

Minutes, Meeting of the Kampoosa Stewardship Committee
Monday, December 19, 2022, 5 p.m.
Stockbridge Town Offices, 50 Main Street, Stockbridge, MA

Committee Members:

Present: Lisa Bozzuto, Rich Bradway, Arthur Dutil, Louise Gachet

Attending via Zoom: Laura Beasley, Chair

Absent: John Hart

Other Attendees: Rene Wendell, Land Steward, The Nature Conservancy; Brett and Deena Weinhouse, Sandy Sanderson, and Eric [last name inaudible] attended via Zoom

1. Approve minutes from 11/21/22 meeting

Discussion:

Lisa Bozzuto moved to accept the minutes of the November 21, 2022, meeting; Arthur Dutil seconded. VOTE: Unanimous.

2. Status of outreach and records collection

- Stockbridge Conservation Commission (Lisa)
- Lee Land Trust (Lisa)
- Museum and Archives, Stockbridge Library; news clippings (Louise)
- NHESP (Laura)
- Local Mass Wildlife office (Rich)
- Tennessee Gas (Laura)
- The Nature Conservancy (Louise)
- BNRC (Rich)

Discussion:

Stockbridge Conservation Commission: Lisa has continued to read documents from the Conservation Commission that seem most interesting to the committee, among them documents about the treatment of phragmites by Native Habitat Restoration. Lisa has made a list of what is in the ConComm files and will compare it with documents that Rich has located elsewhere.

Discussion followed about ownership of Kampoosa ACEC land and the approval process for entities seeking to do work in the ACEC. The group foresees a role for this committee in communicating to and coordinating with all involved agencies and entities (as hub of the wheel, as it were).

The Nature Conservancy: Rene Wendell, Land Steward of The Nature Conservancy, attended. The Nature owns a small parcel of land in the ACEC, amounting to 10 or 15 acres, near Rattlesnake Mountain Road. Lisa asked if TNC is still active in the ACEC. No, TNC just monitors its property and boundaries. Discussion followed about the documents that TNC might be able to share. TNC has a lot of documents from the previous Stewardship Committee days. Laura requested a high-level summary (e.g., headlines, big messages, key things we should know) of the documents TNC could share, to make a realistic use of Rene's time. RW will review documents with an eye to identifying what's important to the committee. TNC documents are in electronic form and could be made available to committee in shared folder. At this time, it is unclear what role, precisely, TNC and Rene Wendell would play on the committee in its new form. Certainly, TNC played an active role on the previous committee and members foresee a time when a more active role on the committee would be welcome. Rene expressed enthusiasm that a committee had been revived as "it's good to be paying attention."

Lee Land Trust: Lisa contacted the Lee Land Trust but has not yet had a response. This item will be removed as a recurring agenda item.

Museum & Archives News Clippings: Louise had no update on this issue.

NHESP: Laura has not yet heard back from Chris Buelow, Restoration Ecologist. Rene Wendell offered to send Chris Buelow an email to help make the connection.

Local Mass Wildlife Office: Rich has been in touch with Andrew Madden, DFW Western District Supervisor, to let him know that the Stewardship Committee has been reformed as a town committee. Mass Wildlife has an extensive file on the Bog and will be happy to share. Rich will get back to him to let him know what we are looking for. Mass Wildlife is enthusiastic about participating in the committee in future.

Tennessee Gas Pipeline: Laura has not reached out yet but will.

BNRC: Doug Brown, Director of Stewardship at BNRC and Beth Mills, Director of Conservation, would be more than happy to share their files with the committee. Rich brought a folder of files from BNRC to the meeting. The files contain documents on such issues as private property within the ACEC and use of herbicides in the Bog. BNRC's files are not largely digitized. The committee could digitize the documents and share with BNRC. BNCR is eager to participate when the time is right.

