

**Land Stewardship Committee Meeting
January 15, 2019
Town Hall - 7:00 PM**

Meeting Minutes

Present: Tom Brownrigg, Deborah Geltner, Warren Lyman, Andrew Wilmot, Sylvia Willard (Conservation Administrator)

Not Present: Lyn Carroll, Dwight DeMay

The meeting was opened at 7:06 PM

Minutes: The minutes of the December 11, 2018 meeting were approved with amendments.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Drone Regulations

Geltner reported that a recent news article said that the Federal Aviation Administration may be on the verge of loosening restrictions to make commercial drones more useful in the US. Under a set of proposed rules, commercial drone operators could fly aircraft at night and use them over populated areas.

2. Cranberry Bog Working Group (CBWG)

There has been no CBWG activity in the last month to report on.

3. Report on Carlisle-Chelmsford Bog Subcommittee Meeting

The Carlisle-Chelmsford Bog Subcommittee had its semi-annual meeting in Chelmsford on 1-7-19. Three ConsCom members plus Willard and Lyman represented Carlisle. Chelmsford continues to be interested in learning what Carlisle will do with its bog. If we do not continue with agriculture, they will consider removing the earthen dam for the reservoir in Chelmsford. If we do continue with agriculture, and also continue with our registered water rights for the agriculture, they would like Carlisle to assume responsibility for maintaining the dam. In the meantime, Chelmsford may request an engineering study of the dam. Chelmsford also reported that their DPW has agreed to maintain the Elm St. trail access to their Cranberry Reservation, as a fire road, as far as the dam. They also noted that large trees growing on the dam are a concern.

4. Greenough Dam

Willard reported that her draft letter requesting State funds for the repair of the Greenough dam had been sent to Town Counsel for review. She hopes to be able to send it to the State by the end of January. She also learned that Carlisle would not need a permit from the State's Office of Dam Safety for the anticipated repairs. Willard will also be sending a modified letter/application

(for funding) to Carlisle's Community Preservation Committee; their deadline for application for funding in 2019 is February 1st. The thinking is that if the State does not agree to fund the dam repairs then CPC might. There was discussion on the dual application plan.

Separately, Geltner reported recently seeing the stump remains of a cut tree on the north side of Greenough Pond. She has learned that the tree was initially felled by beavers and later trimmed (and removed?) by an unknown person.

5. Need for More Conservation Signs

There was a discussion on the need for new conservation signs (and property line markers) to go on newly acquired conservation lands as well as replacement signs on older properties. We will look for a volunteer to come up with a list of needed signs before seeking funding. Lyman mentioned that he has an assortment of old signs, mounting hardware and sign posts (wood) that he will inventory. Willard has a collection of property line markers. Some existing signs just need washing!

6. Woodward Land - Update

Willard gave an update on the recent Woodward acquisition. One issue that had to be addressed is finding a pathway for any future (buried) water supply pipeline from the O'Rourke land – on which the Town has a public water supply easement – to a public road; apparently a pipeline across the already acquired Woodward land would not be approved.

7. Cranberry Bog Maintenance

Lyman requested work on: (1) the disturbed earth near the Bog House left from the new well installation; and (2) the Martin St. end of the lower reservoir dam which is deteriorating and close to failure. Willard said she is in discussions with Duffy and the DPW, respectively, on taking care of these two matters. Willard said she is also considering some fencing and signs on the lower reservoir dam to control dog access to the water and thus reduce the formation of erosion gullies.

Willard said that she had submitted a request, and necessary information, to Tim Goddard to replace the three carbon monoxide detectors in the Bog House apartments that have stopped working.

NEW BUSINESS

1. LSC Annual Report

The committee reviewed a draft of the LSC Annual Report that had been drafted by Wilmot. The report was approved as amended in the meeting.

2. Site Visit to Russell Conservation Land

A site visit will be planned when warmer weather returns. Willard reported some problems with the creation of a compensatory (storm water) storage area on the site covering a few hundred square feet. While permitted, the area was not supposed to be constructed during high water periods. And the heavy equipment used left unwanted tracks at the site. Later the site will be hydro-seeded using a tackifier.

3. Stearns St. (61B) Visit

Willard had gone to visit this site. She does not feel it has the necessary conservation value to support purchase by the Town for conservation purposes.

4. LSC Conservation Projects

There was a brief discussion of the need for LSC to review what it can realistically do in the way of conservation projects, including working on some of the LSC “Initiatives” listed in the Town’s 2013 Open Space & recreation Plan (OS&RP). A major discussion will be held at a future meeting when more time is available. Lyman suggested that LSC members come prepared to: (1) prepare a prioritized list of projects/initiatives to work on; and (2) identify those which they would like to work on. Willard mentioned the need for more volunteers to start work on the next OS&RP, and Lyman mentioned his interest in preparing a Baseline Assessment for the Benfield Land.

5. Joint Meeting of Conservation Minded Committees

This “initiative” is on LSC’s OS&RP list (see item # 5 above). The committees that should be invited include: ConsCom, LSC, CRAC, Trails, CCF, and possibly the Planning Board. A volunteer/champion is needed to lead the effort to organize the joint meeting; in the past, this was done by Lynn Knight. A significant problem is finding a date and room that allows most interested parties to come.

6. Budget Issues

Willard mentioned that the currently approved ConsCom budget includes \$12,000 for bog maintenance, \$2,000 more than past years. This situation now allows for more flexibility in using other land maintenance funds in ConsCom’s budget. She also mentioned the need for more funding for the control or removal of invasive plants on conservation lands.

The meeting ended at 8:56 PM.

Next Meetings

- February 12, 2019 @ 7 PM [cancelled for lack of quorum]
- March 12, 2019 @ 7 PM

Minutes approved on March 12, 2019

Submitted by Warren Lyman