**Groton Stewardship Committee Agenda**

**Present**: Eileen McHugh (Conservation Commission, Earth Removal Stormwater Advisory Committee); Laura Moore (Lawrence Academy, Historic District Commission); Olin Lathrop (Conservation Commission, Invasive Species Committee, Trails Committee); Alex Woodle (Great Pond Advisory Committee); Lisa Murray (Groton Garden Club); Bob Hanninen (Earth Removal Stormwater Advisory Committee); Anna Eliot (Community Preservation Committee, Park Commission); Nik Gualco (Conservation Administrator).

**Meeting date:** Wednesday, January 20, 2021, 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM

E. McHugh called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

1. **Boots on Ground: Discussion on potential projects (including the newly acquired Priest Family Conservation Area)**

N. Gualco gave a summary presentation of the Conservation Commission’s efforts to acquire the Priest Family Conservation Area (off Martins Pond Road). O. Lathrop then provided an overview of a potential habitat restoration project for the upper parcel (Assessor’s Parcel 224-15), which includes addressing the invasive species overgrowth atop the hilltop field. The effort would be linked to a MassWildlife Habitat grant, which the Stewardship Committee could apply for is the project is approved by the Conservation Commission. E. McHugh commented that she would like to consider saving some of the trees in the field (mostly evergreens) and suggested that as part of the preliminary efforts that the field and more specifically the trees should be surveyed and documented– something the Stewardship Committee could undertake. After this the Committee discussed access to the field. Finally, the Committee agreed that they would undertake a site walk on Monday, February 15th and would park at William’s Barn and walk up to the field.

The Committee then discussed the lower parcel (Assessor’s Parcel 224-18). E. McHugh presented ideas that members of the Conservation Commission began looking into over a year ago, which included the development of a parking area, accessible trail, and shoreline picnic area. The major issue for these ideas has to do with the topography of the site, which will require a lot of grading and engineering in order to develop a parking area. The Committee discussed funding ideas and what value the property may have (logging potential). B. Easom cautioned that the amount of investment required for this property may make it cost prohibitive and that he would like to see funds spent elsewhere. O. Lathrop replied that he still believes this property could serve as a “feature” parcel for the Commission, but stated that it would require outside funding (grants). Finally, the Committee directed member O. Lathrop to request that the ‘No Trespassing’ sings installed along the road be removed.

1. **Discuss networking/outreach/education: Partnership opportunities with Groton Cable and the creation of media content.**

N. Gualco shared that at the next meeting he would have a representative from the Groton Cable Network come present to the Committee on how video can help with efforts to educate the public about stewardship opportunities/activities around town. The Committee discussed some possible ideas for how to utilize video to showcase various stewardship efforts. L. Moore commented that she is concerned that this group is getting to the point of needing task forces as the number of potential projects keeps growing with each meeting. This way smaller groups could focus on their individual projects and report back to the Committee as a whole. L. Murray asked if there was a distribution mailing list the Conservation Commission maintains to which N. Gualco replied ‘no’. However, he continued, the Groton Conservation Trust, Nashua River Watershed Alliance, and the Trails Committee each have similar lists that Stewardship could likely utilize to get a message out.

1. **Discuss process for tracking OSRP action items**

This item was tabled until the next meeting.

1. **Approve past meeting minutes**

Upon a motion by B. Hanninen, seconded by A. Eliot, it was:

VOTED to approve and release the meeting minutes for October 14, 2020 as drafted.

**The motion passed by a roll call vote with O. Lathrop and A. Eliot abstaining AND B. Hanninen, A. Woodle, L. Moore, L. Murray, E. McHugh voting ‘aye’.**

Upon a motion by B. Hanninen, seconded by A. Eliot, it was:

VOTED to approve and release the meeting minutes for November 18, 2020 as drafted.

**The motion passed by a roll call vote with L. Moore, A. Woodle, and O. Lathrop abstaining AND B. Hanninen, L. Murray, A. Eliot, and E. McHugh voting ‘aye’.**

Upon amotion by B. Hanninen, seconded by L. Murray, it was:

VOTED to approved and release the meeting minutes for December 16, 2020 as drafted.

**The motion passed by a roll call vote with O. Lathrop abstaining AND A. Woodle, L. Moore, B. Hanninen, L. Murray, A. Eliot, and E. McHugh voting ‘aye’.**

1. **Conclusion and set next meeting date**

The Committee agreed that the next meeting would me on February 17, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.

**Minutes Approved: April 21, 2021**