

Minutes, Meeting of the Kampoosa Stewardship Committee  
Monday, October 16, 2023, 5 p.m.  
Stockbridge Town Offices, 50 Main Street, Stockbridge, MA

Committee Members:

Present: Laura Beasley, Chair; Lisa Bozzuto, Rich Bradway, Arthur Dutil, Louise Gachet, Sally Underwood-Miller

Also in attendance: Patrick White, David Adler, Stephanie Adler, Tim O'Brien

Remote Attendees: David Paulson, Supervisor, Wildlife and Endangered Species Unit, Massachusetts Department of Transportation Highway Division, Environmental Services Section MassDOT; Amer Raza, MassDOT District 1 Environmental Engineer in Lenox, MA

**1. Approve minutes from 7/17/23 and 9/18/23 meetings**

Lisa Bozzuto moved to approve both sets of minutes; Rich seconded; VOTE: Unanimous.

**2. DOT Wildlife Crossings Pilot Program (Patrick White; Guest: David Paulson, Mass DOT)**

David Paulson described a grant proposal ("Route 7 and Kampoosa Brook Wildlife Connectivity and Resiliency Project") submitted by Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) that requests Wildlife Crossing Pilot Program funds to create an oversized culvert at Route 7 for better movement of water and safer passage of wildlife under the road. The existing culvert is undersized from a hydraulic standpoint, and there are issues of flooding in the area. The primary goals of the proposal are to optimize the hydrology to be more resilient in the face of climate change and to find the best long-term solution to connect wildlife and aquatic systems. At this time, it is not known when MassDOT will learn whether the proposal will be funded or what the chances are of its being funded.

Rich Bradway asked how construction would affect the brook itself and how water flow would be managed during construction. He asked what a larger culvert would mean for the people who live downstream of the ACEC and Kampoosa Brook. Rich expressed concern about massive shifts in flow, which have historically created problems (e.g., erosion) for those living downstream. David Paulson spoke about a 2D model that is currently being developed (it will include understanding how changes in flow will affect those downstream) and about involving landowners and other stakeholders throughout planning and construction if the proposal is approved and funded. The goal is to have resilient infrastructure, but also to "do the right thing." In the discussion, Amer Raza mentioned that MassDOT bridge projects (if the span is 10 feet or greater, it is considered a bridge; the current culvert is 4 feet) are exempt from Wetlands Protection Act permitting, but that MassDOT has to go to DEP and the Army Corps of Engineers.

Patrick White spoke about similarities shared by Agawam Lake and Kampoosa Bog ACEC and wondered whether the Kampoosa Stewardship Committee might also consider including

Agawam Lake in its preservation efforts. There was larger discussion of the issues at Lake Agawam that make it similar and different from the concerns of the ACEC and its neighbors.

David Paulson pledged to keep this committee up to date on the grant proposal's status and to update the committee after the 2D modeling is done.

### **3. Finalize Mission Statements and Objectives (Laura)**

Laura read aloud the latest draft of the committee's mission statement: Through the union of stakeholders, we will facilitate communication and resource sharing between core partners, educate the public, define baseline environmental data, coordinate cultural and environmental research, communicate research results, and communicate activities, review and comment on proposed developments, all in order to restore, preserve, and protect the bog.

Committee members discussed "define baseline environmental data" and agreed that, as a clearinghouse, the committee needs to provide all such information from different organizations, even though their baselines may be different. The mission was revised to read "coordinate baseline environmental data":

*Through the union of stakeholders, we will facilitate communication and resource sharing between core partners, educate the public, coordinate baseline environmental data, coordinate cultural and environmental research, communicate research results, and communicate activities, review and comment on proposed developments, all in order to restore, preserve, and protect the bog.*

Regarding articulated objectives and goal, Laura said that these could change over time. Rich said we could easily approve vision and mission and then prioritize our objectives and goals in something like a five-year plan. Water quality and invasive species have repeatedly been named our highest priority. Sally affirmed that we need to identify what is there; we need a survey. After a baseline survey (flora, fauna, water sources), further investigation may be needed, but a baseline will provide a lot of what is needed, said Rich. We don't know about recent surveys. In the documentation we do have from other organizations, survey information feels old. A baseline survey will help us prioritize what to do, what to focus on. From there, we can plan critical immediate mini goals and move on to other goals.

Sally moved to approve mission as read by Laura B. No second was audible. The vote was unanimous.

