



GROTON STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING

Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

September 17, 2025 – 6:30 PM

The meeting was opened at 6:30 PM.

1. INTRODUCTIONS:

- **Present at the meeting:**
 - Olin Lathrop – Chair of the Stewardship Committee/Conservation Commission/Invasive Species Committee/Stewardship Committee
 - Anna Elliot – Parks Commission/Stewardship Committee
 - Kim Kuliesis – Conservation Commission/Stewardship Committee
 - Charlotte Steeves – Conservation Administrator
 - Benjamin Wolfe – Invasive Species Committee/Conservation Commission
 - Adam Burnett – Stewardship Committee
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2. COMMITTEE UPDATES:

COMMITTEE ORGANIZATION

- It was noted that the committee did not currently have an elected chair due to recent membership changes. A nomination was made by Anna Elliot to appoint Olin Lathrop as the chair. This was seconded by Kim Kuliesis.
 - Following brief discussion, a roll call vote was taken and the nomination was approved.
 - It was noted that committee membership is still stabilizing following recent turnover, with confirmation that a quorum was present for the meeting.
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3. ON-GOING PROJECTS

Recent Site Walk

- The committee discussed and reviewed the recently completed site walk report. It was noted that the report included detailed observations of site conditions, including wetland areas, plant communities, and invasive species, and that edits had already been incorporated following initial review.
- Members discussed whether additional edits or clarifications were needed and agreed that further review should be handled at a future meeting. It was agreed that remaining comments would be compiled and reviewed together at the next meeting rather than editing the document during this session.

Parcel Updates and Mowing Schedules

- The committee revisited a prior agreement for members to review individual conservation parcels and develop management recommendations, including mowing schedules and long-term stewardship goals. It was acknowledged that some members had begun this work while others had not yet had the opportunity.
- Anna Elliot shared an update on Priest Hill, stating that there is a mowed path leading to the top of the hill and that pedestrian access is available from multiple points. She asked whether there was an intent for the field to continue being mowed by Bruce, as had been done previously.
- Anna also noted that she had been assigned Ames Meadow and asked for clarification regarding the mowing plan for that parcel.
- The Chair stated that he would take an action item to review Eliades Conservation Area, and that Anna would continue looking into Ames Meadow.

Site Walk Debrief Carrol Wheeler Park Grant Application

- The committee discussed ongoing work related to Carrol Wheeler Park and the application for the grant.
- Kim reported that she had not yet completed revisions to the draft application language due to other commitments, but stated that she would conduct a site visit over the upcoming weekend to gather updated documentation and photographs.
- The Chair stated that he had previously written a management plan for the site and offered to provide background materials and assistance as needed.
- It was noted that the grant is not yet open, but members agreed that preparation work should continue so the committee is ready when the application period begins.
- It was agreed that coordination with the Parks Commission could be revisited once application materials are further developed.

Invasive Species Updates

- Recent invasive species work was discussed, including treatment of phragmites at Eliades Conservation Area and along the Priest Hill driveway.
- Additional invasive species observations were noted from recent site walks, including mature bittersweet vines along road edges, phragmites within utility easements, and areas of buckthorn and multiflora rose.
- Members also discussed observations from Meadowbrook Conservation area that contains a significant concentration of invasive species dating back to former gravel pit activity.
- It was agreed that these findings should be brought to the Invasive Species Committee for further discussion.

Site Walk Planning

- The committee discussed options for a future site walk, including Meadowbrook Conservation area, which has known invasive species issues and previous committee activity.
- Members agreed that this site would be appropriate for a future walk, but noted that scheduling would be difficult during the meeting due to limited calendar access at this time.
- It was agreed that the site walk date would be coordinated via email.

Student Engagement Opportunities

- The committee discussed the possibility of involving students in stewardship-related projects, such as vegetation surveys or parcel management research.
- It was noted that a student had previously reached out expressing interest in assisting with committee projects.
- Ben volunteered to draft short descriptions of potential projects that could be shared with interested students, with the understanding that this work would be reviewed by the committee at a future meeting.

4. GENERAL DISCUSSIONS

Communication

- The committee noted that there is currently no centralized email distribution list for Stewardship Committee members.

- The Chair agreed to create an email list once member contact information is provided, to support coordination, scheduling, and sharing of action items.

Action Items Review

- The Chair will review Eliades Conservation Area and create an email distribution list for the committee.
 - Anna will continue reviewing Priest Hill and Ames Meadow, including mowing considerations.
 - Adam will research Farmers and Mechanics Conservation Area, including prior management plans.
 - Ben will review Nipmuc Meadows and draft project descriptions for potential student involvement.
 - Kim will conduct a site visit at Carroll Wheeler Park and continue preparing background materials for a future grant application.
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5. ADJOURN

- The meeting was adjourned at 7:06 PM.
- The next meeting was tentatively scheduled for the third Wednesday of the following month at 6:30 PM, with final confirmation to occur via email.

Respectfully submitted by Andrea Rollo, Per Diem Minute Taker

Approved: March 18th, 2026