

Acton
Land Stewardship Committee (LSC) Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, April 15, 2025, 7 P.M., Hybrid

Attendees (in bold)

Full (voting) members: **Bettina Abe, Jon Campbell** (Vice-Chair), Dale Chayes, **Aaron Moore, Bruce Rachman, John Watlington, Joe Will** (Minutes), **Tom Wolf** (Chair)

Associate (nonvoting) members: Ken Appel, Josh Haines, **Jody Harris, Rebecca Harvey, Everett Kenerson, Mel Lima, Bob Mackin, Adam Nolde, David Pinsky, Jim Salem, Bill Smith, Jason Temple, Todd Tsakiris, Bob Walton**

Others: **Ian Bergemann** (Community Conservation Specialist)

Tom opened the meeting at 7 p.m.

Review & acceptance of March 18 Minutes

March Minutes not ready yet.

Concerns from the public

None.

Invasive plants, March 2025

Japanese barberry — John presented Japanese barberry because it's "really standing out right now", referencing the Acton Invasives Wiki Japanese barberry page:

http://ec2-44-218-8-154.compute-1.amazonaws.com/aiw/index.php?title=Japanese_Berry

Japanese barberry, multiflora rose, and bush honeysuckle are the plants that are really standing out right now, so now is a good time to find this plant and kill it. One of the most distinctive features of Japanese barberry is its sharp spines — vicious straight thorns. These will actually go through leather jeans. They can also embed themselves in your hand quite painfully. The straight thorns and the bright yellow wood you see when you cut the stems or roots are ways to make sure that you're killing Japanese barberry and not some native plant. Japanese barberry spreads mostly by seed, but also by buried stem so frequently you'll find a cluster with little colonies growing around it. It doesn't take too many cuttings to kill. You can try to dig the roots out, but you don't have to.

Ian's updates

- Land Steward Check Ins: Two new check-ins. Ian will add some new dates that will go into June and July for those who haven't met with him yet.
- Land Steward Logs: Stewards are doing them; Ian needs time to check them. Per Ian: On reporting stewards' hours on conservation lands, if you feel like you're out there with your volunteer hat on, say noting things to come back to, picking up trash, or anything (even research, paperwork, or battling beavers), then reporting how many hours you spend each month is great information to share with him. In pursuing grants, reported hours allows Ian to write, "On average, my land stewards work x number of hours per year."
- Volunteer activity: Several things going on. Among them, a "really great" volunteer day today at Stonyemeade where a corporate group of 16 helped remove "a ton" of bush honeysuckle as part of its community service program. Yesterday a small group attacked barberry and multiflora rose at the main entrance to Nagog Hill.

- Great Hill encroachment (187 Main Street): A letter has been sent to the Conservation Commission; also to the Planning Department in case it would be a zoning issue. It's on the Cons Comm agenda for its meeting tomorrow evening.
- We found out today that we will not receive BRIC (Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities) grant funding from FEMA to help pay for replacement of the culvert at Jenks — a result of Federal funding cuts to FEMA.
- Upcoming programs at Acton Memorial Library (AML): On Wednesday, April 30, John will give a talk on invasive plant species. On Thursday, May 22, John (and four others) will receive the Col. Francis Faulkner Exemplary Volunteer of the Year Award from the Select Board. Check the AML website for times.
- On messages sent to the LSC by the public, Ian will respond to them, but should he copy the LSC on his responses? Per Ian: Land Stewards can always assume that I will respond to such messages, and if I don't respond, it's because a response is not required. If a message is about a particular parcel, Ian will CC the steward for that parcel.
- Ian will be traveling incommunicado May 21-31.

Parcel Issues

- Guggins Brook: Jon reported on the widespread flooding (water level 6 in. below the stringers on the Troop 284 bridge) caused by beavers and the recent snowmelt, following up on his monthly e-report sent on Sunday. Jon will be supervising high school volunteers on their Community Service Day Thursday.
- Camp Acton: The memorial bench (see February 18 meeting Minutes) is moving forward. Ian is waiting on a purchase order to order the bench. Also, Ian talked briefly with Josh Haines about rebuilding the amphitheater and fire pit, and Josh seemed interested. If someone is to do something re those facilities, they should be sure to first talk with Bruce.

Also, it appears that there will be housing developed on adjoining land. A lot of trees have been cleared. A building site can be seen very clearly from Campsites 1-3.

Boardwalk Design Guide Revision project

Bob led a technical discussion on the Design Guide contents. The issues, per Bob, are here:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1O09NpgbYLeqUpjWOXFmr2ukD7gxHiHVDBIbNNHcTglU/edit?usp=sharing>

and the meeting results, as edited by Bob and Bruce, are here:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ZD7vOD5ozCC_wqXd8rQMvorDzGEXgzsA_qtTojbSpn4/edit?usp=sharing

Comments during the discussion that seemed peripheral to Design Guide information:

- Eagle Scouts usually raise like around \$1K and spend \$500-\$700 for such projects. In general, prices for building materials could increase.
- Ian will look into the purchase of a jet sled or gorilla cart, or something, to haul gravel needed for construction.
- After Bob puts together the Guidelines, we can make a “Tips of the Trade” for Scouts.

Next step(s): Bob will start writing up pieces that will go into the first draft of the Boardwalk Design Guide. He expects to present these pieces a few at a time at upcoming LSC meeting. He will keep accumulating information that could go into the Guide and try to address other issues that could come up —

hopefully at a regular LSC meeting. Question: Can things in the original Guide that we didn't critique be retained? Probably yes. As Bob's drafts are approved and there are no more edits, Bob and/or Ian will try to integrate the approved material into the existing Boardwalk Design Guide, with Ian possibly including photos, possibly of Scouts at work.

Other Updates

- Google Drive: There is a Google Drive to house your kiosk photos (front, back, legs, roof, etc.). Ian will re-send its link. If there's not a folder for your parcel, make one and move your photos into it.
- Wetherbee property: Acton has closed on it purchase. The property is not open to the public yet as there is still work to be done on it. Ian expects to organize some May trail workdays with Scouts, a goal being to have the parcel open to the public by the end of June. There will be a dirt parking lot where a house used to be, along with a sign identifying the parcel, and a kiosk that a Scout is already working on. The parcel will be joined by trails, but not by name, to the contiguous Wetherbee Conservation Land.

Next month's (05/20/25) agenda

Bob's Design Guide revision

Adjournment

At 8:33 pm.

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, May 20, 2025, at 7 p.m.