

**Acton**  
**Land Stewardship Committee (LSC) Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday, October 21, 2025, 7 P.M.**  
**Hybrid Zoom and In-person**  
**Room 9 Acton Town Hall, 472 Main Street, Acton, MA 01720**

Attendees (in bold)

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

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

Others: **Ian Bergemann** (Community Conservation Specialist), **Brent Carter** (who is applying to be steward of Wills Hole), **Nik Mani** (who is applying to be steward of Great Hill).

Jonathan Campbell opened the meeting at 7:05 p.m.

The meeting began with introductions of new and existing members, including Nikhil Mani, who has applied to become the steward of Great Hill.

1. Review & acceptance of September 16 minutes:

Minutes not yet ready for review.

2. Concerns from the public

None.

3. Invasive plants, September 2025

John Watlington presented and discussed *Euonymus alatus* (commonly referred to as burning bush or winged Euonymus), the challenges of dealing with it on Acton conservation lands, how it is spread, how to identify, how to kill/remove. [https://ipm.cahnr.uconn.edu/invasive\\_plants\\_burning\\_bush-winged\\_euonymus/](https://ipm.cahnr.uconn.edu/invasive_plants_burning_bush-winged_euonymus/). He emphasized the large amount of seeds and seedlings under the parent plant and its predominance in the Great Hill understory. Bob W. mentioned a large infestation near the Pencil Factory. John and Rebecca will get together to discuss another Great Hill trail.

4. Boardwalk Design Guide Project

This is Bob's ongoing project. Monthly, Bob has led a technical discussion on the Design Guide contents. The process of reviewing and accepting New Guide Components was completed at the September LSC meeting-- except that additional changes to the bridge components [13] through [16] were to be allowed at this October meeting. There were no additional changes. The next public version of the Guide can be found at

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1vqgZpeE5wAlpT0Fd2Fy7jKuWsIBtPfiM1gZYLssWVOC/edit?tab=t.0#heading=h.wzmt52hjgwbe> .

Bob requests the LSC's formal acceptance of the new New Guide Components. Instead it was decided to open this document to comments on Google Docs.

Next step is to have someone write a first draft of the document with a goal of all technical details entered correctly. A second go-over will be to make the guide easy to understand. Rebecca suggests using

AI (Artificial Intelligence) for the final draft. The immediate next step is to have committee members submit comments on the New Guide Components.

Ian to send the latest copy of the Boardwalk Design Guide to everyone as both a Word document and **by** a link to Google Drive. Ian will collect all comments on the new Design Guide draft as written and resend to the Committee. It's important that Bruce Rachman review the Guide draft. Dale suggests that we specify the audience for whom the Guide is intended. Dale also suggests that we be careful to not "over specify" details and materials.

#### 5. Rebecca Presented and Discussed TrailCare App

Rebecca presented the ins and outs of using this app. Trail users can make comments and provide photos of trail issues. It will send the steward an email with "new pin notifications." You can even get notifications on the Apple Watch. One does not need an account to report a trail issue. You can download signage for your kiosk if you want to use this on your parcel. She feels the app is here to stay and is used widely. Not enough stewards monitor the communications and are not clearing the issues once fixed. You need to register but you don't have to pay to use it. Link: <https://www.trailcare.com/about>

#### 6. Election of Clerk and Discussion about Expanding Membership

Bettina Abe volunteered to serve as Clerk. John Watlington nominated Bettina; it was seconded. No further discussion. Roll call vote was unanimous.

Jim Snyder-Grant is asking about membership expansion. The LSC currently is allowed 25 members (9 regular, 15 associate, 1 being onboarded) overseeing 24 trail systems, with 549 Main Street to have a future steward. The charter allows a maximum of 25 members, but to cover all 24 areas plus 3 at-large positions, 27 are needed.

Dale suggested increasing to 30 members total for flexibility, however, all open positions do not need to be filled immediately. Discussion emphasized ensuring all members have active assignments and responsibilities. Ian recommended that there be some way of evaluating each new member after their first year to determine their commitment availability. Currently, each new LSC member receives a one-year trial/probationary period before a three-year term renewal. Membership categories to be clarified as "Voting" or "Associate." Rebecca and Ian will revise the mission statement and charter over the winter. Proposal to define "inactive" members as those unresponsive for six months (via reports, email, or presence at meetings), after which their positions may be reassigned.

