sign at the north end of the agricultural field, but Gigi reported that it was quickly vandalized by a man who rammed into it with a pickup truck and then quickly sped away. A neighbor told Gigi that he has seen the man, or at least the truck, before.

There was some inconclusive discussion about whether the sign should be put back in the same spot or moved; it was also suggested that perhaps the Town could put some boulders in front of and behind the re-installed sign to protect it from at least this form of vandalism.

- OSRP report: Linda e-mailed Dave that the Open Space Committee is considering putting a warrant article

on the Town Meeting agenda for funds for the LSCoM. Tom thinks it would be better not to do this, but he also indicated that it may be too late to do so anyway since these warrants are usually submitted by the end of December.

- Merriam School project: Dave reported that this year's school project, which will involve six sessions from Feb. 13 to April 24, will focus on gathering the data to certify a vernal pool in the Mt. Hope Cemetery woods, drawing pictures of bog plants that might be used for, or as a basis for, the Wills Hole educational kiosk, and planting a row of trees at the Robbins Street entrance to Heath Hen to serve as a barrier between the trail and a nearby house. Tom will be involved in part of the project.
- Signage: Bob is compiling a list of signs to be produced this winter, including several to mark internal boundaries (Camp Acton-Spring Hill, Spring Hill-Nashoba Brook, and Mt. Hope Cemetery-Heath Hen). Bob noted that the entrance signs we currently have use two different wordings — Conservation Area and Conservation Land — and wondered which we should use for the new batch of signs. The consensus was that Conservation Land is preferable. Peggy brought up the question of whether to put up posts with colors blazed on them to mark a few places in meadows where there are no trees for blazing (Heath Hen, Guggins, Jenks), but several others thought there was no need for them. Bob said that the New View community should place a sign at the Central Street access to Guggins stating that the first part of the access trail passes through private land.
- Winter projects: In addition to other things noted in this month's minutes, Bob said that he hopes to be able to test the depth of Grassy Pond in the spot where the observation deck is to be built and then to begin constructing the extension of the pier and the observation deck if the ice is safe.
- Next meeting: The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, February 6, at 4:00.