

HARVARD CONSERVATION COMMISSION - Land Stewardship Subcommittee

MINUTES OF MEETING

January 25, 2022

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

Wendy Sisson called the meeting to order at 7:20 PM as a virtual meeting (recorded)

Minutes from the 11/30/21 meeting, as drafted by Jim A, and edited and circulated by Wendy, were approved

Property Reports

- Overall
 - o Trails are in pretty good shape, Peter reports, from a number of chainsawing trips
 - o A lot of work was done between Christmas and New Years
 - o The combination of ice, crust, and snow makes travel difficult
 - o Peter notes that there are some longer-term items highlighted in the Trail Status Log
- Hermann Orchard – Jim Burns, John Lee, and Marc Seigny cleared downed trees to reopen Bridle Way
- Clapp-Scorgie – Wendy reported that the Snowmobile Club started some work on the Clapp Cove Tr, but it didn't get finished because weather has made it tougher to spread material
- Holy Hill – a gravel load has been brought in through the Eisenberg's property and spread at the worst spot
- Prospect Hill was in good shape the previous weekend
- Williams and Great Elms were in good shape, according to Wendy
- Powell-Reed-Abbot – An ATV came down the hill from Bolton Rd almost to the chestnut grove, and then went back up, but we think the people have been identified, so it won't happen again
- Small Nature Trail
 - o 3 huge dead trees, still standing, are around the seating area; we may need to have a group remove the trees, and/or caution at Hildreth Elementary School against using the seating area due to the hazard presented
 - o Peter is contacting the school principal
 - o Perhaps Robin Carlaw and Bill Calderwood, trail keepers for the Small Nature Trail, can look at a plan for what to do
 - o Snowmobile Club also put in a corduroy road, which should be removed
- Clapp-Scorgie – Peter and John Lee took down a large part of a Norway Maple

Bridge/Boardwalk on the Bolton line, near Bare Hill Wildlife Sanctuary/Bowers Springs

- Peter is working on a solution recommendation for this project; more work will be needed on the design; Tom volunteered to be someone for Peter to bounce ideas off
- Drew Hickok is a landscaper who may be a possible resource to use to help with the work, on a paid basis; there may be other people who could be used

- We do have access to drive materials to the site
- We talked about whether high school students needing service hours could help, and felt that they would need to be supervised
- Once the design is ready, it will need to be presented to the Conservation Commission, which is concerned about possible disruption to the wetland

Haskell Land native grass and pollinator plan to be presented at the next meeting

Hermann Orchard

- Wendy feels that additional help is still needed to improve access, and that a volunteer workgroup might be able to work at it
- In the future, Cruft Lane access will be better
- We also need to come up with a place to put materials cleared from the north side of the former orchard
- It may be possible to bring in a chipper for the white pines

Invasives

- There is buckthorn on Powell and Dean's Hill
- For Powell, we intend to hire Scott again in 2022
- For Dean's Hill, perhaps need to have a group work on it gradually, to avoid invasives coming in
- On Stone Land, Tom reports that all the brush that's pullable is out

Hunting Program update

- Had 12 sites this year, with 12 people, 6 or 8 of whom were more active
- Shot three does this year, up from one last year
- Have discovered quite a lot of illegal hunting activity
- Currently, deer hunting is only being pursued on conservation property, but could be modified to include private property
- Wendy talked about trying an enclosure – having a fenced area, and seeing what might be the difference for vegetation

Wild and Scenic Grant for Bowers Brook educational signs

- Wendy reported that a proposal for signs at several locations along the brook in Harvard would need to be submitted no later than February 1st
- Wendy would welcome help, if we do it, to take photographs
- We discussed possible locations, and came up with some ideas
 - o Bowers Spring property
 - o Ohlin property or Cruft Lane
 - o Old Mill site
 - o Stone Land overlooking the mill pond
- Another possibility would be to just do some small signs that just identify Bowers Brook

Next meeting – 2/22/22

Meeting adjourned at 9:25 PM