### **4. Stockbridge Library Archives (Lisa)**

Lisa Bozzuto reported on her conversation with Talya Leodari, Curator, Museum & Archives, Stockbridge Library. Talya was amenable to our storing two boxes of hardcopy files, eventually expanding to include digital storage. Lisa likes this idea because then anyone interested in the bog can read what is in the files there, and we are trying to make whatever documents we

accumulate available to the public. Conservation Commission office is not an option because the office is not open to the public. The group agreed that we should be asking for electronic versions of documents, not hardcopy, though we presently have no place for digital storage. Rich suggested that we talk to the library about partnering with a library that will scan our hardcopy documents using Optical Character Recognition (OCR) and index the text. We could apply for a grant to do that. We need to ask the Select Board: Where do we keep digital files? The group discussed whether we are free to put anything that has been given us from other sources in an archive that is accessible to the public. Going forward, we should ask sources if we can share their documents with the library. There was discussion of the security of documents at the library and what kind of responsibility the library has to maintain the contents of our archive. Lisa suggested that we put public documents in the Library Archive and keep back the private documents. Rich recommends that anything in the library has a digital scan of it somewhere.

Laura moved that when we are ready, we put our records in Stockbridge Library Archives for storage (as long as the volume of records does not exceed two boxes), eventually storing digitally. Rich seconded. The vote was unanimous.

## **5. Next Meetings**

The next meetings of the committee are on November 20, 2023; December 18, 2023; January 22, 2024; and Feb. 26, 2024.

## **6. Other Issues / Public Comment**

Louise reported some news from Angela Sirois of The Nature Conservancy, who may be able to attend the November meeting. She sent a document, "Geochemical Study Design of Kampoosa Bog, Stockbridge, Massachusetts," which Louise will share out to the committee. Louise reported that Angela does not know if the water quality stations are currently being monitored. TNC does not have the staff to do surveys, but they can make recommendations of consultants who can. TNC does do some inhouse invasive monitoring as well as some other botanical surveys, but Angela is not aware of a final report that is easily sharable.

Laura will add TNC to November's agenda.

The group again discussed whether CPC funds could support a survey to inform the CPA (Community Preservation Act) about open space. It might just be possible, but a considerable obstacle is that Kampoosa is not readily open to the public. CPC requires that there be some public component.

Could we invite Conservation Works to a meeting? Could they tell us what they would do in a survey? Rich will ask. That could help us gather the information we would need for a grant application. If Rich could coordinate that for the December meeting, that would be helpful.

Stephanie and David Adler, who live within the ACEC at 7 Lee Road, spoke about what has been going on at 9 Lee Road, a property owned by Berkshire Gas that has been leased to Osterman Gas Company and most recently Superior Plus Propane.

The Adlers began investigating the history of activities on this property after it recently came to light that 176 propane tanks, which had not been permitted, were discovered on the property and subsequently removed. The Adlers shared some of the information they have discovered about activities permitted on the property. In 1972, BG was permitted to put an aboveground 30,000-gallon propane tank on the property. In 1982, permission was given to add two underground tanks. Superior Plus Propane now has the lease of the big tanks on the property, which is currently used only as a depot. And though trucks were not originally permitted, diesel delivery trucks are there at all times. Originally, the facility was intended to tap gas from the nearby Tenneco—now Kinder Morgan—gas pipeline, but that is no longer done.

Recently, the Fire Chief discovered propane tanks of various sizes there, and subsequently, 176 propane tanks were pulled off the property. (It was not clear that any inventory of the number of tanks or their contents was taken before the tanks were removed.) The tanks had been brought onto the property to be emptied, but they had not been emptied. The Adlers reported that the property had not been inspected for safety over the years. The activities at the site, which sits entirely in the ACEC, pose potential environmental, safety, and health risks, and lack of oversight of the goings on at the site have prompted the Adlers to bring these activities to the attention of all concerned boards and committees in town, as well as state-level entities. The State Fire Marshall has already been involved, and Mass Environmental Protection has been informed. Sally suggested contacting Mark Stinson at Springfield, Mass., DEP office. Rich suggested requesting an Environmental Impact Report and a full history of what has happened on the property. Rich will inform BNRC and other entities about the issues.

Additional permitting is now being sought at the November 9, 2023, Select Board meeting. David Adler reported that Superior Plus is requesting permits for storage of 600 gallons of methanol, 26,640 gallons of LP gas in aboveground containers, five 3,200-gallon delivery trucks, 72 120-gallon tanks, 90,000 gallons stored in three 30,000-gallon underground tanks.

There was discussion of nearby water resources that would be of interest to the Conservation Commission. The ConComm will need to know how close this property is to any resource areas. Heron Pond is nearby. Sally and Lisa encouraged the Adlers to come before the Conservation Commission, bringing any and all useful documentation with them. Lisa asked whether there was a disaster plan in place. Apparently, the 1972 permit required one. Laura confirmed that the property lies in a residential zone and that the industrial use is grandfathered activity.

## **7. Adjournment**

Laura adjourned the meeting.

**8. Link to recording of the meeting.**

To find the recording of the October 16, 2023, meeting, please go to:

<https://ctsbtv.org/government-channel-1303/>

And then search using the term *Kampoosa*.

Alternatively, access the recording on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c0FXP9MYvHw>