**Groton Stewardship Committee Minutes**

**Present:** Eileen McHugh, Chair (Conservation Commission); Anna Eliot (Community Preservation Committee, Park Commission); Olin Lathrop (Conservation Commission, Invasive Species Committee); Kim Kuliesis; Lisa Theall (President, Groton Garden Club); Bob Hanninen (Earth Removal Stormwater Advisory Committee, Conductorlab Oversight Committee); Lisa Murray, Vice-Chair (Groton Garden Club).

**Absent:** Deb Collum

**Others Present:** Nik Gualco (Conservation Administrator).

**Location:** Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

**When:** November 16, 2022

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

**Discuss when the Committee will regularly meet and set next meeting date.**

The Committee discussed changing the meeting date from the third Wednesday to the first Wednesday of each month. This change will go into effect beginning on December 7, 2022.

**Committee updates**

OL shared that the Conservation Commission is moving along with it’s acquisition of the Casella property, which includes the future CR-holder (Groton Conservation Trust [GCT]) recently conducting a site walk of the property. NG commented that the State has given the Notice to Proceed (for LAND Grant).

BH commented that the Conductor Lab site remediation is nearing completion and the Town should expect to receive the Activity and Use Determination soon.

LT commented that the Garden Club had a successful time tabling at Grotonfest where informational packets (prepared by the Invasive Species Committee) on managing invasive vegetation were handed out. LT continued and stated that the Garden Club had prepared tree decorating at the Hayes Woods Conservation Area as part of the GCT’s Winter Tree Stroll. Finally, LT announced that the Garden Club received grant funding for planting100 plantings to celebrate the Club’s 100-year anniversary.

AE reported that the Park Commission has submitted a CPC application for new softball fields at Cutler Field.

LM reported that the Garden Club is working with the library on educational programming. She continued and stated that the March 5th will be the date for the Garden Club’s annual public lecture.

**Regulation Review: water withdrawal and the regulations around it (Lisa M.)**

LM/NG provided an overview of the discussion, which centered around observations of hydroseed landscaping companies pumping water from wetlands without permitting. NG reported on a recent correspondence he had with MassDEP in which he learned that the State only regulates water withdrawal over 100,000 gallons per day as long as the water source is not affected during the withdrawal (e.g., observable drop in water level). The Committee discussed this topic for several minutes and explored the possibility of creating local use permits or requiring a RDA for withdrawals. The complexities of such actions were also discussed including the challenges of enforcement. LM agreed to review the Water Management Act and report back at a future date.

**OSRP Action Plan Tracking**

EM gave an overview of the status of the OSRP tracking, including highlighting which goals had and had not been worked on. The Committee discussed the details of various goals and objectives with highlights including the properties enrolled in the Chapter 61 tax program and the status of recreation and how it is prioritized in Groton.

**Permitting Review: turtle nesting areas (Deb) – added Nov. 14, 2022**

This item was tabled to a future meeting.

**Reports from the field**

GCT Bates Land Conservation Area (Anna) – this item was tabled to a future meeting.

Tire cleanup efforts along Wrangling Brook (Kim) – KK provided an update on the status of the RDA for the proposed tire cleanup. The hearing will be December 13. This project generated a lot of support and excitement among the Committee.

MVP Project (Ayer) – Tree Planting (Kim) – KK shared about a project that the City of Ayer is conducting centering on forest restoration. The MVP grant funded the project. The Committee discussed how similar projects could take place in Groton.

**Discussion on neighbor outreach/land management/succession planning**

This item was tabled to a future meeting.

**Approve meeting minutes**

This item was tabled to a future meeting.

**Adjourn**

 Upon a motion by A. Eliot, seconded by L. Murray, it was:

 VOTED to adjourn the public meeting.

**The motion carried by a roll call vote (YES: OL, BH, LT, LM, AE, KK, EM).**

**Minutes Approved: December 7, 2022**