

# HARVARD CONSERVATION COMMISSION - Land Stewardship Subcommittee

## MINUTES OF MEETING Approved: October 27, 2020

**September 22, 2020**

**Present:** Wendy Sisson, Jim Adelson, Rob Traver, Peter von Conta, John Lee, Pam Durrant

**Guest:** Margaret Kusner, *Harvard Press*

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

Minutes from the 7/28/20 meeting, as drafted by Jim A. and edited, were approved, with an additional correction to add that Rob Traver had been present at the 7/28 meeting

### Chestnut Orchard update

- Most trees are looking good, with three having already grown above the 5' height of the deer tubes
- Two trees have died, and some are runts
- Some watering has been done, due to the drought

### Mini-Kiosks with Maps – An Eagle Scout project

- Potentially for Clapp-Scorgie, Bare Hill, and Sprague
- We felt these should be mounted on posts, not on trees
- Peter will work on the kiosk design, and be the contact for the Scouts

### Fall Walk

- With the pandemic we can't offer a fall walk and decided a "suggested walk" isn't needed
- We can focus efforts on trail maintenance, esp. given increased use of trails

### Property/Trail Reports

- John Lee asked about the trail between Depot Road and Lancaster County Road; Wendy indicated that this trail is not on Conservation land, so it's not ours to maintain
- Trail Stewards
  - o Rob will become the steward for Clapp-Scorgie, taking over there for John Lee
  - o John will continue on Eastview, Willard, and Small
- Prospect Hill
  - o There is a large fallen pine that needs to be cut up, located near the junction of the trail heading up to Dean's Hill and the trail heading west that loops around; this tree does not block the trail, but it's a considerable visual distraction
  - o Peter will see if he can remove it, and seek help if it's more than he can handle with his chainsaw
- Holy Hill
  - o The Starpack material for trail improvement is at DPW
  - o Wayne Carollan engaged to apply the material but has yet to do
  - o Wendy continues to try to get Mike Bohan of Middlesex Fence to do repair work on the fence at the Dancing Grounds

- Remediation of steep section of snowmobile trail has eroded at sides after early summer downpours. Jim Burns noted the need for repair and placement of silt-sock at top of slope for erosion control and will convey to snowmobile club.
- Old Mill
  - Jim Adelson reviewed options for rerouting around the current wet and overgrown section that has drawn some complaints for years
  - Jim's option 1, which discontinues a section of the trail that goes through the wet, overgrown area was preferred for now, rather than an alternative that would have been to reroute the trail near the stonewall at the edge of the property, because then the trail would have been close to adjacent houses
- Bridal Way
  - Jim Burns has cleared fallen trees this summer and Wendy and Brian did some prep work a year ago for the Fall walk
- The section near Ayer Rd needs more work; Wendy will address and ask Jim Burns for help Black Pond/Vesenka
  - Wendy has been coordinating with SVT and needs to reblaze trails

#### Bromfield School Volunteers organized to do trailwork for Harvard Conservation Trust for Senior Community Service projects

- Just did a new trail on the Callahan property, from W Bare Hill Road to Bolton Road
- Cleared the Brem trail
- Removed barbed wire from the Brown property
- Marc Sevigny suggested they could monitor town trails and Wendy asked about getting their help for other projects
  - Clearing bittersweet at Shaker Spring House trailhead
  - Trimming back branches and white pines on Holy Hill and other trails

#### Invasives work

- Williams
  - Cat pulled invasives over this summer
  - Wendy hired Oxbow Associates for pesticide application on the Williams land; Wendy did some pulling in preparation
- Bare Hill Wildlife Sanctuary
  - Brian cleared invasives along the Mary Abbot trail, from the Bolton Rd entry
  - There has also been herbicide treatment for poison ivy and for bittersweet
- Shaker Field on Shaker Rd. – still needs pesticide treatment for Black Locust
- Shaker Spring House
  - Invasives at the entry need to be cleared
  - Possibly the Bromfield Community Service volunteers could help with this
- Clapp-Scorgie
  - Wendy has flagged Norway maples for removal

#### Grant for Mapping

- It may be possible to get a grant to improve our mapping capabilities – Town staff do not have expertise on this
- We need more mapping, for multiple purposes
- One area of needed help is identifying which phone app(s) to use for mapping and field reporting

#### Log and Trail Work reporting

- Marc Sevigny takes people's reports and gets pictures; he would like a better system for reporting

Wendy will talk to Brian and Jim B about the reporting approach Deer Management

- The archery hunt season starts 10/19 this year (10/5 on Daman/Stevenson) and ends Dec. 31st
- Daman/Stevenson, Perini, Mass Ave, Rodriguez and Willard/Poitras are the properties
- Concom has sent out an abutter letter
- We'll talk in the future about monitoring and exclosures
- Please give Wendy any feedback on hunting

Haskell Land

- Calves are drawing interest and visitors from nearby Still River Road

Next meeting will take place on October 27<sup>th</sup>

Meeting adjourned at 8:50 pm.