

**LAND STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
NOVEMBER 6, 2002, 4:00 P.M.
ACTON TOWN HALL**

Present: Dave Cochrane, Bob Guba, Gigi Hopkins, Phil Keyes, Peggy Liversidge, Nan Millett, Cyril Murphy, Rich Rhode, Ann Shubert, Jim Snyder-Grant (chair), Laurie Ullmann

- Sophomore community service project: Laurie reported that three boys, working in the high school shop with Bob's revised plans, have half-completed their first kiosk and appear to be doing a good job. He expects that they will be able to finish it next week. This first one will probably be for the Rt. 27 parking lot at Great Hill. Assuming that the workmanship is good enough, these students or others in the group will continue over the winter to work on, and install as the weather permits, up to ten other kiosks for spots identified last month. Other members of this group have cleared tree limbs at Guggins, spread wood chips at Grassy Pond, and picked up trash at Bulette.

Other jobs remaining to be done, either by the students or by other volunteers, are spreading additional wood chips at Grassy Pond, spreading chips on the Nagog Hill access trail, and moving the Pratt's Brook brush piles to the existing burn circle, a job that Bob thinks may be slow and difficult. Dave wondered if the brush could be burned where the piles are now located, but the general sentiment was that the blueberry bushes in the new spots would not survive and we therefore shouldn't do this. Laurie suggested that we try advertising a work day by e-mail and/or by a newspaper notice. Jim suggested Saturday, November 16, and agreed to get the information out to our e-mail lists and the general public. Spreading the Grassy Pond wood chips is the first priority, followed by moving the Pratt's Brook brush piles (if enough people show up), then spreading wood chips at Nagog Hill.

- Esker trail at Bulette: Bob has recorded the track where this trail will be cut and has sent the image to Rich to add to the website map as a blue trail. He will contact Andy to flag it, after which it can be checked by others and cut.

- Possible new trail at Stoneymeade: Cyril has spoken with Linda about the possibility of adding a new trail through the woods from Pope Road to the Stoneymeade access trail so that the BCT connector to/from Spring Hill won't have to lead along Stoneymeade Way. Nan pointed out that it can be fairly wet in this area. It was decided that we will hold off on this and check the area in the spring.

- Signs/markers/blazes: Bob has put up a no hunting/motorized vehicles sign at Bulette and installed boundary markers at both Bulette and Wetherbee.

Peggy noted that at the Wheeler Lane entrance to Nashoba Brook, a worded sign points to the part of the yellow trail that leads to the other side of the brook but doesn't indicate the trail in the other direction, paralleling the brook on the Rt. 27 side. The consensus was that the worded sign should be taken down but that an additional yellow blaze should be put right at the beginning of the latter trail segment, since currently the first blaze is barely visible from the parking lot. (Bob made the general observation that at many trail junctions, the first blazes are not close enough to the junction.)

Ann suggested that one place a worded sign might be useful is where the access trail to Jay Lane leaves the Spring Hill loop trail, since that is an unusually long access trail.

Cyril mentioned that he still has a few BCT blazes to put up, and Laurie said he will take down the old metal markers as he sees them.

- Acton-Boxborough connections: Linda reported (via an e-mail read by Jim) that she had a productive meeting with two women from Boxborough who are beginning a land stewardship committee for that town under the auspices of their Conservation Commission. They have expressed interest in connecting their Half Moon property with Jenks (using blazing conventions that match ours) and their Flagg Hill property with Stow's Capt. Sargent land.

- Guidebook fundraising: Nan reported that she has not moved as quickly on this as she had hoped because of difficulty getting a usable mock-up from Lynn Horsky, but she has begun the process.

- Future workshop: After briefly noting that the recent invasives workshop went well, Jim asked for suggestions for our

next public talk. The beaver problem quickly emerged as an important topic. Phil offered to take this on, and February or March was suggested as a potential date.

- Vernal pool certification information: Gigi is waiting to receive new certification forms from the state. After receiving them and adding some clarifications concerning the procedure, she will pass the information along to Rich for inclusion on the website.
- New website address: Rich thinks that our website will move from the eglobalreach domain to the town website sometime soon (perhaps the middle of November), but the timing is still uncertain.
- Future of Wetherbee agricultural field: Gigi is concerned about this area as the lease is up soon and she is aware of interest in it for athletic fields. She reported that she has recently seen a bird there that is on the threatened species list (the vesper sparrow) and that there is possibly a vernal pool nearby, and she hopes that one or both of these will help keep the field from being developed as a recreational field.
- Passage of Community Preservation Act: Phil noted that we should start considering how we might be part of the process of determining how the town's CPA funds will be used.
- Revised procedure for map copies: Bob, still valiantly trying to find a workable way to keep the map boxes stocked, brought in a form that would be filled out at each meeting and given to Andrea, who will make the copies a day or two after the meeting. Stewards may then drop by her office to pick them up before the next meeting or collect them at that meeting.
- Next meeting: The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, December 4, at 4:00.