

Acton
Land Stewardship Committee (LSC) Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, June 20, 2017, Town Hall, Room 9, 7 P.M.

Attendance

Regular (voting) members present: Paula Goodwin, Bob Guba, Joe Holmes, Jim Snyder-Grant, John Watlington, Joe Will (Minutes)

Associate (nonvoting) member present: Sherman Smith,

Nonmembers present:

Bettina Abe (Acton Natural Resources Assistant), Janet Adachi (Acton Board of Selectmen LSC liaison), Lucy Indge (Acton resident, New England Aquarium Youth Service Coordinator)

Bettina called the meeting to order at 7:03 P.M.

Review and approval of April and May minutes

Approval was moved and voted near-unanimously. (Joe H abstained, having not had time to review the May minutes)

The New England Aquarium Youth Services (NEAYS) Learning Program

Lucy explained the Program. It's year round, although there are more participants and sessions during the summer. A volunteer session normally involves 8–15 teens who are, for LSC purposes, good at removing invasives. The length of a session can vary. A group can work with or without LSC stewards present. Adults don't need to be CORI checked as long as an Aquarium representative is present. Bettina explained for Lucy what the LSC does re invasives and asked LSC members to make a list that it could give to Lucy, and also show her in advance where the worksites would be. Lucy will send dates on which NEAYS groups would be available.

Spring Hill development — Board of Appeals public meeting

Jim reviewed the proposed development situation, noting that the Planning Board can grant a variance if there is "public benefit." Jim noted that any suggestion that the red trail (in from the end of Spring Hill Road) meandering onto private land is a public benefit could be more regarded as a "public threat," but it really is a non-issue as that portion of the trail can easily be moved onto easement land. Jim wrote a letter to the Planning Board noting that allowing a variance here would encourage developers to seek similar variances in similar situations elsewhere in town. Joe W pointed out that at the recent meeting of the Open Space Committee (OSC), the OSC prepared a letter discouraging the Spring Hill development as it runs counter to Town open-space considerations, and also noted about 10 specific similar situations to which Jim had alluded. (Note: Following the meeting, Janet e-shared a copy of the OSC letter.)

Water-level control on Acton Water District land and Guggins Brook Conservation Land

Jim and Acton Water District (AWD) folks will meet tomorrow with Mike Callahan of Beaver Solutions (www.beaversolutions.com), the company whose DVD provided the basis for the water-control device at Heath Hen Meadow (HHM). The meeting will include a visit to the (second-)most upstream culvert at Guggins Brook where (Bruce's Scout team built a bridge and) Jim recently removed a failed beaver deceiver. The AWD expects Mike to provide a bid to install a new deceiver

there. Paula and Bettina (and others) are welcome to attend and eavesdrop the whole process. It's possible that Mike could help out with a new deceiver at HHM, possibly doing installations at Guggins Brook and HHM the same day. Bettina will let Tom Tidman know that this is happening to help make sure that there are no other issues.

The new parking and access trail for Nagog Hill on Skyline Drive

Joe H projected an openstreetmap showing this new trail with a trailhead and parking (P) off of Skyline Drive, and connecting with the red Nagog Hill access trail that's accessible from Hazelnut Street. Should this trail be blazed (red)? Should there be a kiosk near the parking lot? The LSC can ask Carolyn Kiely who is president of the Quail Ridge Homeowners' Association, owner of the land on which the trail exists over a public easement. If yes, the LSC can advise on the kiosk.

Recap: Scout workdays (06/03, 06/10)

These (spreading wood chips) went great at Pratts Brook and HHM. There still is a good-sized pile of chips next to the HHM kiosk.

Nagog Hill invasives, mowing, etc., update

Bob G, Bettina, and Kat Kaminski, abutting homeowner (see April Minutes), settled on this plan: The LSC will clear both sides of the two CL long stone walls up to the CL boundary, taking out everything at the corner. Kat would keep the ground clear next to the walls. The land on both sides of the walls will be mowed once a year. Per Bob, It would help if the Town could clear two or three major rocks in the field before Fall.

Conservation Land Naming Guidelines/Policy; report on Conservation Commission meeting update

Joe H met with the Conservation Commission. It agreed with and approved the Guidelines. It also approved the four names: Heath Hen Meadow (merging of 176 Central Street and HHM), Bulette/Town Forest (merging of the Anderson parcel and Bulette/Town Forest), Wright Hill, and North Acton Community Gardens.

Suggestions for Wright Hill:

- Post Wright Hill signs on trees rather than trying to dig them into the ground.
- Help Jim Salem move along the cutting of the trails that have already been tagged.

Robbins Mill/Scoutland update

Bettina will continue to pester Scoutland Trustee Bill Klauer about getting a trail easement along Nashoba Brook. Wording of the easement can be up to Bill as long as the LSC can complete a trail. (The Appalachian Mountain Club volunteers cleared the trail — currently marked with blazing ribbons — to Scoutland's northern property line.) Bettina will also follow up on tax obligations re Scoutland.

Nashoba Brook bridge update

Bob G reviewed the status of the bridge across the Nashoba Brook sluiceway at the end of Wheeler Lane. He plans to submit a list of materials for purchase on July 1, the start of the new fiscal year.

On merging 176 Central and Heath Hen Meadow update

All relevant parties have approved this. Paula and Peggy Liversidge can move ahead with blazing. Bettina will work on getting signs made. Changing the map will happen after blazing is completed.

Miscellaneous parcel information

- Nagog Hill: Bob G took care of a squeaking leaner near the horse farm entrance. Hearing it was scarier than seeing it.
- Grassy Pond: Gary Kilpatrick cleared out the big mess near the pier. He also brushed out the Newtown Road access trail. A report on a few trees down went to the sawyers.
- Heath Hen Meadow: It's getting a little crowded in places with deadwood. Paula is working on this.
- General: Joe H is confirming/inputting stonewalls on the maps. He will share results and ask for input when done.

Officers slate for election next meeting update

It was moved, seconded, and voted unanimously that nominations for next meeting include: Bruce for Chair, Paula for Vice-Chair, and Joe W for Clerk.

Future meetings: 07/18, 08/15, 09/19, 10/17, 11/21, 12/19

No comments.

Event Calendar: How to add many events — Jim

No comments.

Brainstorming WildAware stories

No comments.

July 18 agenda

Re-insert "Parcel Reports" or the equivalent into the Agenda.

Evaluate meeting

Fun meeting with the right mix of chaos and getting work done.

The meeting adjourned at 8:16 P.M.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, July 18, at 7 P.M., in Room 9.