

Land Stewardship Committee Meeting Minutes
November 19, 2012
Acton Town Hall

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TOWN CLERK, ACTON

Regular (voting) members present: Joan Cirillo, Philip Keyes, Peggy Liversidge, Nan Towle Millett, Ann Shubert (minute taker), Jim Snyder-Grant, Laurie Ullmann

Associate (nonvoting) members present: Tom Arnold, Bob Guba, Josh Haines, Bruce Rachman

Nonmembers present: Tom Tidman, Director of Natural Resources and LSCOM's Town staff liaison; Detective Keith Campbell, Youth Officer, Acton Police Department

Meeting minutes: The September and October minutes were approved.

Possible community service projects for teen offenders: Detective Keith Campbell, Youth Officer of the Acton Police Department, has kids who need to do community service projects. About 15-25 hours of work are performed depending upon the type of offense. Detective Campbell might go out with the kids to do some supervision, but they usually work alone. The offenders are approximately 14-16 years old. They would contact us directly, could do such things as brush cleanup and trail clearing, and supply the equipment needed for the job. Bob suggested that they remove graffiti on the wood deck at Grassy Pond. Tom Arnold suggested they could do things for the Acton-Stow Open Table. The goal is to reduce the recurrence of an offense. Detective Campbell can be reached at the Acton Police Department, 978 264-9638, or at his number, 978 929-7528, or by email at kcampbell@acton-ma.gov.

Relocation of trail at Guggins Brook: During Hurricane Sandy, around three dozen trees were blown down along the blue trail near the Boxborough border, including some across the trail where three prongs of the blue trail form a small triangle. The chainsaw crew (Bob, Josh, and Laurie, aided by Jim) decided to simplify the tree-clearing process by creating a new temporary trail to replace two of the three sides of that triangle. A motion to make the trail official was made and seconded, so the trail can be blazed. New blazes will be made in the spring when the weather is warmer.

Parcel updates: *Hurricane damage:* Many trees were blown down during Hurricane Sandy. Bob and others cleared three trees at Mt. Hope Cemetery, 14 at Nagog, 7 at Grassy Pond, 25 at Guggins Brook, and 8 at Great Hill. Andy Gatesman cleared 6 at Bulette/Town Forest, Bruce cleared around 10 at Camp Acton, Joan moved 3 at Wetherbee, 5 were cleared at Nashoba Brook, Laurie did some sawing at Spring Hill, Philip took out a large tree and a hanger at Spring Hill and will check Jay Lane, and Tom Tidman's crew removed a huge tree that was on the access road at Camp Acton. There is also a tree down on the Quail Ridge connector.

Spring Hill: The "You Are Here" signs at Spring Hill need replacing. It might be that all the kiosks could use "You Are Here" maps, or "You Are Here" arrows could be added to the maps that are already posted.

Philip thinks the long boardwalk that is in bad condition is a real liability issue at this time and suggested that the trail at this point might be closed. There was some discussion of putting "Use at your own risk" signs at the beginnings of the boardwalk. Joan asked if anyone had run this language past Town Counsel. Jim and Tom T. indicated that they had chosen the language. Joan suggested that a sign saying something like "Storm damage assessment under way. Use with caution." might be sufficient and more legally accurate. Tom T. will get signs put up.

Tom T. thinks an Eagle Scout might redo the damaged boardwalk.

It was also noted that CPA funds can now be used to redo boardwalks and that the Arboretum also has a boardwalk in bad need of replacement.

Camp Acton: There was a discussion of sign changes and removing the main gate (near Pope Road). It was suggested that the sign on the main gate saying "Authorized use only" be removed. Bob suggested completely removing this gate, and both Tom T. and Bruce agreed that there is no need for the gate. Only the secondary gate near the campsites is needed. Upon motion made and seconded, it was voted to recommend that the main gate be removed. Tom T. agreed to follow up with ConsCom and take whatever other steps are needed to effectuate this vote. He will also talk to the Recreation Department regarding the payment at Camp Acton for day use of the area. Discussion of this was tabled to the next meeting.

Steward news: Elan Riesman is now the co-steward at Nagog. There is no steward at Pratt's Brook yet; Jim will put a note on the Pratt's Brook kiosk and at the Senior Center. At Will's Hole/Town Forest, Theresa Portante is still on leave, but she will return in December. A volunteer, J.B. Sweeney, is doing occasional patrols there and is sending in reports.

Follow-up/debrief on 8 Green Community Service Day: The eighth-grade community service day went well. The students did an excellent job of putting chips down at the Newtown Road entrance to Grassy Pond. They did painting and chipping at Camp Acton. Twelve kids worked at Nagog putting chips down. Jim worked with a group at the Parker Street end of Pratt's Brook doing chipping. Laurie reported that Linda was very satisfied with the hauling of brush and work done at Wheeler Lane. One hundred daffodils were planted at Faulkner Hill and there was hauling to put in wildlife piles.

Bench policy: The Conservation Commission has voted in a new bench policy. The next step is to prepare publicity and appropriate forms. Bettina will work on this in consultation with the Committee and Tom Tidman. Joan asked whether it had been determined which Acton conservation lands ConsCom had/has oversight authority for (or "jurisdiction" over), and which ones it did/does not, so it could be determined who needs to approve the Bench Policy for the "other" conservation lands. She reminded Jim that ConsCom raised this issue when the proposed policy was first presented to them at their December 2011 meeting. Jim asked if this was about the conservation land/rec land aspect of Great Hill. Joan said it was clear from the discussion at that meeting that ConsCom seemed to believe that several conservation lands were not under its purview. She agreed to forward correspondence that would refresh Jim's recollection of the issue.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:40. The next meeting will be held at 4 PM on Wednesday, December 19.

Documents that serve as background for these discussions can be found at <http://doc.acton-ma.gov/dsweb/View/Collection-5080>. They are titled:

- 0 – Agenda
- 1.1 – draft LSCOM minutes 2012 09 19
- 1.2 – draft LSCOM minutes 2012 10 17
- 9.1 – Bench Policy As Recommended by LSC
- 9.2 – Bench Policy as adopted by ConsCom
- 9.3 – Redline from Recommended bench policy to Final