#### 7. Conservation Updates (Ian)

- Beaver Solutions – company installed 2 devices at HHM. Ian will check tomorrow and take photos. They will install 2 more next year for downstream dams. Next week Thurs. 10:45 am they will come to Guggins. Volunteers are to meet at Inches Brook Lane in Boxborough to help carry materials the long hike in. No help needed to install. All of the work has been permitted for the upstream culvert's decoy fence and the Troop 284 bridge's beaver deceiver and protective fence. Monitoring to occur in the spring. Beaver Solutions LLC recommend to breach HHM or they will come and breach it in the winter.

- Bench Policy: The policy will describe a 5' green recycled-plastic bench (current approved style) and include the Camp Acton bench and plaque as examples. It will apply to both conservation and non-conservation lands, with locations subject to Conservation Staff approval. The Recreation Department may adopt the policy. The LSC may consider limiting to one bench per conservation property or ending the

donation program entirely—without a clear policy, the LSC risks being overruled by the Conservation Commission (Cons Comm).

- 549 Main St. – Grand Opening: October 28

“The Trails at Brewster’s Meadow” will open on Acton Water District (AWD) land at 549 Main Street—the only AWD property open to the public. All LSC actions go through Ian, who coordinates with the AWD. The LSC is responsible for trail maintenance. The Town is working with AWD, to adjust responsibilities so the Town will mow the meadow annually and AWD will mow trails biweekly. The amended Land Management Plan has not happened yet. No dogs or hunting allowed as this is water recharge area.

- Violation

There was a person walking at Spring Hill with archery equipment, which is a violation the Conservation Land’s Rules and Regulations. The information was given to the Cons Comm and the Acton PD, who will increase patrols in the area. Each year there is evidence of illegal hunting on some parcels.

8. Other parcel issues

Dale mentioned there was dumping leaves and grass clippings at Grassy Pond entrance at Willis Holden Drive. 13 Wheeler Lane abutters’ trees need attention. Wills Hole sign is rotten and buried in the bushes on Captain Hadley Road. At Davis Road entrance to Nashoba Brook there is a tree that needs cutting up and Bob W. will work with Dale to put on sawyers’ list. Bob W. mentioned that the old safe at Davis Road last year may be lined with asbestos mortar. Bob W. would like to draft a simple letter to Bill Klauer asking permission to maintain a trail on the Boy Scout land and he will run it by Ian.

9. Other updates (Blazes, Bridges, Boardwalks, Maps, Mowing, Sawyering, Shed Stuff, Website, etc.)

John W. requests that the Town not mow the sumac patch so early in the Fall at Great Hill. Ian stated that next year Conservation may contract out all meadow mowing. DPW has to mow when it fits into their schedule. Sam Bell will mow when the Town asks. This will depend on the budget. Town (Ian) has money for sawyer training.

Action items:

1. Ian to send the latest copy of the Boardwalk Design Guide to everyone as both a Word document and through a link to Google Drive
2. Bob or Bruce to integrate existing updates and changes into the existing Boardwalk Design Guide
3. Ian to send the bench policy document to everyone for comments
4. Ian to check the Beaver Solutions installation at Heath Hen Meadow
5. Ian to coordinate with Beaver Solutions for the Guggins Brook work on Thursday
6. Ian to contact the neighbors near Inches Brook Lane about people accessing the Guggins Brook trail
7. Rebecca and Ian to work together to update the LSC charter/mission statement
8. Bob W. to draft a letter to Bill Klauer about the Scout Trust Land trail
9. Ian to coordinate with John about delaying the town's mowing of the sumac patch at Great Hill
10. Ian to organize a meeting about meadow mowing schedules and expectations
11. Ian to get quotes for sawyer training – Dale to provide contact info for a possible trainer.
12. Ian to order lumber based on John's list
13. Ian to send Bettina the link to the meeting recording
14. Ian to help Bettina set up email forwarding.

**Adjournment**

At 8:56 pm.

The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, November 18, 2025, at 7 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Bettina D. Abe