

# Groton Invasive Species Committee Meeting Minutes

10 Oct 2016

Legion Hall

Committee Members Present:

Brian Bettencourt

Olin Lathrop

Also attending:

Greta Marks-Strouble Marks-Strouble

Agenda:

- 1) Update on communications with Town Manager re/ licensing
- 2) Review of Roy Van Driesche visit and next steps
- 3) Membership and viability of committee
- 4) Action Items
- 5) AOB

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 PM

Olin Lathrop related the history and mission of the committee to Greta Marks-Strouble.

The first order of business was the Update on Town Manager communications.

- Olin Lathrop stated that in April, he gave the Town Manager information on costs and courses needed for applicator license, plus timing.
  - \$150-200 per person.
  - Equipment: Backpack applicators, etc.
  - The Town Manager had asked how much chemicals would cost.
- Olin Lathrop mentioned that the committee's previous invited speaker relayed information on the costs of spraying Phragmites.
  - Brian Bettencourt agreed that pesticides are necessary for Phragmites according to all the experts.
  - Olin Lathrop mentioned that the Conservation Trust has done some nice studies of the issue.
- Olin Lathrop described having emailing the Town Manager on cost estimates – a maximum of \$10s per acre. The Town Manager said "Let's do it". The committee only needs to send him invoices for training. The Town Manager and Tom Delaney approved.
- Brian Bettencourt asked when the next training was.
  - Olin Lathrop said late winter, typically. He agreed to keep an eye on the website.
- Brian Bettencourt asked what species could/would be targeted with herbicides?
  - The committee discussed:

- Phragmites
  - Japanese knotweed
  - Bittersweet
- Brian Bettencourt asked: The committee would not do any open-water aquatic work, correct?
- Greta Marks-Strouble asked: Don't the lakes groups do that already?
- Olin Lathrop responded positively: Yes, Sonar applications. Also, he asked whether one of the lakes groups had already done a mechanical harvest?
- Brian Bettencourt mentioned that he hadn't heard affirmatively.

The second order of business was a Review of the Roy Van Driesche visit.

- Brian Bettencourt mentioned that he'd already sent Thanks from the committee.
- Olin Lathrop thought the talk was great.
- Greta Marks-Strouble said she learned a lot.
- Brian Bettencourt took an Action Item: Ask Roy Van Driesche for other potential speakers.
- Olin Lathrop agreed, saying that the committee definitely wants to do more lectures.
  - He mentioned talking to Michelle Ruby as a potential speaker; she was heavily involved in research on Shepley and Bates land.
  - Brian Bettencourt asked whether she'd ever presented her work publicly?
  - Olin Lathrop replied Yes, but never as a stand alone lecture.
    - Olin Lathrop took an Action item: to reach out to Michelle Ruby re/ lecture on control efforts on Trust land in Groton.
- Brian Bettencourt mentioned recent email correspondence with David Black on loosestrife and Groton School.
  - Olin Lathrop added that David Black also works on Bates/Shepley land, but felt the committee should have him talk about loosestrife.
  - Brian Bettencourt agreed, and took an Action item: To ask David Black if he'd like to give a lecture.

The third order of business was Membership.

- Brian Bettencourt mentioned writing to Celia Silinonte a couple times, and not having heard back.
  - Olin Lathrop said he knew she's in Seattle right now.
  - Brian Bettencourt mentioned finding old correspondence from July that indicated Celia wants to help but not join.
- Greta Marks-Strouble mentioned that Helen McGrath might be interested; she agreed to follow up with her.
- Brian Bettencourt stated that as of now, members were Olin Lathrop, Brian Bettencourt, and Adam Burnett (absent).
- Olin Lathrop reviewed the process of joining for Greta Marks-Strouble: How to do the volunteer form on the website, print and drop off.

- Olin Lathrop said we can vote to recommend Greta Marks-Strouble if she wants to volunteer.
- Olin Lathrop Moved to recommend Greta Marks-Strouble for appointment should she volunteer.
  - Brian Bettencourt seconded.
  - The motion passed unanimously.
- Brian Bettencourt took an Action item: To email the Town Manager that recommendation.
- Greta Marks-Strouble reviewed her background and qualifications.
- Brian Bettencourt reviewed the committee's goals and mission.
- Olin Lathrop reviewed the Committee's permission to work on Cox-Walker, and some differences in approach with the Trust – specifically their conditions for controlling bittersweet on the land.

