

June 9, 2022 Land Stewardship Subcommittee Meeting Minutes

1. The meeting was **called to order at 8:35** by Ann Welsh. Members attending: John Carroll, Ann Welsh, Sally Needell, Larry Brickner-Wood, Gale Carey, Mike Everngam. On Zoom: Mike Drooker and John Nachilly. Also present: Tom Brightman and Todd Selig (on Zoom)
2. The **meeting agenda** was approved unanimously.
3. **May meeting minutes** were amended and approved; Larry Brickner-Wood and Sally Needell abstained.
4. **Project Updates**-Tom Brightman
 - Tom introduced three UNH students who are **Nature Groupie interns** for the summer. They are working with Tom for two weeks doing field work and learning about what he does.
 - **Spruce Hole:** Notices prepared by UNH students conducting research at Spruce Hole were discussed regarding changes/additions and locations. There are no QR codes at present due to the UNH permitting process. It was suggested that an explanation explaining why the research applies to the Arctic. Signs will be enlarged.
 - The “herd” trail to the bog at Spruce Hole has been covered up; Tom has in mind a possible location for a bog overlook..
 - **Oyster River/Thompson Forest:** The Conservation Commission has provided funds for the continued mowing by John Nachilly.
 - **Doe Farm:** A new, well-established fire pit has been found on the site near Moat Island. It will be dismantled and new signage will include the “why” of fire danger in the area. Signs will also encourage positive aspects of using the site for picnicking and swimming. Challenges to stopping the campfires include a tradition of fire-building and the delivery of the materials for the fire pits by boat. Fire signage will be separate from the overall site map. Signage will include a statement about the site being “our” responsibility (not the town’s).
 - **Milne Property:** Work on the property will be on June 15th from 9-12:00. The Milne property has been added to the Monarch Waystation registry and NHF&G will be providing signage for the site.
5. **White Trail Reroute:** John Nachilly and Tom Brightman met with the UNH Woodlands Committee to discuss changes to the trails on the UNH Thompson Farm parcel. Suggestions for improvements were made and ultimately rejected by UNH in favor of the original plan. There are continued concerns by John and Tom that there are alternate options that would avoid trails on wetlands, and they would like access to the UNH maps showing sensitive areas and research areas. Next steps were discussed and it was suggested that it might make sense to have non-voting representation by UNH at LSSC meetings and by the LSSC at UNH Woodlands sessions. Todd Selig will contact Steve Eisenhauer (UNH Office of Woodlands) and Megan Davis (UNH President’s office) regarding improving communications with non-voting members of the respective committees.
6. **Follow-up to Tallamy:** A discussion was held about how to encourage composting yard waste, and how to match town initiatives and DPW efforts like No Mow May. This led to discussion of how to effectively share with the community information such as food waste and methane and

the important role of insects in our food web. It was pointed out that facts alone are not enough to change attitudes and behaviors.

- There will be a **Native Plant Tour** in Durham on August 13th that will take participants to locations where they may learn more about growing native plants.
- “Change Starts in Your Backyard”
- The Tallamy talk is now its own link and available to the public.
- It was suggested that we should involve students, through the schools, in understanding the role of insects.
- Follow-up discussion of bugs and leaves will continue at the next meeting.

7. **Chesley-Bickford House**-Larry Brickner-Wood, Carolyn Singer and Charlotte Hitchcock (HDC/HC). Carolyn shared a brief history of the Wagon Hill Farm site, its historical significance, and grants acquired and being pursued were presented. Restoration should follow professional preservation process guidelines with specific repairs required. How the house will be used based on its structure was discussed-including small exhibit spaces (history, artists gallery, community); resident caretaker upstairs; kitchen and restrooms in the ell. The importance of maintaining authenticity was emphasized. Charlotte shared possible architectural design ideas for the future of the building, including the potential for composting toilets for public use and solar panels on the roof (facing away from the road).
8. **Woodridge Road Lot**: Julian Smith, former Durham resident, has offered the town a parcel of land on Woodridge Road. Wetlands on the property were modified without NHDES permits and it is yet to be determined what funds Durham would need to use to restore the lot. If left unchanged and acquired by the Town there would be needed maintenance of the lot to keep it open as a public park, primarily used by residents of the neighborhood. With restoration it would most likely revert to wetlands. The lot is not buildable. There is additional information needed to determine whether or not this lot should be accepted. The consensus of the committee was that more information needed to be gathered.
9. **Reports** from Committees:
 - HDC/HC: resident concern about property maintenance
 - Town Council: Committee/Commission/Board Chairs are reporting on recent and current projects
 - Parks & Rec: Memorial Day and Durham Day were successful!
10. **New Business**-none
11. The meeting was **adjourned at 10:40 am**.

Respectfully submitted,
Sally Needell

