

**Land Stewardship Committee Meeting**  
**March 14, 2023**  
**Via teleconference - 7:00 PM**

**Meeting Minutes**

**Present:** Judy Asarkof, Tom Brownrigg, Dwight DeMay, Warren Lyman, and Rhonda Michaud. Julie Durrell and Debby Geltner were absent. Conservation Administrator Sylvia Willard was present.

This meeting was conducted by Zoom teleconference due to the Covid-19 pandemic, with all participants at home. The meeting was opened at 7:05 PM by Chair Lyman.

Guests: Richard Annese, and prospective new LSC members Claudia Talland and Shane Usher

The February 7, 2023, minutes were approved as amended.

1. Prospective new members Shane Usher and Claudia Talland

Willard said that ConsCom has been very busy and she has not been able to schedule Talland and Usher for an appearance. She said she will try to have this on the agenda for the March 30 meeting.

2. Towle Field

a. Suggested signs describing field management

Discussion was postponed until the next meeting since Durrell and Geltner were absent.

b. Kiosk signs

Michaud reviewed the signs she had prepared for Towle kiosk and asked for comments. There is currently a list of plants, although no one knew who created the list. Brownrigg suggested that botanist Walter Kittredge, who has been preparing a plant list for Towle Field, review the list to see if he thought it was accurate; Asarkof said that she will contact him. As an alternative to a list, Lyman suggested selecting a few plants (maybe up to a dozen) and include pictures of these. Discussion will continue at the next meeting.

c. Adding native plants, and grant request

Asarkof said that in February she received an email from the Mass Pollinator Network that mentioned a grant for planting native trees and other plants. The deadline was February 28, and she contacted Lyman and Michaud to ask whether or not to submit an application. Lyman and Michaud encouraged her to send the application, although the application was not reviewed by

LSC or ConsCom since there was insufficient time before the deadline. Asarkof sent LSC members a copy of the application, sent to One Tree Planted, prior to the meeting. At the meeting, she said LSC did not receive a grant. She thought that there were many applicants, and only a few were chosen.

Following this discussion, there was a discussion of whether to plant native plants at Towle Field. Asarkof had submitted a memo to LSC prior to the meeting with some suggestions as to how this might be done. Brownrigg suggested that Asarkof ask Walter Kittredge his opinion as to which plants would be good choices. Regarding the location of these plants, Asarkof thought that they could be planted in places where Maddie Kiszewski and co-workers had removed non-native invasive species. Willard asked about the cost of the plants and noted that they might have to be watered during the growing season. Asarkof said that Kittredge sells plants, but that another factor is “robustness”; she has experience with several suppliers and can obtain cost estimates. Lyman said that he grows native plants from seed and could do this at no cost to the town. Discussion will be continued at the next meeting.

### 3. Richard Annese, regarding Greenough Land

Mr. Annese lives off Estey Road in Billerica, near Greenough Land. He would like Estey Road extended to the border with Carlisle where it would end very near Greenough. He would like to develop a portion of his land in Carlisle, so that his son could build a house there. Willard thought LSC should be aware of this project given its proximity to Greenough. Annese joined the meeting at about 7:30 PM to answer questions. He also provided a map showing the location of the proposed house and road extension.

Annese said that the road extension with turn-around was required by the Billerica Fire Dept. There are currently two very large boulders at the Carlisle end, but Annese would be agreeable to having a guard rail there, as suggested by Lyman. The project is still under review by the Carlisle Planning Board, and Annese will need to have the property boundaries marked. Willard suggested that there be a “preconstruction review of existing conditions” which would be attended by LSC members. Willard said that there are no wetlands on the parcel so that ConsCom would not be involved. Annese said that his main concern is the removal of trees with barbed wire that are along the boundary with Greenough, left over from the days when it was farmed. He is concerned that the barbed wire is hazardous to children. Annese is agreeable to having LSC members visit the property, but no date has been set.

### 4. Foss Farm – Protection of Sandplain-Grassland Habitat

Discussion was postponed until Durrell and Geltner are available.

### 5. Cranberry Bog Working Group

The meeting scheduled for February 13 at 7 PM was postponed until March 20 due to lack of a quorum. Lyman is planning to attend.

#### 6. Plans for Invasive Plants on Major Conservation Lands

Prior to the meeting, Asarkof sent a memorandum “Discussion to developing a plan addressing native plants on all the major conservation areas”. The memorandum was discussed at the meeting. Asarkof raised the question of whether LSC should begin a program to inventory and remove invasives on conservation lands, and how this would be done. After discussion, members voiced their support for this program. Some issues that were discussed were: who would identify the plants and map their locations; how the plants would be removed, e.g. by professionals or volunteers; and how funding would be obtained for professional help.

Brownrigg asked about the scope of the project, i.e. which areas to focus on. Asarkof suggested that areas that had been treated for invasives by Kiszewski could be replanted with natives, since the soil was already disturbed. Michaud said that this would tie in with an effort to reintroduce native plants at Towle. Asarkof prefers the use of Kiszewski or Kittredge for plant identification since they are both very knowledgeable. Willard suggested using high school students in need of community service projects as part of the labor force. Asarkof said that she will work on developing a protocol and will contact Kittredge regarding his possible participation. Willard suggested selecting one property to begin with and to estimate the costs involved.

#### 7. Stewardship Program Checklists

Several members submitted checklists for conservation lands prior to the meeting. Lyman asked members to read these and send their questions to the people who wrote the checklists.

#### 8. Earth Day Program: “Route to Sustainability”

There was no discussion of visual material prepared by Durrell and Geltner since both were absent. Lyman reviewed the list of participants, and various people signed up for duty at the table. Willard said that oversize visuals can be printed at Town Hall according to John Metivier, Building Inspector.

The event will be held on the Town Common, and Willard suggested bringing weights in case of wind. She also suggested that if candy is offered, it should not be wrapped in plastic to not offend the sensibilities of some of the participants (paper wrapping would be better). Lyman said he will be there early to help set up the display.

#### 9. All Chairs Meeting 3/10/23

The meetings are held quarterly, and Lyman and Willard attended. The only matter of potential interest was that fully remote Zoom meetings for committees might not be allowed after this

month. However, Willard was later informed that hybrid in-person/Zoom meetings might continue until 2025. She will follow up on the requirements for hybrid meetings. Lyman took a poll, and all members present expressed an interest in having in-person meetings, although Geltner would probably not be able to do this.

#### 10. Other

Willard said that ConsCom's request for funds to remove Greenough barn is on the warrant for spring Town Meeting; a Notice of Intent for the project has been approved. She has had no response from the Office of Dam Safety regarding the proposal to repair of Cranberry Bog Dam #1.

Documents discussed at meeting:

- J. Asarkof, Earth Month Event Proposal submitted to One Tree Planted 2/23/23, for planting native trees, shrubs, and perennial wildflowers at Towle Field (grant not awarded).

#### **Next Meetings:**

April 11, 2023 @ 7 PM

May 9, 2023 @ 7 PM

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM.

Submitted by Tom Brownrigg

Minutes approved: 4/11/23