

# HARVARD CONSERVATION COMMISSION - Land Stewardship Subcommittee

## MINUTES OF MEETING

**March 23, 2021**

**Present:** Wendy Sisson, Peter von Conta, Jim Adelson, Rob Traver, Brian McClain

Wendy Sisson called the meeting to order at 7:15 PM as a virtual meeting (recorded)

It was noted that the list of LSS members shown on the LSS website needs to be updated

Minutes from the 2/23/21 meeting, as drafted by Jim Adelson, were approved

There were no additions to the agenda as prepared and distributed by Wendy

### Trail Reports

- Clapp-Scorgie – Peter retagged the trail through Clapp Cove on 3/22; he also tried to prop up the bridge in that section, but said that it needs more work, and we might even need to rebuild the bridge
- Black Pond/Vesenska – Wendy completed some reblazing work on 3/23
- Holy Hill – There is a section where gravel needs to be brought in; Wendy indicated we need to arrange for a vehicle to bring in the gravel
- Town Forest – Jim A reported that he'd seen a "Trail Closed" sign on a loop in the SE corner of the property; we believed it was probably placed there late in season by the Snowmobile Club, and Wendy will contact them to ask
- Sprague – Jim A reported that he'd walked the old woods road that diverges left from the official trail and unknowingly continued from the Sprague Land over onto Capobianco, which is private property, but we decided it was the owner's responsibility to put up No Trespassing or other signage, not ours

### Trail Status Log and Trail Conditions

- Peter is trying to take care of some of the older red entries in the log, particularly one on Dunlap, but Wendy indicated that she'd been on Dunlap multiple times and had never seen the reported obstruction, so we don't need to pursue it and should change it from red in the log
- Wendy offered her view of the most important current trail maintenance priorities
  - o Bridal Way/Hermann Orchard
  - o Black Pond/Vesenska
  - o Entry to the Great Elms section that is north of Murray Lane
- Peter is trying to organize a couple of crews to take care of the most important items
- We noted that a lot of the properties are very dry

### Planting

- Haskell – we were planning to plant clover, but there was an extremely narrow time window this year, so Rob thought he got about two-thirds of it done
- Ann Lees (and other playing fields) to get a different seed mix and fertilizer without herbicide this year

### Signage/Blazing

- Wooden sign installation/straightening
  - o The person who provided the auger is leaving; we may want to use it for Hermann Orchard and for Fuller-Dudley Woods

- There are a number of other wooden signs that need straightening
- We want to create a sign for Willard and will be giving it a name of Willard Wildlife Sanctuary
- Jim A mentioned that he'd recently been on conservation trails in Littleton and Bolton, and both those towns use a blazing convention of marking turns by using two blazes, one above the other, with the top one offset in the direction that the trail would be turning; while that convention is also used elsewhere, we concluded that we didn't want to use that on Harvard trails, at least for now, preferring to keep the number of blazes on the trees to a minimum and avoiding such doubling

“Big Night” – Brian reported a mini-migration of salamanders on Littleton County Rd; Brian put out 10 or 11 signs, and will remain responsible for putting up and retrieving the Amphibian Crossing signs

### Forest Health

- Emerald ash borers are now in our area, though ash trees have been dying for decades
- Wendy was particularly concerned about hemlocks, and asked us to keep an eye out when we see them to determine if they are healthy, or appear to be affected by woolly adelgid; watering helps hemlocks in a dry season, if possible, because they have shallow roots and are prone to drought
- Wendy heard a SUNY forester talk on even-age forests, and also a proforestation talk by William Moomaw, who really encouraged the maintenance of existing trees to moderate climate change; will send links to these talks

### Pollinator Garden, and possible locations

- Haskell
- Stone

### Small Nature Trail

- Wendy to arrange a walk with Robin Calderwood to determine what sections to maintain and any to abandon
- Jim A said he'd be interested to join for the walk

### Possible Trail on Gillette

- Wendy thought perhaps not
  - Would potentially disturb the wilder view currently on the property
  - Would impact wildlife habitat
  - In that area it is easy to inadvertently go on private land
- Wendy plans to organize a walk there, once the sale of the National Grid land is completed

### Eagle Scout projects

- Tim Zobbi to do a project on Tripp
  - Clean up trail that has not had attention other than being kept passable
  - Put in a little boardwalk
  - Remove some old barrel parts
- Peter talked to Matt Zobbi about gravel to install posts for kiosks; Wendy also has some thoughts about printing maps from Trail Guide on waterproof paper
- Brian has talked further with Christian Lancelloti; Christian was potentially going to work this upcoming weekend, and Brian is planning to remove a tree on Friday beforehand

### Boardwalks

- Margaret Nessler is putting in a boardwalk to be an access from Cruft Lane to Hermann Orchard

- Wendy saw an excellent design at Grassy Pond in Acton for locations over water; Wendy will get more information on this design and show to HCT stewards

The next meeting will be April 27<sup>th</sup>

Meeting adjourned at 9:25 PM