

HARVARD CONSERVATION COMMISSION - Land Stewardship Subcommittee

MINUTES OF MEETING

January 23, 2018

Present: Wendy Sisson, Jim Adelson, Brian McClain, Carl Sciple, Pam Durrant, Jim Burns

Not Present: Phil Knoettner, John Lee, Bill Blackwell, Sydney Blackwell, Jo Ward, Bob Benson

Wendy Sisson called the meeting to order at 7:20 P.M. at the Hildreth House

Minutes from the previous meeting (10/17/17), as prepared by Jim Adelson, were approved

Possible future properties

- Capobianco
 - o Will be for sale, in the spring, but likely to be a lot of money
 - o Abuts the Willard and Sprague conservation properties
- Smith
 - o On the border between Littleton and Harvard, near Black Pond
 - o Under CR now
 - o Sudbury Valley Trustees to be involved with the Littleton portion
 - o Possibly a couple of years on this one – not a hurry

Spring Walk

- Likely date – Sunday, April 8th
- Possible route – one that Jim A had previously developed, starting from Village Nursery School and including Ohlin, Town Forest, and Kaufman properties; Jim A to bring more information to next meeting

Property Reports

- Hoch
 - o Jim B and Brian did chainsaw clearing for that property earlier in January
 - o The removed trees were probably red pines, which have shorter lives and are often affected by disease
 - o It would probably be beneficial to remove some additional standing dead trees that are likely to fall in the not-too-distant future
- Pin Hill – Jim A had done a walk there 11/25/17, and spotted 4 trees that needed chainsaw removal, which he will look to work on in the spring if they're still there (none of them fell on the portion used by the snowmobile club, so they probably wouldn't have tackled them)
- Old Mill – Jim A had done a walk there 10/21/17, and spotted 7 trees that needed chainsaw removal; some are too big for his chainsaw, so help will be needed
- Powell-Reed-Abbot – Pam had done a walk within the last few days, and it was all clear
- Tripp – Brian had done a walk recently, and all was clear
- Great Elms – Wendy had done a walk recently, and there was a big tree down, though easy to walk around

Winter/Spring Projects

- Daman – the group should do a walk, to consider possible trail routes; tentative plan to go Saturday, 2/3 at 1 PM – Wendy to send out more details
- White “pinelings” – Wendy wants to have these cut back on the edges of some trails, so they don’t fall across the trail in winter; this is a possible Eagle Scout project (see more below)
- Willard Trail/CR
 - o Wendy is working on getting the necessary agreement with the Still River Realty Trust
 - o Wendy, Brian, Jim A, Jim B, and Pam all interested in scouting/flagging a trail – possibly the second weekend in February
- Holy Hill – the Dancing Ground sign needs to be rebuilt, as the back has rotted out
- Possible Eagle Scout projects
 - o Ethan Graham is the immediate candidate, and is interested in trail projects
 - o Make a cover for the well shaft on the Pin Hill property
 - o Holy Hill field needs non-chainsaw clearing
 - o Re-position and anchor the bridge on Clapp-Scorgie that has moved
 - o Additional work on the Shaker Spring House trail, to go ahead from the work already done by Carl; one part could be removing the sand accumulation at the entry from Green Road, though we will check with Ron at DPW first, to see if they’re going to do it
- Wendy and/or Jim B to provide trail markers to Carl for re-marking on Shaker Spring House; Wendy to also get additional nails

Deer Management

- Basically it winds up that hunting is the practical way to reduce deer counts
- We would need to identify possible conservation properties and locations for this
- Wendy is looking for a volunteer from the Land Stewardship Subcommittee to join a group to work on this, but a volunteer has not been identified yet

Chainsaw Volunteers

- Wendy had started an Excel spreadsheet with the information on current volunteers
- Jim A to try uploading the spreadsheet to a new tab in the on-line trail status log

Trail Maintenance for horse use

- Requires clearance to greater heights
- In addition, Wendy mentioned that you have to make sure that a boardwalk doesn’t occupy the entire trail width, since horses don’t go on boardwalks, and have to have a way to walk around, or in the case of streams, to ford them

Trail Steward/Trail Keeper list

- Wendy has compiled a list
- Carl will confirm with the Maxwells that they’re willing to take this on for Great Elms and Williams
- Carl will also confirm Wade Holzman for Sprague
- Brian will confirm Mary Traphagen for Clapp-Scorgie
- Jim B will confirm John Schoenberg for Hoch

Wendy briefly showed Littleton's Land Stewardship Management Form – to revisit in a future meeting

Next meeting – 2/27

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 PM