

HARVARD CONSERVATION COMMISSION
Land Stewardship Subcommittee
MINUTES OF MEETING
APPROVED: FEBRUARY 28, 2023

January 31, 2023

Present: Wendy Sisson, Jim Adelson, Peter von Conta, Brian McClain, Pam Durrant

Guest: Jim Gorss

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

Minutes from the 12/13/22 meeting, as drafted by Jim A and modified by Wendy, were approved unanimously.

Wendy applied for and received a small grant from SuAsCo-CISMA for Japanese knotweed control

- For an area on Stow Rd and the Perini land near 495, and also on Barrett land on Mass Ave
- This project will be a preview for a proposed larger scale effort to control roadside knotweed headed up by DPW

CPC decided not to fund invasive work this year

- There were more groups looking for funds this year, including large requests from Park & Rec
- Brian suggested we could partner with the Pond Committee, and potentially have an approach to go after the phragmites going in and out of Bare Hill Pond
- On the subject of phragmites, they are also in the Bennett's Brook wetland near Shaker Village; we may look at it this year to recommend a course of action
- CPC applications are due around September, so we may want to see what we can do this year to strengthen our application

TrailCare App

- Peter reported that he's gotten a lot of notices
- There are people going out and working on the problems being reported, which is very good, although they don't always indicate that they've taken care of something
- At this point, there aren't too many reports being put in the Trail Status Log, although we'd like to have them recorded there

Jim Gorss as a potential member of the Land Stewardship Subcommittee

- We have a vacancy due to Rob Traver's move out of Harvard

- Tom Gormley, who had previously expressed interest, has taken a new job whose commitments prevent him from joining LSS, but he would potentially like to be in on projects
- The LSS members at the meeting voted unanimously to recommend that Jim G become a member of LSS, and Wendy will take this to the Conservation Commission for approval
- Jim A will work with Jim G to get him access to the Trail Status Log
- Peter von Conta will send Jim G info on the TrailCare app
- Jim G will need to sign the chain saw waiver to do chain saw work

Clapp-Scorgie – one of the bridges has a hole, and will need repair

The Annual Report was prepared and submitted by Wendy

We're working on new Amphibian Crossing signs, which will say property of Harvard on them, though that may not deter theft

Pollinator Plants

- Robert Gegear is a bumblebee expert, and has helped us to identify the right plants to get
- One contemplated location is near the chestnut grove, on Powell-Reed-Abbot
- Jim G talked about Southborough's experience using Robert's pollinator plants, and offered to arrange a tour; Wendy, Brian, and possibly others were interested
- Robert Gegear will be talking in Stow on 2/15 at 7 PM on this, for those interested to hear him
- Maintenance of the pollinator plant areas was significant for long-term impact – weeding is the largest thing
- For location selection, Jim G indicated that access to water is critical, for the first year
- We need to think about someone to spearhead/manage this project

Ethics Training

- To be provided March 14, 2023 6-8 PM at Harvard Public Library (Volunteer Room)

Deer Management

- Repeated that there were four does taken – 1 at Maxant, 3 at Daman-Stephenson
- We recommended adding Coke to the list of properties in 2022

Trail User rules and etiquette

- To potentially discuss in the future
- Would include things like who gets off the trail to let another pass, and cell phone use so as not to disturb others
- Perhaps part of a bigger discussion on the directions for trails and trail use

New Hermann Orchard access trail

- When access through Margaret Nessler's CR is opened, there are three white pines down on the trail that need to be removed

- Peter asked that this be entered in the Trail Status log, and Wendy said she'll enter it

Stone Land boardwalk

- Somebody constructed a boardwalk/bridge from old pallets, and they were breaking down, exposing nails
- Wendy brought planks to replace the pallets
- The project remains to be done
- At our next meeting, we'll try to pick a date

Old Mill trail reconfiguration

- Jim A to bring information on where work needs to be done, and what type, to the next meeting
- Jim A said that from his Fall scouting, reblazing is probably the biggest part of the work
- We'll look to pick a date at our next meeting

Rodriguez

- The trail cuts there were done by Tony Shaw, without discussion or permission
- He was told afterwards by the Conservation Commission that he couldn't do it without permission
- ConCom is looking for a recommendation from LSS
- To pick a walk date/time at the next meeting to look it over

Spring Walk

- Discuss at the next meeting, since we'll probably have to decide the date and location, and can't wait until the following meeting for what will likely be an early April event
- Jim A will bring possible ideas to the meeting

Next meeting – February 28, 2023

The meeting adjourned at 9:15 PM