

Acton
Land Stewardship Committee (LSC) Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, January 16, 2018, Town Hall, Room 126, 7 P.M.

Attendance

Regular (voting) members present: Bob Farra, Bob Guba, Joe Holmes, Bruce Rachman (Chair), Jim Snyder-Grant, Joe Will (Minutes)

Associate (nonvoting) members present: Sherman Smith

Others: Bettina Abe (Acton Natural Resources Assistant),

Bruce called the meeting to order at 7:05 P.M.

Review and approval of December minutes

Approval was moved and voted unanimously.

New map features

Jim showed the under-development “Acton Trail Map”, highlighting a new “Zoom to” feature that shows a drop-down menu of 19 Conservation Lands (CLs). Click on a CL name and the screen shows that CL.

Other features, features to be, or suggestions:

- The map uses thicker lines than previously to show boundaries of CLs.
- There will eventually be a “Print” button.
- Have the Arboretum map show the labeled gardens, e.g. Fragrance Garden. (Bettina will provide the necessary information.) Also, show larger directional arrows for the one-way Parking.
- There are contour lines at present, but the contour interval is 10 m. There is a plan to lay in better contour information.
- The map shows CL behind Trader Joe’s. This is one of the parcels that the Acton Dog Park Committee has been told it can consider for a Dog Park.
- Parking area (at Camp Acton) needs some color other than white (perhaps darker gray, but transparent). Also, the map should number the campsites.
- When will this map be available to the public? This is available to the public now if one can find it. The url has not yet been published. At its next meeting, the Committee should talk about when to make this readily available to the public.

Equipment Storage Subcommittee report

Bruce, Joe H, Bob G, and Bettina talked with Tom Tidman about getting a storage shed. Tom thought it a great idea, but nothing else has been heard from him yet, so the ball is in Tom’s court. In addition to a shed itself, other issues are its funding and location. One location possibility (there are other options): The irrigation well that is to be installed at Morrison Farm (possibly where the small building is presently in the paddock that borders Concord Road) may be housed in a shed, so maybe that shed could be made larger. A storage shed at Morrison Farm would be centrally located, and there would be electricity. One need for a larger shed is to allow for storage of the mower on the trailer inside the shed. Joe H plans to move the trailer tomorrow to one of the sheltered spaces at the west end of the Morrison barn. Using the Woodlawn Chapel basement for winter storage is another possibility.

Updates/Continuations

– Wright Hill-Guggins Brook easement trail: Sherman and Jim presented the proposed location at the December BoS meeting and it was approved. The proposed easement for a 15-ft-wide strip of land with a 4-ft-wide trail is in the works. Jim is providing NewView feedback, but also wants to find what the LSC thinks of the proposal. Jim showed an editing-in-progress draft of the easement on the screen and went over some of the NewView concerns. Notably, NewView approved the use of bicycles. Jim explained why bikes are seen as okay on Wright Hill, but not on the easement to Guggins Brook from Central Street — essentially the bike okay is the same as with other CLs, while the bike denial on the Central Street easement has to do with trail conditions and some abutters' views. Stewards were generally comfortable with the wording of the document.

– “Robbins Mill North”: No new opinions were offered re the naming issue. It was noted on the Acton Trail Map that the trail from the Carlisle Road Parking does travel along the Nashoba Brook/Robbins Mill boundary after crossing Scoutland, but then enters Robbins Mill property in the guise of the Nashoba Brook yellow trail just east of the Nashoba Brook bridge at Wheeler Lane, i.e., a portion of the Nashoba Brook yellow trail is actually in the Robbins Mill parcel. The Acton Trail Map also suggests that a possible new trail could be explored that would link the trail from the Carlisle Road Parking with the current yellow trail in Robbins Mill. This, or possibly a trail through Scoutland, could be investigated in late March. This topic is tabled until such a trail link is investigated.

– Investigate blazing at Morrison Farm — Volunteer? Joe H volunteered to contact Andrea Ristine, Acton's Municipal Properties Superintendent, as to whether it would be okay to blaze — before LSC does any actual planning for blazing.

– Heath Hen Meadow (HHM) — Relocate 50' of blue trail? 1) Joe H showed a map of the HHM blue trail to Winter Island. The trail ends by sloping down a small curve to the marsh. Joe proposed replacing the curved path with a straight path (as used by, and only by, skiers). Bob G said to add the straight section, but keep the curved part and show the entire “end” of the path as a loop so people will loop around and return on the blue trail. 2) The LSC should consider the following about the HHM yellow trail from Robbins Street to Billings Street. It should be yellow only to the blue loop about a third of the way from Robbins to Billings. That blue loop could become yellow, and the yellow trail from the blue loop to Billings could become red (as it is an entrance trail to HHM). 3) There was discussion also about the shape and location (crossing private property) of the trail at Billings Street, and 4) discussion about the high water at the bridge linking HHM with Mt. Hope Cemetery. The LSC approves the notions of (1) and (2) above, subject to the approval of Paula Goodwin, the HHM Steward. On (3), Paula has not talked to the landowner about it. It was also noted that there is not much traffic there. The LSC needs Paula's opinion on this as well. No further suggestions on (4).

– “Dunn Conservation Land” or “Shepherd Memorial Conservation Land”? The LSC concluded discussion on this (retain “Dunn”) at the December meeting.

– Other parcels

Kudos to Peggy Liversidge for the fine job of blazing she does on all parcels in general.

Brainstorming WildAware stories

No brainstorming.

Evaluate meeting

Nice that it ended early.

The meeting adjourned at 8:11 P.M.

The next meeting will be Tuesday, 02/20, at 7 P.M., in Room 9.