3. Did Invasive Management for phragmites ever happen in 2010? (Lisa Bozzuto)

The only work Lisa knows of specifically is the work done by Native Habitat Restoration. We do not know specifically about any other projects to manage invasive phragmites. There are state agencies and private companies that have interest in this area.

4. Digital file storage of all records (Laura Beasley)

No update on this topic.

5. Landscape Software (Rich Bradway)

Discussion: Rich has investigated Landscape, a software solution that could be useful for tracking work within the ACEC. The Stockbridge Land Trust may buy or license it. Landscape could be useful for many committees in town. Rich will bring this software to the attention of the Select Board and the Town Administrator. The price and the tools offered make it attractive. It's cloud based, and the Committee's content could be backed up elsewhere as well. It's a possible alternative to the storage and limited access made available by the Town. Rich will share the video of the demo before the committee's next meeting.

6. Mission and Vision Statement (Laura)

Discussion: Discussion centered on the merits of keeping this as a recurring agenda item. The previous committee had a good mission statement. Laura proposed sending out some possible statements for discussion at the next meeting.

Rich responded to a query from Zoom attendees Deena and Brett Weinhouse about the previous committee's mission; Laura provided a brief history of the current instance of the committee.

7. Do we need a working meeting to review documents? (Laura)

Discussion: Laura asked how we should manage reading all the documents that are now available to us or that will become available: Do we need a working meeting to review them? Or do pairs of committee members get together to review them? Louise suggested that we work from lists of documents to select documents to read and report back on. At this time, the committee will not hold a working meeting to review documents.

8. Guidelines for residents in the ACEC (Laura)

Discussion: The committee discussed whether recipients of the committee's letter might respond to it and seek guidelines to understand any responsibilities. Do guidelines exist for people who live within the ACEC? There is no info on the Mass ACEC website for such property owners. The intent and purpose of the ACEC are made clear in the document establishing the ACEC. Zoning laws and the Wetlands Protection Act provide guidelines to property owners. Rich offered that the Land Trust manages Conservation Restrictions on several abutting properties and that there are very clear guidelines for what can be done or not done in those CRs. Rich suggested that Mass Wildlife might have suggestion for guidelines as well.

Zoom attendee Eric [last name inaudible] introduced himself and asked if there are obligations for abutters. Rich mentioned that if and when there is a controlled burn, the water level in the Bog will first be lowered. It will be of interest to neighbors of the ACEC when water is released.

The committee will hope to be notifying abutters and interested property owners when such things occur. The committee could advocate for people who live in or near the ACEC.

9. Next meeting is Monday, January 23, 2023, at 5 p.m.

10. Confirm February, March, April, and May 2023 meetings.

The committee confirmed the next meetings will be at 5 p.m. on Feb. 27, 2023; March 20, 2023; April 17, 2023; and May 15, 2023.

11. Public comment / Any other business / Action Items. .

Arthur brought an email sent to the Marian Fathers by Alex Entrup, Prescribed Fire and Habitat Restoration Ecologist at Mass Wildlife, after a meeting at the Marians. Arthur also brought a map showing neighbors who might be affected by the proposed controlled burn in the ACEC (Winter 2023–2024). Rene Wendell mentioned that TNC did a controlled burn (burned a lot of cattail) on TNC property with the DFW. TNC reached out to neighbors to tell them it was happening. A DCR person and the fire department were involved and watched the weather very carefully. Lisa asked how effective controlled burn is. RW said it was very effective at keeping brushy areas open for rare species. RW explained that the phragmites slows the way water sheets through the fen system and creates land where there was not land before. The new land provides a foothold for shrubby growth. Wet, spongy ground is replaced by shrubby land which invites beavers, who dam it up, raising the water level and drowning native rare plants.

Laura will reach out to Alex. Arthur will share the documents by email.

12. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn: Laura moved to adjourn the meeting. Rich seconded. VOTE: Unanimous.

13. Link to recording of the meeting.

To find the recording of the December 19, 2022, 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=a_KubtLahEQ