The fourth order of business was Action Items.

- Brian Bettencourt stated that Olin Lathrop had talked to Town Manager.
- Brian Bettencourt stated that he'd wrote to Celia Silinonte.
- Brian Bettencourt mentioned that the committee had also taken care of items re/ the Roy Van Driesche visit, and that he'd written to Adam Burnett.
- Olin Lathrop mentioned that he'd talked with Mark Gerath at Groton Conservation Trust.
  - The GCT holds the Conservation restriction on Cox-Walker. Mark stated that he's very busy, but also that Olin Lathrop should sit and talk with Michelle Ruby and work it out.
    - Brian Bettencourt asked: Mark sounded responsive and reasonable?
    - Olin Lathrop stated: Yes.
- Brian Bettencourt: Olin Lathrop has a new action item : To ask Michelle Ruby about working conditions for bittersweet removal at Cox-Walker.
- Olin Lathrop reviewed where Cox-Walker land and showed it on screen (via the Groton GIS website). He also reviewed the parcel's history and purchase.
  - He described the large bittersweet infestation on Cox-Walker, along with a large number of other invasive species.
    - The goal is to get a bunch of volunteers together and get in there to clear things.
    - The Conservation Commission who owns the land had said "sure!". The Trust holds the Conservation Restriction, and they have the conditions for removal work.

The fifth order of business was Any Other Business.

- Brian Bettencourt stated that the committee needs to push for increased membership.
- Olin Lathrop felt the committee should hold off on membership plea emails until (perhaps) after the next lecture.

- Brian Bettencourt asked: Why not now, we just did a talk?
  - Olin Lathrop agreed.
- Brian Bettencourt took an Action Item: to email Talk About Groton re/ coming out to meetings, potentially joining.
  - Olin Lathrop said that ideally this should be done 1 week before the next meeting.
  - Olin Lathrop stated that Mondays are not always good because of selectmens meetings.
  - Brian Bettencourt agreed to ask Adam Burnett whether 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesdays are okay, and emailed him immediately.
  - Greta Marks-Strouble noted that the town website still says Wednesdays.
  - Olin Lathrop proposes 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesdays – and agreed the committee just has to hear from Adam Burnett.
- Olin Lathrop Moved that the committee change meetings to 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesdays of the month if Adam Burnett can attend.
  - Brian Bettencourt seconded.
  - The motion passed unanimously.
- Brian Bettencourt took an action item: If an only if Adam Burnett responded positively, he will write to the Town Clerk and see if Legion Hall is available, and mention the website needs changing.
- Olin Lathrop and Brian Bettencourt discussed wooly adelgid infestation around Groton.
- Greta Marks-Strouble asked whether hemlock mulch is safe to use.
- Greta Marks-Strouble described finding a White Mulberry tree behind Prescott School.
  - The species was originally brought to the USA to try to grow silkworms – it didn't work out. White Mulberry hybridizes and displaces native red mulberry.
  - Olin Lathrop asked whether it spreads.
  - Brian Bettencourt reviewed Mass. NHESP info here: <http://www.mass.gov/eea/docs/dfg/nhosp/species-and-conservation/nhfacts/morus-rubra.pdf>
- Greta Marks-Strouble described the tree's location.
- Olin Lathrop asked whether the committee could get a picture.
- Greta Marks-Strouble mentioned that the leaves are diagnostic.
- Greta Marks-Strouble took an Action Item: To take pictures of the tree's leaves, etc. and send to the committee.
- Brian Bettencourt said that the committee (once possessing that information) can contact Tom Delaney and the Town Manager (and a positive identification), and ask about removal.
  - Greta Marks-Strouble asked whether the committee could plant a red mulberry.
  - Olin Lathrop stated: possibly, would have to ask permission.

- Olin Lathrop stated he would also get a picture of white mulberry.
- Olin Lathrop mentioned that the committee would have to ask for an expert opinion --- perhaps David Black.
- Brian Bettencourt took an Action Item: To add to the committee's list of emails those that came from the Roy Van Driesche talk attendee list, and make a google group.
- Brian Bettencourt moved to adjourn.
  - Olin Lathrop seconded.
  - The motion passed unanimously.
- The Meeting Adjourned at 8:04 PM.