

# HARVARD CONSERVATION COMMISSION - Land Stewardship Subcommittee

## MINUTES OF MEETING

**April 25, 2023**

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

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

Minutes from the 4/4/23 meeting, as drafted by Jim A and with one correction from Brian, were approved unanimously.

Spring Walk (April 8<sup>th</sup>)

- Not a really large group – 15 total attendees – but Wendy felt it was very enjoyable
- Some of the history of the area had been mentioned during the hike, and one interesting item was that in 1940, Harvard had more apple trees than any other town in the state
- When the group reached the ponds at Bowers Springs, it was related that they were originally dug as gravel pits in the 1960s
- Most people took the longer route – approximately 2.6 miles – and didn't seem too tired out

Earth Day

- Brian had run the show for visitors to the Chestnut Grove, and had a great poster; 20 people came to his stop
- Wendy went to Frog Pond Farm
- Pam went to Margaret Nestler's, where a boardwalk is being installed this weekend
- In addition to visiting the Chestnut Grove, Jim A and his daughter Erica went to the Electric Vehicle Petting Zoo

Powell-Reed-Abbot/Pollinator Garden

- We have settled on a sunny site, near Jim Lee's house, for the Pollinator Garden
- The anticipated plot will be about 30' x 10', though triangular in shape
- We will probably need to fence for deer, so that the plants don't all get eaten; several material choices for the fence are possible, including green wire with stakes and/or landscape cloth
- For mulching
  - o Jim Lee would use wood chips, but perhaps they may be too acidic
  - o Pam liked shredded leaves, but then they would need to be hauled to the site
  - o Straw may be a possibility
  - o We may want to have Jim Lee chip some birch and give it time to decrease in acidity for future use

- At the north edge of the back field
  - o Abutters removed poplars and their house is more visible
  - o Jim Lee would like to put in some cedars
  - o Wendy thought of willows in the wet portion, possibly
  - o Pam will look at it, and make recommendations

Oak Sentinel Study Sites for Deer Management – nothing new since last meeting

Kaufman – Jim A to walk, and make recommendations on trail routing and marking, based on a letter raising issues regarding the property

Rodriguez Site Walk

- decided to hold off 'til summer, to be able to also see the new easement off of Cruft Lane
- For the new easement, we need to clear some large fallen pines on Hermann Orchard – Wendy to send Peter the location of the fallen trees, and perhaps Jim Gorss can help with the removal work

Amphibian Signs – we didn't lose any this year, in marked contrast to last year

Stone Land

- Wendy and Kevin to work on the boardwalk
- Need more autumn olive removal there

Holy Hill Dancing Ground Fence – Drew may be available to work on it

Wendy took a course for plans for managing invasives

- The course was oriented towards landscapers
- Wendy felt that she'd learned over the years what they were teaching; they really didn't have new suggestions for managing barberry in wetland areas
- Pulling large areas is disruptive, and creates opportunities for more invasives; they tended to emphasize herbicide as more effective for many situations
- Most treatments need to be repeated

We did receive a grant for Japanese knotweed treatment – the work will be done by this summer

Permitting was done last year for the phragmites where Bowers Brook flows out of Bare Hill Pond and crosses Rt. 110

More Powell-Reed-Abbot

- Wendy and Brian to work on bittersweet near Jim Lee's house
- Another spot there has multiflora rose; when that gets ripped out, we discussed what to put there so that another invasive doesn't come in, and Pam said she had a couple of native plants to suggest

### Trail Signs

- Peter reported that he is looking into having signs done with CNC equipment to have the lettering routed into the sign
- There are several different designs and styles of signs on our trails now, not just a single design
- For a design, Wendy recommended that Peter look at the one currently at Community Gardens
- Jim A reminded that there is a Sign Status tab in the Trail Status Log, with an indication of sign condition; the information was compiled in 2021

Next meeting 5/30

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45