

HARVARD CONSERVATION COMMISSION - Land Stewardship Subcommittee

MINUTES OF MEETING

May 15, 2018

Present: Wendy Sisson, Jim Adelson, Brian McClain, Carl Sciple, Sydney Blackwell, Jim Burns

Not Present: Pam Durrant, Phil Knoettner, John Lee

Guest: Chris Fitzgerald

Wendy Sisson called the meeting to order at 7:20 P.M. at the Hildreth House

Minutes from the previous meeting (4/17/18), as prepared by Jim A and edited, were approved

Property Reports

- Shaker Spring House
 - o Carl and Joe Theriault had cleaned the trail
 - o Since Joe had been a member of the Harvard Historical Commission, he had a key to the padlocked spring house, and they were able to go inside
 - o Tim Kilhart had done more clearing at the trailhead
 - o Carl and Joe didn't have time for trail marking, so that still needs to be done
 - o Carl is going to try to get an abutter to be the trailkeeper
- Holy Hill – Carl, Marc Sevigny, and Richard Blinn will be working on the new decking for the Bennetts Brook bridge on 5/16/18
- Prospect Hill
 - o Chris Fitzgerald volunteered to become the trail steward for Prospect Hill, since it didn't appear that Teresa Garti had sufficient time to monitor and maintain the trail, and to update the log
 - o Jim A to give Chris access to the Trail Status Log (done 5/16/18)
- Pin Hill – Jim A had walked the trail after the April meeting, and captured in the log 6 trees that need to be removed, although all are easy step-overs, so it's not urgent
- Barba's Point – to be added to the log (done by Jim A 5/16/18), with Sydney Blackwell as Trail Steward
- Clapp-Scorgie
 - o Jim B, Brian and John Lee have completed a lot of tree removal/chainsawing
 - o We agreed to allow a blue trail on the west side of the property to go, because of the great amount of material blocking it, and the feeling that this particular trail did not have a lot to offer or a lot of demand

Carl mentioned a group of people that meets at Hildreth House (through Council on Aging) that he thought was a potential source of trailkeepers and possibly volunteers for other work; he will talk to them to see if there's interest

Willard Trail Layout

- On 4/21/18, a group including Wendy, Sydney, Brian, John, Jim A, and Pam completed trail flagging for the trail on this property on the south side of Willard Lane
- This could be a potential site for our Spring walk in 2019

Clapp Cove Bridge/Trail

- Still River Realty Trust apparently not eager to provide an easement at this point, to allow us to link Willard and Clapp-Scorgie
- The bridge on the trail near Clapp Cove still needs to have its footings reset – a possible Fall project

Bare Hill

- There is a difficult wet section right near the Bolton line that needs boardwalk, or some similar approach
- Chris Fitzgerald will analyze and suggest a solution

Trail/Property Signs

- Phil is working with Pete Dumont on a set of new signs
- DPW will help with their installation, since they'll all be at roadside locations
- Carl reported that the Shaker Spring House sign is dilapidated, and since this is not one of the ones that Phil and Joe are making, Carl will replace the current sign with a metal Harvard Conservation sign

Trailhead Mowing (plus some internal fields)

- Wendy is looking for ideas for handling this more effectively
- We currently have a contract guy doing some, but perhaps we could contract with him for more

Chris Fitzgerald's maintenance list

- Blomfelt – the Western end near Ayer Rd is frequently wet, except when frozen over; we didn't have a good solution, so Chris will get notes added to the on-line trail map to indicate that it can be wet and overgrown
- Prospect Hill
 - o Chris indicated that the entrance from the playing fields on Depot Road, near the back of the transfer station, can get overgrown, but Chris will handle it
 - o We still need coverage for the entrance off Prospect Hill Road, which gets overgrown with grass and poison ivy every summer; Chris will look to see if the trail could be rerouted closer to the stone wall, to reduce the scale of the mowing requirement
- Clapp-Scorgie – as mentioned above, there is a blue trail on the western side of the property that we agreed not to maintain; Chris will ask Marc Sevigny to indicate that it's not a trail anymore
- Small Nature Trail
 - o We agreed to focus on keeping access via the snowmobile trail open
 - o Chris will monitor the other entry from the parking lot, to see whether it can be used reasonably; otherwise, we may want to have the sign moved to the snowmobile entry, but it isn't our sign to move (belongs to the school)
- Great Elms/Brehm
 - o Chris had found the Brehm entry difficult

- Brehm is actually HCT, not town land, so we won't be covering that
- Wendy indicated that the "official" entry (with parking) for Great Elms is now from the end of Murray Lane, via the Brown Trail

Wendy plans to take a walk on the Mass Ave property with Pam for plant spotting

The low fence at the Dancing Ground on Holy Hill is in bad shape – Sydney will check whether the Historical Commission could access CPC funds to pay for it to be rebuilt

Wendy related that we will be doing a particular treatment for the invasive Japanese Knotweed on roadsides by conservation land

Wendy showed news signs, including our new Amphibian Crossing signs, which Brian will put up

Next meeting – 6/19

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 PM